

Final Report Crookston Study and Review Committee

June 30, 2000[†]

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Report of
The Crookston Study and Review Committee
June 30, 2000
Executive Summary

The Crookston Study and Review Committee was charged in December of 1999 by the Executive Vice President and Provost Office in consultation with Faculty Consultative Committee with assisting the University of Minnesota-Crookston (UMC) in assessing its current academic status and directions and in identifying possibilities for further strengthening the campus during its next phase of development. The Committee reviewed an extensive set of documents and visited the Crookston campus to meet with faculty, administrators, staff, and students. The Committee was asked to review and make recommendation regarding several specific aspects of UMC's programs, operations, and direction. Among these were:

- The status of academic directions already underway or under consideration.
- Academic governance systems and processes and their relation to the vision, academic directions, and administrative processes of the campus.
- Academic staffing and personnel policies and practices.
- Efforts to address the unique needs of the region in which UMC is located.
- Collaborative and cooperative efforts with other campuses of the University and with regional institution in Minnesota and North Dakota.
- Professional development opportunities and support for faculty and professional staff, including support for research, development, and outreach activities.
- Status of UMC's innovations in the use of computer technology in teaching and learning and potential for applying these innovations more broadly in the University of Minnesota.

The Committee found that UMC's success in meeting the benchmark's established by the Board of Regents in 1992 reflects strengths still in evidence today: visionary leadership; a dedicated and hardworking faculty and staff; and strong regional and University wide support. Through their efforts, UMC has made the transition from a two-year technical college to a regional university campus emphasizing career-oriented baccalaureate programs. Furthermore, it has distinguished itself as the first laptop campus, extensively integrating computer technology into its teaching and learning activities. These achievement potentially provide a unique and sound basis for further building the quality of the campus and its contributions as part of the University of Minnesota system.

As UMC moves into the second phase of its transformation, however, several issues must be addressed to insure the future quality and vitality of the campus.

Academic Programs, Directions, and Operations

- Further growth of academic programs now should be more deliberate and planful than in the fast-paced transition from two- to four-year degree programs. Before additional major and minor programs are added, a comprehensive, faculty-led curriculum review should be undertaken to reduce or eliminate courses and majors that have not attracted students and/or that are less central to the distinctive longer term mission of UMC.
- Pioneering uses of computer technology should be extended by further developing pedagogy and enhancing faculty-development activities and more effective integration of technology-based instruction. The efforts may provide useful models for similar efforts on other campuses of the University.
- An unusually high rate of academic difficulty among entering students should be addressed by developing a comprehensive plan for the first-year experience, addressing academic, intellectual and social needs of a diverse group of beginning college students and facilitating adjustment to campus life and higher education.
- The remarkable integration between UMC's academic programs and links to the community and region carries many potential advantages. To realize this potential fully, UMC should create collaborative mechanisms to enrich and increase the relevance of curricular offerings, especially interdisciplinary ones, and to enhance work-related and service learning.

Academic Staffing Patterns and Faculty-Staff Development

- The quality of faculty and staff appointments is a critically important building block for the future. UMC must insure that appointments to tenure-track positions are consistent with the transition from two-year to baccalaureate programs. Particular attention should be given to recruiting and appointing faculty with strong credentials, including the terminal degree offered in the individuals field, and supporting the efforts of these individuals to achieve tenure. Because tenure is held in the University system, University's Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Human Resources and the Director of Equal Opportunity should support and carefully monitor the search, appointment, and approval practices pertaining to tenure-track faculty at UMC. This includes a review of all recent and new appointments.
- Workload issues appear to be a major impediment to faculty-staff morale, recruiting of well qualified faculty, and optimal faculty development at UMC. Faculty and administration should establish and implement workload policies to insure equity and to increase opportunities for research and scholarly work.

Campus governance

- Campus decision-making currently is hampered by contentiousness and distrust among faculty and adversarial attitudes of faculty toward the campus administration. Faculty and academic staff, with the encouragement and support of administration, must design and implement an inclusive, collaborative process for setting future directions and making decisions and must insure its integrity.
- Visionary and effective leadership by the current chancellor and his predecessor should be more closely matched by the effectiveness of administrators at other levels. The quality of decisions and overall management affecting such areas as academic appointments, curriculum, and faculty governance has not been sufficient to the growing needs of the Crookston Campus. These areas deserve close scrutiny and require improvement of administrative reviews at all levels of academic administration.

