

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR STANFORD FACULTY

Prepared by the Faculty Political Action Group

The following statement concerning University policies has been prepared by an ad hoc group of faculty, some of whose names appear below. Its purpose is to initiate discussion and change in the University. The ideas and proposals are viewed as stimuli to discussion rather than finished conclusions.

A series of open discussions concerning the proposals will be organized. The first will be on "University relations with the community", and will be announced shortly. Students, staff, faculty and citizens from the community will be invited. It is hoped they will join in cooperative projects resulting from the discussions.

The proposals derive from numerous discussions with many faculty in the past 10 months. Most of the participants and signatories have reservations about some portions of the document. The group as a whole has functioned as the "Faculty Political Action Group (FPAG)", a name which is likely to be changed.

Pending more formal organization, persons interested in joining the work should contact FPAG, Room 71D, Inner Quad.

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BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Knowledge is the product of centuries of man's experiences, work and thought. It is the heritage of all people.
2. The social utility of knowledge is: a) to permit man to understand himself and his surroundings and b) to enable man to better his life and those of others.
3. Knowledge, in that sense, is not a private possession of those who have attained it. The responsibility of those who deal with knowledge transcends the creation and refinement of knowledge; it includes also the transmission of knowledge to all who wish and need it.
4. Because knowledge is a distillate of experience and perception, it cannot thrive or develop in isolation from the society from which it is derived. In general, those who seek to develop knowledge relate it to the specific experiences of man. Furthermore, teachers who are good at transmitting knowledge to others are usually sufficiently close to them to perceive their problems and needs. These teachers understand the purposes to which knowledge will be used and therefore to which it must pertain. Their own understanding of knowledge is deepened and enlarged by the interaction with the learner.

5. Political and social democracy require access of all citizens to knowledge lest it become the basis for power and privilege of a few. Particularly when technological knowledge changes rapidly and new experiences are being gained continuously, all citizens, not just youth, need continuous access to knowledge as it develops.

II. CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE IDEAL UNIVERSITY

1. The university is the site for learning of the known, creation of new knowledge, and contributions to the improvement of the general welfare. Its interests concern whatever influences or emanates from man. Its studies range from the most abstract to the very practical. It perceives scholarly inquiry and research as essential to the education of both the teacher and the student. It strives to make its knowledge available to all who want it. The university is an innovative force and instrument for social change through the education it imparts, the subjects it chooses to research, and the products of that research.
2. As the site where the young with their aspirations, the cumulative knowledge of mankind, and the exploration of the unknown all converge, a university is a place of ferment. Refinement and change of both thought and practice are its currency. Perhaps as much as any other social institution it cultivates change. The ideal university organizes itself to facilitate the emergence and examination of the new, not only in external subject matter but also in its own internal structure and practices. Thereby, as an institution, it exemplifies its intellectual values.
3. The desired relationship between students and faculty is that of partnership. Though they usually differ in age and experience, the differences are less than the similarities -- shared experiences of the moment, search for understanding, and participation in the emergence of the new. In the ideal teaching-learning relationship, each participant is both learner and teacher. The structure and function of the university should reflect this mutual dependence.
4. It is the responsibility of the university to contribute to society's knowledge and understanding. Society provides the university with material support and with the academic freedom which is necessary for the faculty and students to pursue knowledge wherever it may lead. Academic freedom assures society's right to learn. At times this contract is challenged by those outside the university who no longer wish to hear the new or the critical, or by those inside the university who wish to isolate themselves from surrounding society. The contract between the university and its parent society is a political contract. The ideal university strives to strengthen and defend that contract by changing and improving itself, and by persuading new generations of citizens of the value of the contract.

III. CURRENT PROBLEMS

In recent years, universities, including Stanford, have significantly failed to exemplify these ideals.

