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August 15, 1975

Report to the University Community

Subject: Special programs for minority students

After studying many recommendations--often conflicting, but presented with passion and eloquence--I have decided on the following course of action with respect to our special programs for minority students (including whites from a low income background):

- 1) The responsibility for leadership and coordination of the University's efforts on behalf of these students will be assumed by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.
- 2) The administrative sub-structure known as EOS, which has been headed by a coordinator in the student services area, will be dismantled as rapidly as practical.
- 3) Persons responsible for admissions and financial aid for these students will be transferred to the appropriate administrative offices, but with job descriptions which specifically direct their efforts to the minority populations. Fiscal and performance audits can thus test for the proper use of resources allocated for the respective programs.
- 4) The Center for Self Development (originally called the Study Skills Center) will be transferred from the College of Education to the College of Liberal Arts. Deans Baldwin and Bowlin can consider whether that service should be combined with the Learning Resources Center, which appears to have a similar mission for a larger student population.
- 5) The cultural centers will not be reopened in the fall. Instead, the directors will be invited to work within the program in other capacities for the remainder of their terms. This decision will certainly cause distress in some quarters, and I regret the disappointment it will occasion. Nonetheless, having listened to virtually all staff members who have been working in the EOS program, I am convinced the decision is educationally necessary, however politically difficult it may be. The only alternative

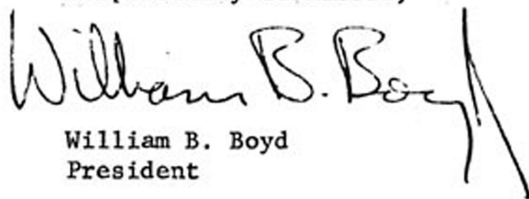
would be to staff the Centers more adequately, so that the quality of services offered could be brought up to acceptable University standards. To do that would require the commitment of additional funds to support activities. That would preclude the needed diversion of monies and human energy from administrative services to academic concerns.

That shift in emphasis is the principal goal and should be the principal consequence of the changes which are now being made. The desirability of such a re-orientation was perhaps the one common theme in the diverse recommendations which have been made to this office. Resources which are freed by these changes will be put to that end under Dean Baldwin's direction.

Every effort will be made to help minority students achieve success in the regular curriculum of the University. This will require wise recruitment of students, sensitive response to their needs by faculty and administrators, courses or tutorial help to compensate for deficient skills in language and mathematics, and some broadening of our curriculum to complement the interests of an increasingly diverse student body.

Even before this announcement could be made public, these changes have brought protests from persons who criticize the process as violating tenets of participatory democracy. In response, it should be noted that hundreds of human hours of consultation have led to these decisions. The process was not perfect, and it was not democratic in the sense that a vote was taken to determine a majority view, but it was in accord with decent academic traditions of consultation and deliberation. The substance of the changes should improve the quality of this University's response to the educational needs of its students. That is what our efforts are all about.

Respectfully submitted,



William B. Boyd
President

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