CROOKSTON FINAL REPORT

Introduction

The Crookston Study and Review Committee was charged by Executive Vice President Robert H. Bruininks in December, 1999, with assisting the University of Minnesota-Crookston (UMC) in assessing its current academic status, directions, and profile and identifying issues to be addressed in further strengthening the campus during the next phase of its development. The Committee was asked to review and make recommendations regarding several specific aspects of UMC's programs, operations, and directions. Among these were:

- The status of academic directions already underway or under consideration.
- Academic staffing and personnel policies and practices.
- Efforts to address the unique needs of the region in which UMC is located.
- Collaborative and cooperative efforts with other campuses of the University of Minnesota and with regional institutions in Minnesota and North Dakota.
- Professional development opportunities and support for faculty and professional staff, including support for research, development, and outreach activities.
- Status of UMC's innovations in the use of computer technology in teaching and learning and potential for applying these innovations more broadly in the University of Minnesota.

The Committee's work occurred against a backdrop of extensive and rapid transformation of UMC. In 1992, the Board of Regents established UMC as a four-year baccalaureate degree on campus. The benchmarks for the future directions of the campus were adopted by the Board of Regents on November 13, 1992 (see Appendix A). As the state's only polytechnic baccalaureate institution, UMC's mission is to provide programs leading to career-oriented baccalaureate degrees and selected associate degrees in agriculture, business, communications, environments sciences, human resource development, and technical studies. This mission necessitated a shift of many of the existing two-year programs to four-year programs and also the creation of a number of new four-year degrees. In addition, UMC was given a clear mandate to provide a link between the University of Minnesota and the region for technology transfer and outreach. Achieving these benchmarks, thus underlines both the programmatic directions and the administrative structures of the present day.

In appraising the current state of UMC, the Study and Review Committee examined a large body of pertinent background material. These included documents and reports prepared by UMC for its annual planning activities and for the North Central Association accreditation review, which occurred in March 2000. A list of these materials in Appendix B. In addition, the Committee visited UMC on April 10, 2000, to meet representatives of faculty, Professional and Administrative staff members, Civil Service staff members, student leaders, the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, and the other administrators (including Program Managers, Center Directors, and the Administrative Executive Committee). These individuals occupied a variety of roles, including teaching, research, technology support, student support, facilities management, institutional relations, and outreach. In addition, representatives of the business community met with Committee members to discuss links between UMC and the community. Approximately 75 individuals participated in these conversations. Both before and after its visit, the Committee issued open invitations to the UMC community to communicate with Committee members by e-mail and phone, if they wished to do so; approximately fifteen such messages were received.

In preparing for the site visit, the Committee divided into three groups to frame questions to guide its inquiries. These question addressed UMC's mission, it instructional programs, its staffing and faculty-development programs, and it governance processes. The questions appear in Appendix C. Following the visit, the Committee identified four areas with significant ramifications for the programs, personnel, and future directions of UMC:

- Academic programs, directions, and operations
- Academic staffing patterns and faculty-staff development
- Campus governance
- Links to the community and the region

Each of these areas entails several specific, sometimes diverse issues. In this report, we briefly describe relevant historical events and assess current status, including both recent achievements and future challenges. We also identify some issues that require concerted attention to assure the future quality and vitality of the campus. Finally, we recommend a number of actions and strategies for addressing the challenges.

Academic Programs, Directions, and Operations

Few academic institutions face changes in focus and direction as extensive and as rapid as those experienced by UMC. The achievements of administration, faculty, and staff have been remarkable. Today, the campus has eighteen baccalaureate degree programs, where none existed only eight years ago. Moreover, in that period, the campus has integrated computer technology and other media into its instructional program, earning worldwide recognition as the first laptop campus. It has greatly expanded its cooperative links to other institutions in the region, to other units of the University of Minnesota, and to community and regional economic-development activities. Along with the other three campuses of the University of Minnesota, UMC has completed a transition from quarter to the semester system. That these multiple changes have been accomplished with, effectively, no increase in funding for faculty and instructional staff makes transformation of UMC all the more impressive.

These achievements can be attributed to strengths that still operate at UMC today: visionary leadership; a remarkably dedicated and hardworking faculty and staff; and effective and stalwart community and regional supporters. Their collective efforts have been rewarded by greatly enhanced prestige and recognition of UMC by other institutions and the private sector.

Against this impressive backdrop, the Study and Review Committee nevertheless learned of several continuing challenges that must be addressed now to insure that the next period of campus development is successful:

Its success at the dual task of becoming a career-oriented baccalaureate instruction and, simultaneously, a model for integration of computer technology into instruction has positioned UMC to make unique contributions to post-secondary education. As the campus moves into the second phase of its transformation, several broad goals require attention.