1. Despite their oft-proclaimed neutrality they have exhibited a striking partisanship. Curricula in the past have omitted study and teaching of such important

areas as: the history, culture and movements of minority, worker and farmer groups; social bases of urban development, decay and renovation; environmental biology and preservation; racism and its impact on political and economic democracy; social implications of technological development; international economics as it relates to national independence, national liberation, and the exploitative relationship between developed and underdeveloped countries; strategies of development of peace-time economies. Research programs have been conditioned as much by available funds as by the importance of subjects. Highly selective admission policies have favored the well-to-do white and resulted in socially unrepresentative student bodies. Governing boards have been unrepresentative of society at large as well as of the university community.

2. By denying institutional social responsibility, by studying and teaching only selected aspects of man's relationship to man and his social development, and by developing projects which secure available research funds rather than assuring a full breadth of research programs, universities have been increasingly associated with particular policies of government, especially with foreign intervention and war. Thereby universities have contributed to the exploitation of some by others and to the neglect of pressing social needs. The dispassionate pursuit of understanding and truth have receded in favor of acceptance of prevailing political concepts and sources of funds.
3. As universities have pursued socially partisan roles, they have become more and more isolated from their surrounding communities. This is exemplified at Stanford, which has for some time served a "national constituency." In doing so, it has denied many capable youth from mid-California access to its facilities. Its research projects, which provide important financial support for the university, neglect the problems and needs of mid-California. The academic interests of its teachers, and hence its curriculum, do not reflect sufficiently broad social concern. Consequently, as Stanford has grown in national prestige in the last 20 years, it has become simultaneously more and more isolated politically, educationally, and financially from its immediate community, neither serving it nor supported by it.
4. Nowhere have university failures been more apparent than in relation to the war in Vietnam. The universities have been significant contributors to the war through direct and indirect military research. They have established and maintained scholarly programs which encompass covert projects of military and political intervention in Vietnam and other countries. Faculty and trustees have been both advisors to the war effort and financial beneficiaries of it. These actions have associated the university with the degradation of the nation's political and moral integrity resulting from prosecution of the war, and have exposed the universities' most partisan nature. These, more than any other actions, have contributed to the destruction of the concept of the university as an "ivory tower."

When many students and some faculty protested, the universities first denied their responsibility and then sought to punish the protestors. Politicians fanned the flames of enmity for personal political benefit. Police, militia, and gas were deployed. Then students were killed. Now mutual violence has supervened, further threatening political liberties, academic freedom, and the university functions.

Protestors have been accused of politicizing the university. Yet participation in military research and war projects is in itself a politicization of the university at least as substantial as protests against the war.

5. Many students, perceptive of the gulf between proclaimed university goals and actual performance, have become cynical and hostile. Some faculty, identifying themselves with current university policies, have become defensive and rigid. Others, recognizing their own culpability, have become pessimistic and withdrawn. Many, pursuing their own interests, remain uninvolved. University administrations have tended to adopt both denial and repression as the institutional response to challenge by students and faculty. In many ways, challenge itself has been considered subversion and the challengers, whether student, faculty, or citizen, have become enemies. As a result, universities often drift, divided and beset by quarrelling.

IV. PROPOSALS

The University is in serious crisis. The current course of events promises persistence of the bias in University programs, possibly diminished support of the University, and increased repression on campus. We do not desire this outcome. We seek instead a University which is an exciting place of learning for both students and faculty, where real issues confronting society are addressed and clarified, and where students and faculty generate mutual allegiance, enthusiasm and momentum. To achieve this at Stanford fundamental change is necessary, change in student body and faculty, in governance, in curriculum, and in research policy. This change requires redefinition of our intellectual and social responsibilities and an expansion of our attention and our activities to the community in which Stanford exists.

To accomplish this change, the following proposals are made. In making these suggestions, we intend that the creative capabilities of the faculty, student body and staff be more effectively harnessed, that scholarship be extended to a broader range of subjects, and that Stanford's personnel and programs be effectively related to the people and problems of central California.

