

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

*Regents' Commission*

ON THE URBAN UNIVERSITY OF THE 70's

September 30, 1970

**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
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**Report of the**

***Regents' Commission***  
**ON THE URBAN UNIVERSITY OF THE 70's**

**The Commission**

This is the final report of the Regents' Commission on the Urban University of the 70's. It represents the findings and recommendations of a "blue ribbon" Commission of Nebraskans, whose names appear at the end of the report, established by the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska in March, 1970.

**Omaha, Nebraska**

September 30, 1970

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## PREFACE

### **Purpose of the Regents' Commission**

The Regents' Commission on the Urban University of the 1970s was established by an act of the Regents at its March 1970 meeting, with Mr. Willis Strauss named as chairman. Its membership consisted of more than 140 persons (a full list of whom is included as Appendix A to this report) drawn from the legislature, the Regents, business, agriculture, commerce, the community, and the university (students, faculty, and administrators). The Commission accepted as its primary purpose the examination of the appropriate role of the University of Nebraska at Omaha as an urban university in the decade of the 1970s. To fulfill this purpose, the Commission accepted the responsibility to recommend specific educational philosophies and programs which it believes should be incorporated into the mission of UNO.

In the process of this study, the Commission has identified many of the needs of the community and state, it has examined the present programs of UNO, and it has made recommendations concerning the most crucial areas to which it believes UNO resources should be devoted in the future. Although some precise areas of concern and potential activity for UNO have been identified, the Commission believes it is inappropriate in this report to set out in detail particular academic programs, the exact amount of funding that would be required, and other technical matters. Such detailed plans must be developed by the university and the Regents, assisted and supported by concerned and interested citizens.

### **Organization and Work of the Commission**

Meetings of the full Commission were held on four occasions: on May 16, on June 23, on September 2, and on September 30. To expedite its deliberations, the Commission was divided into four subcommittees: one on Urban Education, another on the Urban Economy, a third on Manpower and Professional Personnel Development and Continuing Education, and a fourth on Urban Organization, the Environment and Social Problems. Staffing of the subcommittees consisted of a local citizen as chairman, a member of the UNO staff, and an outside consultant. The staff members were as follows:

1. Urban Education—

Mr. Robert M. Spire, Chairman  
Dr. Paul Kennedy, UNO Staff  
Dr. Hubert Locke, Consultant, Franklin Professor of Human Relations, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan

2. Urban Economy—

Dr. Randall Klemme, Chairman  
Dr. Elroy Steele, UNO Staff  
Dr. David Brown, Consultant, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Provost, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

3. Manpower and Professional Personnel Development and Continuing Education—

Mr. Frank Starr, Chairman  
Mr. William Utley, UNO Staff  
Dr. Norman Auburn, Consultant, President, University of Akron, Akron, Ohio

4. Urban Organization, the Environment and Social Problems—

Mr. Robert E. Runice, Chairman  
Dr. John Nye, UNO Staff  
Mr. Homer C. Wadsworth, Consultant, President, Kansas City Association of Trusts and Foundations, Kansas City, Missouri

The chief consultant who was given the responsibility for the preparation of the Commission's final report was Dr. Kenneth D. Roose, most recently Vice President, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

The work of each subcommittee was carried out through a series of meetings, through interviewing conducted by the committee chairmen and the consultants, and by the receipt of numerous letters, memoranda, and comments from Commission members and others in the community. The subcommittee reports reflect a distillation of views and attitudes expressed through the several meetings. The committees benefited enormously from the candid and open participation of their members. Although no efforts were made, nor should there ever be,

to impose any set of views upon committee members, there was a surprising amount of agreement over the general mission and direction of the university.

The final report of the Commission draws heavily upon the subcommittee reports. The chief consultant, however, was given complete freedom by the Commission to make selective use of the recommendations in the subcommittee reports and, if he wished, to offer additional points which he regarded as critical to the UNO development. Although all the recommendations may not have unanimous endorsement, nevertheless, they convey the sense of the committee deliberations and reflect faithfully many concerns of the Commission members, and the emphases which most agree should have the top priorities.

### Acknowledgments

As the chief consultant responsible for the preparation of this final report, I want to express my warmest thanks to the many people and groups that cooperated so fully in this study. Thanks first of all are due to the members of the Commission who gave so generously of their time. Special acknowledgment also should be made of the work of Mr. Strauss, the chairman of the Commission, and the subcommittee chairmen, Dr. Klemme, Mr. Runice, Mr. Spire, and Mr. Starr, who went far beyond the call of duty to demonstrate their whole-hearted dedication to service to the community and to the ideals of the city. President Naylor, the staff, faculty, and students of the university, too, were most open and cooperative in assisting the Commission in its task. The outside consultants also proved to be ideally suited to their assignments. Finally, appreciation must go to the Regents and to Chancellor Varner of the University of Nebraska who conceived the idea, supported the endeavor with enthusiasm, and encouraged the Commission to be imaginative and completely candid in making recommendations about the mission of UNO.