Review and rationalizing of the curriculum. Adapting to changes in society, the needs of students, and community demand requires flexibility in curriculum and programs. UMC's baccalaureate programs now have been in place long enough to establish a track record of feasibility and student demand. Some four-year programs have attracted students at a high rate, but other so far have garnered minimal enrollments. Moreover, the transition from two- to four- year programs is still in progress at UMC. Some 2-year programs are still in the curriculum, and whether and when these remaining 2-year programs are to be converted to 4-year programs is not clear.

Faculty must bear the major responsibility for determining what programs will take UMC successfully into the far future, while honestly discontinuing programs which will not or which simply are not longer viable. Although mechanisms for curriculum

reviews currently exist, their effectiveness must be increased to accomplish this vital task. The review effort should include developing a principled basis for making these subsequent curriculum and programmatic decisions, consistent with the mission of the campus. Careful attention should be given to how best to maintain and creatively strengthen the arts and sciences core essential to baccalaureate education in the United States. The Committee heard interesting and creative ideas for achieving this latter goal, such as integrating the campus's extraordinary base in technology with its increasing bent toward interdisciplinary instruction involving arts and sciences programs.. The resulting curriculum should clearly embody the unique, mission-driven contributions of UMC to the region and to the University of Minnesota as a whole. To assure that this curriculum review is sufficiently comprehensive and balanced, the Committee urges a complete or partial moratorium on the creation of major and minor programs until the review is completed.

RECOMMENDATION 1. The Chief Academic Officer must implement a comprehensive faculty-led curriculum review to maintain UMC's focus on high quality, high demand baccalaureate programs, including judicious reduction or elimination of both courses and majors. The campus should observe a complete or partial moratorium on the creation of major and minor programs until this review is completed.

The Study and Review Committee recognizes obstacles to a rigorous review and "Trimming" of curriculum.. Faculty and staff members often feel great affection for, and loyalty to, course offerings in which they have invested years of effort. Some faculty in arts and sciences appear concerned that the changes in the curriculum to meet the performance benchmarks for the campus set by the Regents already have diminished the core academic disciplines. Furthermore, faculty across the campus may fear that positions, including their own, will be eliminated if course offerings are reduced in a particular area. The Committee recognizes that some re-tooling or reassignment of faculty may be necessary, as is always the case when curricula are adapted to current demands and needs. Considerable benefits in additional instructional effectiveness and resources, however, may be gained through this re-distribution of effort. The Committee thus recommends that attention be given to minimizing perceived barriers to curriculum review and change.

RECOMMENDATION 2. The curriculum review outlined above should take place with the assurance that, whenever possible, faculty and P&A staff members affected by the reduction or elimination of specific course offerings will be offered reassignment. Appropriate faculty-development opportunities should be provided to support reassigned faculty and staff in preparing for their duties or roles.

The Committee also recognizes the difficulty of proposing major changes under expectations of little or no increase in funding to accomplish programmatic goals. Clearly, present funding and resources are not adequate for the range of academic activities now underway at UMC. Although campus financial resources have grown over the years, the growth rate has not kept pace with the conversion to 4-year programs. The base allocation, plus ongoing support consistent with allocation to other campus colleges, presently cover compensation, capital investments, building operating costs, and utilities. A significant proportion of the annual allocation has been non-recurring dollars. Tuition is approximately 30 percent of annual funding many faculty and P&A staff feel they are now operating a baccalaureate level institution that is experiencing increased student enrollment and expanded academic offerings at a funding level more typical of a two-year institution. Many of the 18 baccalaureate programs operate with only one regular faculty member, plus \$5,000 in funding for supplies. The campus has chose to invest in technology and infrastructure and invest in faculty in programs that would increase enrollment. A good-faith basis for curriculum review must include the possibility that increasing the number of upper-level courses and faculty time to teach these courses or otherwise to meet enrollment demands may be necessary in some cases. No institution, UMC included, can be expected to innovate and also maintain quality without adequate funding.

RECOMMENDATION 3. If faculty and staff succeed in reallocating resources through judicious and principled reductions in current curriculum, Central Administration should be receptive to well reasoned and supported requests fro additional resources to realize the future academic goals.

Pedagogy for the use of technology in instruction. Becoming the nation's first laptop campus attracted great national and international attention to UMC. The campus has hosted visits by over 150 institutions form around the country and world. The use of technology also has attracted students from around the region and country and has been key to retaining students making the conversion form two- to four- year programs. In the job market, UMC students are finding they have the edge over other applicants due to their technology-intensive background, now such a valued commodity in the work world. Although some faculty and staff initially were reticent to join the technology revolution, computer technology is now virtually omnipresent on the UMC campus, affecting everyone from those in food preparation and custodial services, to faculty, to the basketball player who never misses an assignment during away games because he keeps up via his laptop. In fact, course materials on the Web have become the standard at UMC.