A. Criteria for Admission to the University and Utilization of University Facilities

The inquiring mind can learn in almost any environment; learning is only in part a product of formal education. Excellence in performance and contributions to society are as much related to perception, imagination and skill in new situations as to the application of accepted practices in standard situations. Specifically, there is no consistent correlation between excellence in contributions to society and social or economic status. Recent experience with students from minority groups establishes that educationally disadvantaged individuals can do well in the university environment. Therefore it is proposed that:

- 1) Stanford University admit an increasing proportion of young people of diverse backgrounds particularly from the Bay Area and central California who have demonstrated motivation, talent, independent critical capacity and leadership capability.
- 2) Admission requirements be redesigned for better identification of creativity and independence of applicants.

- 3) New methods for financing education be explored, such as graded tuition, payment of educational costs out of subsequent earnings, and governmental vouchers, to provide support for economically disadvantaged students.
- 4) Special assistance programs be expanded and conducted by both faculty and students to compensate for shortcomings of students in formal educational preparation.

The rapid development and obsolescence of technical and scientific knowledge, the impact of this knowledge on social organization, and the need to change substantial segments of society, require that opportunities for higher education no longer be restricted primarily to the young. All citizens can benefit from recurrent opportunities for humanistic study and/or revitalization of their technical, professional and general skills. Therefore it is proposed that:

Stanford develop a program of continuing adult education open to citizens of any age which will permit these individuals to enter and leave the school for periods of time compatible with their normal occupations. These individuals should not be segregated into special continuation programs but rather integrated into the regular courses which will then serve full-time and part-time students of different ages and backgrounds.

Education in certain disciplines may suffer from isolation in the environment of the university. Conversely, if conducted in the community to which it applies, education can be substantially enriched and also demonstrate its usefulness to people not hitherto involved. Therefore it is proposed that:

In order to provide special knowledge and skills to the community at large and to derive ideas for its education and research programs, the University organize teaching programs in the community of mid-California which will bring faculty and students into schools, factories, hospitals, community governments, etc., to contribute to and learn from the work of these bodies. This decentralized program would be the reciprocal of the opening of the University to citizens, and would facilitate a continuous flow of people and ideas between the community and the University.

The shortage of certain educational facilities and the limited availability of other specialized installations make it desirable that the greatest possible use and benefit be derived from those which exist. It is proposed that:

Buildings and other facilities of the University be used for educational programs during the evening as well as the day. This would allow a larger number of individuals to benefit from the University and permit a broader group of curricular offerings.

B. Curriculum

Two important characteristics of curriculum are breadth of subject matter and quality of offerings. Courses at Stanford are generally of high calibre. However, in terms of the aforementioned needs and problems of society, the breadth of the curriculum is

sharply limited. The extension of scholarly study into new and socially important areas, currently neglected, and the expansion of the curriculum which would flow therefrom, would be in the best traditions of scholarly and educational innovation. It would probably also create more diverse career opportunities for students. It is proposed that:

- 1) A University Curriculum Study Committee composed of students, faculty, administration, and representatives of different community groups in the mid-California area be established to suggest ways in which the curriculum could be broadened to reflect the problems and needs of the community.
- 2) The University establish a mechanism to explore means of supporting and facilitating teaching and research by faculty and students in the new curricular areas.

Good learning is in significant part self-learning. Familiarity with the application of knowledge to practical problems greatly enhances an individual's understanding of a discipline. Frequently excellent ideas about methods of learning emerge from the practical experiences of individuals in their disciplines. This concept, ancient in vintage, has long been practiced to some degree by professional schools and some undergraduate programs. Its wider applicability would be both natural and highly desirable in the context of the suggested new community orientation for Stanford. It is proposed that:

The concept of course work be substantially broadened to include reading, research and contemplation at Stanford plus practical field work in the surrounding community.