Kenneth D. Roose  
Chief Consultant

September 30, 1970

**REPORT OF THE REGENTS' COMMISSION  
ON THE  
URBAN UNIVERSITY OF THE 1970's**

**September 30, 1970**

**Chapter I**

**THE MISSION OF THE URBAN UNIVERSITY**

Nebraska has a new state university, the university system has a new chancellor, and the city of Omaha has a new self-awareness and vitality. At the same time, higher education is experiencing new pressures, new attitudes, and new demands. The appointment of the broadly representative Regents' Commission on the University of Nebraska at Omaha is a potentially productive response to this context of change. To understand the exciting opportunities confronting UNO, consideration must first be given to the general role of a quality university, then to the particular role of the urban university, and finally to the current status of UNO's present relationship to the urban society.

**1. General Role of a University**

Institutions of higher education were created to serve the broad needs of society. They share with other institutions the responsibility for passing on traditions, for stimulating curiosity of students, and for developing skills and life values of the young. They share with other institutions a dedicated concern for improving the quality of life through philanthropic, welfare, and social services. They share with other institutions the task of providing entertainment and cultural enrichment in the surrounding community. And they share with other institutions the obligation of discovering new knowledge and advancing technological and human understanding. In addition, institutions of higher education act to "sort and screen" manpower, and to continue intellectual stimulation, particularly among students, but also generally throughout the community. Finally, in a



unique way, these institutions provide a forum for social critics who constantly question established values and experiment with fresh emphases and emerging concepts that may improve the lot of man.

A **university** is a particular type of "institution of higher education." Where the college is analogous to a specialty shop, the university resembles a department store. The college, while specializing in one or two missions, almost always concentrates on educating high school graduates in generally recognized academic programs. The university, however, is far more inclusive. It is a pluralistic institution with many missions. Students may receive the liberal arts education so often associated with the college, but they may also receive technical training (e.g., that of an electronic data technician—often associated with general colleges), professional training (e.g., legal, medical, engineering), adult and continuing education, etc. The distinctive characteristic of the university is that it offers many specialties and emphases. Unity is achieved by inclusion, not exclusion.

To reiterate, the primary purposes of universities are to provide environments in which learning can take place and to be centers for those who conserve and extend knowledge in all fields. Clearly, these primary purposes deserve the priority of attention that they customarily receive. If a university is not chiefly concerned with producing young people who are both liberally educated and adequately prepared for a useful vocational purpose, it is really not a university in the accepted sense of the term. It is when we accept these purposes as central and go beyond them to determine what particular purposes a university may serve in any given setting that we encounter the real difficulties involved in suggesting the role of a university in the urban community.

## 2. Particular Role of an Urban University

The main thrust of the Regents' Commission is to isolate those aspects of UNO development especially calculated to enable the university to be of maximum service to the community of which it is a part. The provision of such a role for the urban university always depends upon two main considerations: the state of affairs in the community as such and the capability of the university to respond, within the range of its mission as an educational institution, to the particular set of problems that at any given time are of major concern to citizens. While conditions vary a great deal in American cities,

and those of medium size have far less to concern them than our overgrown and thoroughly disorganized large cities, the fact remains that the urban condition is the future lot of perhaps three-fourths of all Americans who are now of college age or younger. Although most of the students at UNO may not live out their lives in Omaha—simply because as a mobile people about 20 per cent of us change our addresses annually—it is all too likely that they will live and work in an urban area.

In spite of the considerable literature on the role of an urban university, it remains largely true that universities are not able to be as precise as all might wish in determining their own unique role in the urban scene. The phrase "urban university" implies a university responsive to the needs of its socio-economic surroundings that draws upon all pertinent resources. An institution aware of its role in the societal mission of achieving a better life for all, it is concerned more with society's welfare than with its own self-preservation. It is also an institution that behaves responsibly in relationship to its ecology. At the same time the Commission is mindful of the fact that universities and their personnel cannot solve all of a community's problems. Consequently, in the recommendations that eventually follow in this report, the Commission stresses the desirability of the university being selective in its response to community needs. This requires an honest and accurate estimate of community needs as well as a careful assessment of the current areas of strength in the UNO programs. In connection with this latter objective, the Commission was pleased to note the extent of the university's current contribution to the community.

## 3. UNO's Present Involvement in Urban Affairs

First, instructional activity at UNO has been responsive to the city. Appendix B, attached to this report, includes sample titles from among the more than 100 courses directly related to urban affairs.