Clearly, technology is creating a global society and marketplace. These forms of change and growth must continue to drive the student experience curriculum if UMC

is to maintain its leadership in integrating computer technology with teaching and learning. Although faculty members feel they have overall responsibility for curriculum development, greater strides toward technology savvy than their professors, pointing to the need not just to increase technological expertise among faculty, but to intensify development of pedagogy for instructional design and to achieve broader and deeper integration of technology into instructional activities. UMC's Instructional Technology Center could provide additional support to staff and faculty for developing a pedagogy for the use of technology in instruction. The Center for Teaching and Learning Services, as well as other units on the Twin Cities campus, might provide consultation as well. Effective faculty-development efforts in the area would serve as a model for institutions everywhere, including other campuses of the University of Minnesota, which also face the challenge of the appropriate and effective uses of technology in teaching and learning. Few if any effective models presently exist, and UMC is uniquely placed to provide leadership in the area.

RECOMMENDATION 4. UMC should commit intellectual and financial resources to developing pedagogy and faculty-development activities for increased and more effective integration of technology-based instruction.

Attention to student recruitment, performance, and retention. The committee found great enthusiasm and positive feedback from students during its campus visit. Students lauded the use of technology, felt they had a voice with administrators, and enjoyed having community-based faculty, feeling it added to their educational experience. Students already had jobs lined up upon graduation, and they credited their technology skills with giving them this advantage.

Some challenges must be addressed, however. Although the academic profile of students is increasing and the campus is successfully re-defining itself as a baccalaureate institution, some associate degree-seeking students are finding it difficult to make the transition to baccalaureate-level courses. For example, 61% of freshman students were on academic probation. The policy of open enrollment also continues to challenge the caliber of students that can be attracted. To address these problems and, perhaps enhance its baccalaureate completion rate, UMC should develop a coordinated vision of the first-year experience, including both academic affairs and student affairs components. Among the needs to be considered are those of students who difficulty in the first year result in academic probation. A carefully designed, integrated program of tutoring and academic support should be developed for these students. The Committee also recommends that UMC continue its efforts to design and establish ongoing assessment of student learning.

Moreover, like many institutions in largely rural regions, UMC must strive continually to recruit minority students. Current students expressed interest in a multicultural or minority center, as well as the desire for a larger gathering and social center for student activities and recreation, to make the campus more welcoming from all backgrounds.

RECOMMENDATION 5. UMC should develop a plan for first-year experience, addressing academic, intellectual, and social needs of a diverse group of beginning college students and facilitating adjustment to campus life and higher education. This effort should include providing adequate academic support, including an integrated tutoring and study-skills program, to address academic probation issues.

Academic Staffing Patterns and Faculty/Staff Development

UMC faculty and staff have demonstrated great ability to embrace change, coupled with the commitment and initiative to take on additional responsibilities as the institution grows. The “growing pain” of the past eight years, however, continues to be felt among faculty and staff. Some faculty and middle-level administrators with deep roots in the long history of UMC as a two-year technical college have not fully embraced the standards and modes of decision-making that are needed to create and maintain baccalaureate programs of quality commensurate with the expectations of the University of Minnesota. Some also rely too heavily on expedient short-term decisions and practices that often are inconsistent with furthering growth while assuring quality. The Committee identified major challenges for the future in two closely related areas affecting faculty and academic staff at UMC: recruitment and hiring of new and replacement faculty, and faculty workloads.

Faculty recruitment and hiring. The single most important element positioning UMC for the future is assuring the quality and effectiveness of its faculty and academic staff. Baccalaureate institutions that are successful in building and maintaining a strong faculty follow certain common principles. Faculty and administrators work together to identify gaps in academic staff guided by on-going review and evaluation of programs and emerging demands. They consistently seek and appoint tenure-track faculty with terminal degrees in their fields and a commitment to disciplined inquiry, as well as to effective teaching. They devise and implement general plans for attracting promising faculty and staff, including attempting to assure that qualified candidates will have adequate opportunities to pursue the accomplishments required to achieve tenure, have adequate opportunities to pursue the accomplishments required to achieve tenure, including research and scholarship.