C. Governance of the University

Governing bodies of the University should reflect and represent the composition of the University. In general, members of governing bodies should be selected by the governed constituency and not be self-appointed. The diversity of individuals involved in University function should be reflected in governing bodies; this will assist in assuring maximum access of new ideas concerning University policy and thus enlarging the array of available alternatives. The staff of the University should be appropriately represented within the governing councils of the University wherever policy influences the staff. It is proposed that:

- 1) The staff shall be organized into a representative organization similar to the Senates of student and faculty and a coordinating committee between the three bodies shall be established.
- 2) The trustees shall be considered to be a community supervising and overseeing body. They shall be re-organized to be representative of the different components of the mid-California community; thus their composition will include not only some who are associated with business and industry but also educators, trade unionists, local government officials, agricultural workers, and minority representatives with substantially increased proportions of youth and women.

- 3) The new Board of Trustees shall have representatives participating in the three Senates in the University, and conversely these bodies shall have permanent representatives to the trustees.
- 4) An alternative to the above proposals should be carefully examined. The alternative is organization of a form of municipal government for the University community. As the University has grown in population, activities and influence upon the community, policy decisions of a classical institutional nature become political decisions of great importance for the University community. It has become more important to create a local government which derives from the consent of the governed and which guarantees the basic rights of all citizens to members of the University community. It would therefore be wise to consider separating community government from academic government. Community government would represent students, faculty, staff and residents of the Stanford community and could assume legal and other governmental functions of a non-academic nature. This would remove an unwieldy burden from the trustees and University administration and prevent instances of conflict of interests.

Problems encountered in democratic self-government systems include lack of participation by a significant number of constituents, a tendency of some individuals to hold multiple positions, and thus a tendency toward homogeneity of ideas. A mechanism is needed which will provide a continuous source of representatives who enter the governmental system without prior commitment and obligation of a political nature and who will steadily enlarge participation in governance by a constituency. It is proposed that:

- 1) Representatives to University governing bodies be selected by two mechanisms. The first will be standard election techniques which will provide a majority of representatives in any given body. The second will be a lottery which will select a few representatives at random from the entire constituency.
- 2) No individual member of this faculty will hold more than one major elected post or one appointment to a major governing body at any given time.

C. Research Policy

Scholarly research is an essential component of development of knowledge and of an educational system. Research broadens understanding and is one of the central means whereby a university can benefit society. The intent of research programs derives both from the interests of scholars and from the needs of society. An appropriate university research policy safeguards the right of individual faculty and students to study in a scholarly way that which interests them and ensures that the needs of society, as understood by the University community, are introduced into the patterns of research. In the past, Stanford research policy has adequately accomplished the first goal of freedom for scholarly inquiry but has very inadequately reflected the pressing issues confronting society. Examples of neglected areas have already been

indicated (Section III, paragraph 1). It is the responsibility of this University to seek and define new research programs which will redress the existing imbalance, to develop alternative support for new programs through both public and private sources, and to use new programs as examples to persuade the Federal Government to broaden its support of research programs derived from local and regional needs. It is therefore proposed that:

- 1) The University Research Committee shall be enlarged through the addition of faculty and students from each major discipline and shall be charged specifically with the responsibility of developing new research programs. While University departments themselves shall retain ultimate authority to accept or reject new programs and to hire needed faculty, the Research Committee shall serve as a development arm and public forum for both general and specific proposals within the University.
- 2) The University Research Committee shall appoint a series of Citizen Advisory Councils consisting of individuals from the community who could contribute most to the design and implementation of research programs at Stanford.
- 3) The Research Committee shall be informed of all existing and new research programs within the University, shall make this information publicly available, and shall have the authority to make proposals concerning modification of existing and development of new plans. However, the Research Committee shall not have veto authority over programs or proposals of individual faculty members or departments.
- 4) Stanford University, through the Research Committee, shall work with other universities and citizens' groups at the local and national level to accomplish an alteration of national priorities so that social needs will achieve greater attention, to assign responsibility for scientific and social research away from the military into other governmental agencies, and to extend the practice of review of research proposals by peer groups to these other agencies.
- 5) The University Research Committee shall re-examine the desirability of establishing or supporting a separate research institute to conduct applied research on social problems. Advantages of such a separate institution would include easier participation of non-University personnel in such research and development programs and would reduce the needs for the University to expand its regular faculty to accomplish some of the research goals.