The Study and Review Committee found that the recent record of searches and hiring often has been inconsistent with these principles. The deficiencies are most apparently in filling tenure-track positions. The Committee learned that some faculty and staff members regard search and appointment procedures as inconsistent. Most troubling, some faculty members cited instances in which appointing officers (typically, Center Directors, with the concurrence of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs) made tenure-track appointments of individuals whose credentials were less strong than those of other candidates and who were unlikely to be able to meet the campus and University standards for promotion and tenure. The dimensions of the problem are evident in searches conducted during 1999-2000. In that year, UMC sought to fill 11 tenure-track positions. Most of the searches now completed have resulted in the appointment of individuals with master's degrees, even though other candidates held doctoral degrees. Moreover, disciplined inquiry, which is an essential criterion for promotion and tenure for all faculty members of the University of Minnesota, was not mentioned in the advertisements posted in these searches. Although some faculty and administrators attribute this record to difficulty of attracting highly qualified faculty to a rural area and/or to relatively heavy teaching logs, other baccalaureate institutions in the region do not appear to encounter significant problems in attracting faculty members with doctorates.

This state of affair reflects poorly on both administrators and faculty search committees. Moreover, it potentially constitutes a serious impediment to the future success of UMC as a baccalaureate institution. Only through rigorous procedures and the exercise of the highest academic standards in the selection of new faculty can the future quality and viability of UMC be assured. The Study and Review Committee concluded that, at a minimum, UMC should adhere more stringently to standards of quality and to policies and procedures governing searches and appointments throughout the University of Minnesota. Appropriate and viable models for academic searches and hiring are available from the University's Vice President for Human Resources, who should be asked to consult on the application of those guidelines at UMC. Moreover, the Committee believes that, at this juncture, both the Vice President of Human Resources and the Executive Vice President should give extraordinary attention to the search appointment, and approval practices of UMC.

RECOMMENDATION 6. UMC should develop a general strategy for attracting high-quality faculty to fill open positions, including a plan for supporting the efforts of tenure-track appointees to achieve tenure once they accept positions at UMC.

RECOMMENDATION 7. UMC, in conjunction with the University's Vice President for Human Resources, should establish, communicate, and follow standard procedures for searches to fill all faculty, P&A, and adjunct instructor positions. The campus administration and faculty governance system should

assure the integrity and success of these searches. Beginning immediately, the University's Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Human Resources should give extraordinary attention to the search, appointment, and approval practices pertaining to tenure-track faculty at UMC.

The Study and Review Committee recognizes that, in an institution emphasizing career-oriented baccalaureate degrees, the terminal degrees in some fields may be masters, rather than doctoral degrees. An example is UMC's popular major in equine studies. Recommendations 6 and 7 are not intended to imply those individuals with terminal degrees in these areas and otherwise excellent credentials should not be appointed at UMC. In established disciplines, however, such as economics, biology, and speech-communication, the doctorate is the appropriate degree for tenure-track appointees to campuses of the University of Minnesota.

Reviewing and rationalizing workloads of faculty and academic staff. Faculty today view workload concerns as the source of both current and future problems for UMC. During the Committee's visit to the campus, many faculty members reported that overloads are commonplace and that faculty and staff are growing weary of the pace and amount of work. According to some faculty and staff members, overloads occur more frequently in some program areas than others; and the best, most committed faculty and staff members in those areas are especially at risk. Although their hard work has produced great dividends for the institution, many faculty fear that, having done so well with so few resources for so long, they now have established even higher productivity expectations from the campus administration, expectations they feel unable to meet with current resources.

Excessive workload carry significant implications for the future strength and quality of UMC. Heavy teaching loads permit almost no time for research and scholarly work and also limit opportunities for meaningful outreach. The need for additional assistance to conduct faculty research and scholarly work is further highlighted by the absence of graduate students, who serve as teaching and research assistants at most institutions. Workload-related hiring challenges also affect faculty opportunities for leave or release time, in that few temporary replacement faculty are available in the area, and it is difficult to attract candidates from outside the region. Consequently, many faculty simply forego leaves that might enhance their scholarly growth and potential for contributing effectively to UMC's future. Limited opportunities for research, in turn, make it more difficult for current faculty to earn tenure and promotion and also reduce the attractiveness of UMC for able new Ph.D.'s. These effects culminate in a scenario that impedes the necessary balance of tenure-track faculty, adjunct instructors, and P&A staff members to create the high-quality education environment envisioned at UMC.

Additionally, workload-related issues exacerbate tensions that currently exist because of the different needs of these different groups of academic staff members.

Although the Committee appreciates the complexities and hardships created by the need to offer a wide range of courses and maintain and increase student enrollments at UMC, the Committee favors a systematic approach to addressing workload issues in order to promote intelligent growth at UMC. An essential first step in a thorough review of existing workload for faculty and academic staff, followed by an appraisal of the consistency, or fit, between these and the roles and responsibilities carried by individual faculty and staff members.

RECOMMENDATION 8. Faculty and administration should establish and implement workload policies to address varying workloads among center faculty/staff/administrators and to increase opportunities for research and scholarly work by faculty. A primary goal of these should be reducing any workload inequities existing on the campus.

Campus Governance

Effective campus governance requires both a strong administration and a strong participatory faculty governance system. At UMC, the period since 1992, when the Board of Regents directed UMC to offer selected career-oriented baccalaureate degrees, has been a time of testing for campus governance. Fast-paced decisions were required to meet the benchmark requirements and timetable established by the Board of Regents and Central Administration. A visionary campus administration led these efforts. Top-down decision-making often occurred, and in some instances may have been necessary. For a variety of reason, including faculty inactivity, faculty governance gradually look a back seat to administrative decision-making. Eight years later, faculty and staff participation in campus governance remains markedly lower at UMC than at other campuses of the University of Minnesota. The Study and Review Committee believes that several features of both faculty and administrative governance today threaten to impede UMC's future achievement.

Faculty governance. After a period of minimally active and minimally effective faculty governance, in the fall of 1999, the UMC Campus Assembly formed a Faculty Assembly with the Curriculum Committee reporting to that body. A Faculty Assembly Group met for the first time on March 2, 2000, to formally accept Rules and Bylaws. Some of the standards of effective faculty governance currently are met at UMC; but many others are not. The Study and Review Committee found deep fissures in the faculty with regard to the value of, and the proper forms for, faculty participation in

governance. Many faculty members relayed accounts of inappropriate efforts by a minority of faculty to control the governance structures and decision-making at the expense of other faculty members and academic staff. As a result, suspicion, distrust, and a sense of disenfranchisement unduly burden the key decision-making operations of faculty governance. Among the aspects of campus life affected most strongly and most deleteriously by these conditions are the selection of new faculty and curricular reform. In the Committee's view, this state of affairs represents the single greatest threat to the future potential of UMC to fulfil its mission as a campus of the University of Minnesota.

Meeting those challenges lies largely in the hands of the faculty. Faculty must take responsibility for regularly scheduled Faculty Consultative Committee meetings and Faculty Assembly meetings. These and other faculty committee meetings must be scheduled to maximize participation by elected faculty representative, and behavior that is inconsistent with this principle must be resisted. Decision-making by faculty committees must be open, both to assure fully representative governance and to enhance communication. Faculty Assembly actions should be reported to the Campus Assembly for discussion. Opportunities must be created in decision-making processes for regular review and inputs by students and by academic and student support staff.

Administration must support, and collaborate in, the development of these procedures, in the interest of strengthening the campus to address the challenges of the future. To facilitate consultation with the faculty-staff governance system, the administration should seek to clarify and communicate the division of responsibilities among the various administrative positions from Chancellor and Vice Chancellor to Center Directors and Program Managers. For their part, faculty members should insure that faculty/staff perspectives on the business of the campus are communicated to administration and faculty can effective campus governance be established and maintained.

RECOMMENDATION 9. Faculty and academic staff should design a process to work together in meeting future directions and making decisions, with active support from the administration, should assure its integrity, and should communicate the process of decision-making campus wide.

RECOMMENDATION 10. The Faculty Assembly should establish a strong system of active committees, and each committee should establish and annual program of work with clear goals, tasks, and timetables, and fair, open, participatory procedures and rules of operation.

In addition, although UMC faculty have served faithfully, often with distinction, as representatives of the Consultative Committees and other committees of the University of Minnesota Senate, the Committee detected frequent misunderstanding or lack of awareness of University-wide policies among faculty members at UMC. The Committee urges that the UMC Faculty Assembly foster an effective process for communicating broader University and faculty concerns on their campus.

Administration. Review and appraisal of some aspects of campus administration also are needed. The Committee especially noted possible problems in administrative structure and, in some cases, in administrative decision-making.

Unlike most campuses, UMC is not organized into departments and schools or colleges. Rather, the campus has dispersed academic decision-making across an unusually large cadre of middle-level administrators called Center Directors and Program Managers. This organization was intended to be more responsive to the programmatic innovations as UMC moved from a two-year technical college to an institution specializing in applied, career-oriented baccalaureate education. The Committee, however, is concerned that the fragmentation of a small faculty into so many quasi-managerial units, sometimes consisting of only one regular faculty member, may contribute to less than optimal faculty participation in academic decision-making and may exacerbate inequities in workload and faculty development, as noted in an earlier section of this report. Today, a review of this ad hoc administrative structure should be undertaken to determine whether it is optimal for the challenge of the future, as outlined in this report. The time may be right for a more streamlined and mature administrative structure that would foster greater coherence in decision-making, operations, and participatory governance.

The central administration of the campus has been marked by committed, visionary leadership, especially by the current chancellor and his predecessor. The Study and Review Committee's concerns in crucially important areas such as academic appointments and curriculum imply the need for consistently strong leadership by administrators at other levels of administration, as well. One especially troubling instance in which the effectiveness of some administrators must be questioned is the perceived weakness of recent appointees to tenure-track faculty. Although administrative review is beyond the purview of the Study and Review Committee, the Committee urges that the Chancellor initiate a process of review for those administrators who have not been reviewed in the past five years. Such reviews would be most beneficial if undertaken as quickly as practicable. The Committee recommends that reappointment of administrators be tied to the findings of these reviews.

RECOMMENDATION 11. The Chancellor is urged to initiate performance reviews of administrators as quickly as possible. These reviews should be tied to decisions about reappointment. Standards and procedures for the reviews should be widely communicated, and information from faculty, staff, and students should be included in the review process.

Links to Community and Region

UMC's academic accomplishments and future promise and recommendations to strengthen its faculty and staff provide a strong basis for its correlative mission to establishment links to the community and the region. The Board of Regents mandated that UMC serve as an agent for change in northwestern Minnesota, and the campus had responded with an impressive range of programs and initiatives. For more than a century, the University has served as a major provider of research and knowledge to the region, with UMC playing a major leadership role in partnership with the Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service. The resulting impact on the social and economic welfare of citizens and communities is both recognized and valued.

Today, UMC is uniquely positioned to advance an aggressive strategy to better connect the University to the community and region. The campus has the historical underpinnings and future vision to act as a catalyst for connecting information with opportunity, thereby creating jobs, producing income, and serving the public good. Focus is on the region, but by maximizing the use of modern technology, the strategy can be global.

Three aspects of UMC's contemporary linkages throughout the region and the state contribute to the impact of the campus: its career-oriented baccalaureate programs; its partnerships with other institutions in the region; and its role in economic development activities in northwestern Minnesota.

Career-oriented baccalaureate degree programs. Career-oriented baccalaureate programs necessitate new standards for, and processes of, evaluation. UMC works with 18 Program Improvement Audit Committees to aid the implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of each academic program. Committee members include representatives from business, industry, educational, government, health care, and a variety of other related agencies and organizations.

Partnerships with other post-secondary institutions. Partnerships are essential for addressing the higher education and workforce development in this region. University Libraries, on the Twin Cities campus, have excellent partnerships with the coordinate campuses. UMC has received great deal of support from Disability Services in the Twin Cities. UMC continues to have strong collaboration agreements with Northwest Technical College in East Grand Forks and Bemidji State University.

Partnerships for economic development and application. Rural Minnesota is in the midst of a major transition, and trend lines suggest that the challenges in NW Minnesota are uncompromising. A continuing population decline affects businesses, schools, government, and all aspects of rural life. Twentieth century approaches are not enough. New approaches to science and technology are needed. UMC is in a position to advance new approaches, forge new relationships, and build civic capacity.

Since 1992, UMC has expanded partnerships internally through a variety of partnerships with University collegiate units and externally through collaboration with other institutions of higher education, local governments, state agencies, and new ventures. The Campus is home to the Agricultural Utilization and Research Institute, the Red River Trade Council, the Valley Venture Park, and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, to cite a few examples.

Recently, with the support of private donor funds, UMC has launched a new Rural Development initiative to respond to contemporary challenges facing the region. And, legislative funding has been provided to support a two-year effort to organize a health care alliance in response to the particular challenges facing health care providers and the families and communities they serve. These are but two examples of how new outreach initiatives are building on the University's academic and civic foundation.

Some Challenges for the Future

Links to community and region are more clearly integral to the academic programs of UMC than is true of most institutions of higher education. The potential advantages of this unusual circumstance are great. Rather than make specific recommendations about how best to realize this potential, the Committee recommends that the faculty, staff, and administration establish collaborative mechanisms for the most effective means of addressing each of the follow:

- Improving the process for gathering and assessing employer feedback, and using that feedback to inform curriculum development and other initiatives to enhance the student experience and meet employer needs. The career center and an appointed assessment group should work together to develop an assessment measure.
- Designing and testing new models for new program development to use with existing programs/curriculum. For example, when designing the new Rural Development Initiative, there should be an assessment of hiring practices, employer input, and faculty/staff mix. Newly created guiding principles established by the Faculty Assembly to prioritize programs could be used.

- Building on service learning initiatives that connect students with workplace and the community. UMC may wish to draw upon existing service learning models from other institutions in this endeavor.
- Strengthening interdisciplinary education to be a major emphasis in the next five years.
- Increasing partnerships with other campuses/colleges/departments within the University of Minnesota, including the Experiment Station and Outreach Centers.

Toward the Future at UMC

The Crookston Study and Review Committee concludes its work with optimism that the innovations of the recent past have established a foundation for UMC's continuing efforts to be a distinctive and significant campus of the University of Minnesota and a positive force for education and development in rural northwestern Minnesota. In many respects its future challenges are not unlike those of many other institutions: continuing to build and support a strong complement of faculty and students, maintaining its strong programs and renewing itself in areas now weak or increasingly outmoded, planning for optimum use of scarce resources, and infusing its community and region with the intellectual and economic energy. These challenges are unlikely to be met at UMC, however, until campus governance becomes more effective. Particularly urgent is the need for a successful system of faculty governance marked by collaborative, fair, open, and inclusive decision-making. The recommendation offered here are intended to promote the earliest possible efforts to strengthen the governance system and to apply it to the advancement of the campus and the great institution of which UMC is an integral part.

Appendix A
Board of Regents Benchmarks (November 13, 1992)

ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

- FYE enrollment increased by approximately 7% each year to 1,165 FYE by FY97.
- Headcount enrollment increased by approximately 3% each year to attain 1,533 by FY97.
- Approximately 400 new high school admits and 100 transfer students enrolled annually by FY97.
- Student retention rate of 60% freshman to sophomore, 50% to junior, and 40% to senior status respectively by FY97.
- 90% of graduate seeking employment are employed in career-related fields within one year of graduation.

QUALITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Academic program improvement audit committees established by Fall 1993 to review programs and courses on a three-year cycle.
- Learner outcomes established for all courses and programs by Fall 1994 and multiple measurements implemented by Fall 1995.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

- UMC cooperative AAS programs with technical colleges expanded to serve more than 500 technical college students annually by FY97.
- Cooperative agreements established to receive/deliver a total of 50 courses annually within the University, Bemidji State University, Moorhead State University, the University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University, and Concordia by FY97.
- Bemidji State University, Moorhead State University, and the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities will offer extended programs on UMC campus by FY97.
- Fifteen business-contracted agreements annually with area employers for delivery of continuing education and outreach.
- Ten articulation program agreements established with technical and community colleges to insure appropriate transfer of student credits into UMC programs by FY97.

INCORPORATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Computer technology incorporated in all courses and documented in the college bulletin and course syllabi.

Appendix B
Materials Reviewed by the Study and Review Committee.

- (1) NCA Visit Outline
- (2) UMC Compact 1999-00
- (3) UMC Compact 1998-99
- (4) UMC Benchmarks from 1992 when it was established as a Polytechnic University
- (5) 1999 Audit report
- (6) “Bradl report” of proposed academic appointment policies and practices
- (7) UMC 1999 Faculty Assembly Rules and Bylaws; and the UMC 1999 Faculty Constitution
- (8) Charges and Documentation Table
- (9) Crookston Detailed Project Plan
- (10) September FCC minutes regarding UMC
- (11) UMN Position Report
- (12) UMN Rules and Bylaws of Faculty Assembly 3.03.00
- (13) UMC Chancellor Address to Faculty Assembly 3.03.00
- (14) Sabbatical Leave Policy and Use
- (15) UMC Organizational Chart
- (16) Report to the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, March 27&28
- (17) UMC Fiscal spreadsheets prepared by Carole Fleck and Dean McCleary
- (18) Phone Exit Interview Documentation
- (19) Program Improvement Audit Committee Guide
- (20) Graduate Follow-up and Placement Reports 1996-98
- (21) Crookston Study and Review Committee Contact List
- (22) Crookston Study and Site Visit Analysis
- (23) Schedule for Crookston Site Visit
- (24) Crookston Site Visit Framing Questions

Appendix C
Question Addressed in Site Visit - April 10, 2000

General Questions:

- 1) In your view, what are the 2-3 biggest accomplishments in the last five years at UMC?
- 2) In your view, what are the 2-3 most pressing issues facing UMC?

Governance:

- 1) What do you believe to be the issues at UMC with regard to governance and representation?
- 2) Regarding the various kinds of appointments used at UMC, what do you think is the impact of those on voice, input, governance, access to administration, and access to decision-making structures?

Mission:

- 1) How is UMC's need and desire to hire more tenure-track faculty to meet its polytechnic baccalaureate mission balanced against the need to retain sufficient flexibility to respond to the needs of the region?
- 2) Under the current circumstance, to what degree does the campus have the resources to carry out the mission? (Follow-up: where are the gaps?)

Instruction:

- 1) What is the process for evaluating and proposing academic directions? Does the process seem to work? What changes would you propose in the process?
- 2) If you could make one or two changes in the current academic personnel area, what would they be?