Second, the university has founded numerous programs, projects, and institutes to facilitate and strengthen the relationship between university and community. A primary agency is the Center for Urban Affairs, which is the overall coordinating body that carries on the work of the Data Bank Information Center, sponsors the undergraduate major in urban affairs, compiles inventories of urban-related activities, and generates plans for new community programs. Another primary agency is the College of Continuing Studies. It coordinates a very extensive evening educational program, sponsors numerous not-

for-credit institutes for groups such as the Volunteer Bureau, administers the Department of Law Enforcement and Corrections, and generally makes the consultative skills of the UNO faculty available to agencies and groups within the community. The Center for Urban Education within the College of Education also sponsors such programs as "Counseling in Urban Programs," "Teachers Corps," "Social Work Extended Education Program," and "Urban Education." Related to the work of this center, too, is the Institute for Economic Education. Appendix B includes a list of selected research projects of the university that constitute a valuable resource to the community.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha is making special efforts to recruit minority and disadvantaged students and to facilitate their attendance. University recruiters have gone into the high schools and communities in the disadvantaged areas of Omaha and explained the programs available. Despite this effort, the university recognizes that more intensive measures need to be taken if minority and disadvantaged students are to participate fully in the opportunities offered by higher education.

Another noteworthy fact about the university is that over half of the students enrolled at UNO are helping to pay their way through school by full-time or near full-time employment. The university even now is providing a broad range of degree programs that responds to the needs of students desiring a general program in liberal arts as well as the students desiring professional training, often through the master's level.

This quick survey of UNO programs illustrates the extent of the current commitment of the university to its community and to its society. The Commission commends the University of Nebraska at Omaha for having a headstart on other urban-located universities that are only now recognizing the potential of the learning laboratories in their own immediate environments. As will become evident below, however, the Commission strongly believes that UNO should strive harder to become even more a quality **urban university**.

The remainder of this report is devoted to the Commission's recommendations concerning the future role of UNO and to the factors influencing the judgments of the Commission in formulating these specific recommendations. Chapter II presents some basic premises and the educational philosophy guiding the Commission. Chapter III comments on environmental factors that limit and condition the functioning of UNO. And, finally, Chapter IV contains the Commission's recommendations.

## BASIC PREMISES AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY GUIDING THE COMMISSION

The Commission was guided by a concern that present programs should be improved and that new supportive programs of high quality should be developed. It also fully supports the University and the Regents in maintaining and extending the University as an equal opportunity employer in conformance with federal statutes.

### 1. Basic Premises

#### A. Recognition of Current Quality

As Chapter I points out, UNO now has effective academic programs, and within its limited financial resources has already established many programs of relevance to the urban community and the state. In the moves to strengthen the university that lie ahead, due recognition should be given, therefore, to the contributions of current programs.

#### B. The Critical Need for More Resources and Their Effective Application

UNO shares with other institutions of higher learning the two critical problems of obtaining and appropriately allocating financial resources. The Commission, although seeking the best for and from UNO, recognizes that resources necessarily are limited. Thus, it is unrealistic for the Commission to make recommendations which would go far beyond any reasonable possibility of implementation. Consequently, although the Commission has studied and proposed many matters of concern for UNO, it has felt compelled to be selective in its final recommendations.

#### C. Limits Upon What Any Urban University Can Do Or Be

UNO cannot be all things to all people, nor should it try to be. Its primary function should continue to be to provide effective education at reasonable cost for a student body residing primarily in eastern Nebraska and consisting chiefly of persons who choose for financial or other reasons to receive their post-high school education in Omaha. While stressing that UNO should involve itself further in community affairs, this report



recognizes that there are practical and reasonable limitations on what UNO or any university can and should do in addressing itself to community problems. These many concerns require prompt and effective responses from all elements and institutions within the community—UNO is simply one among many institutions which should properly be involved.

The recommendations made later in this report reflect full respect for the distinctive role of universities located in urban areas, but with due regard for the excessive demands often made upon universities to undertake community tasks for which they are not especially well suited.

#### D. False Hopes Must Not Be Raised

A final premise of this report is that recommendations made should be carried out. Hopes of the university constituencies should not be raised and then dashed. The Commission, therefore, mindful of the problem of rising expectations, took care to assign high priority only to those things which are likely to be achieved over a reasonable period of time. At the same time, it recognizes the urgency of pushing aspirations to the limits of reality in search for bold and imaginative solutions to problems.

### 2. Philosophy of the Educational Program— Broad Comprehensive University

What should the term “urban education” mean in terms of commitment and programs at UNO? How can UNO become “relevant”? How can ongoing education be related to the problems of life in an urban community? What are the true future needs of the citizens of the community and state concerning higher education and UNO’s function in it? What philosophy should motivate UNO’s approach to the educational process? In view of the problems, opportunities, and demands being placed upon higher education today, not only in Omaha but nationally as well, the Commission accepts the basic philosophy that the spectrum of available post-high school educational opportunities should be markedly broadened. Currently, students who do not learn by traditional means and who are turned off by traditional curricula, drop out, and, too often, lose self-respect. Consequently, Nebraska and Omaha need a **comprehensive** post-secondary institution—a place where a student may gain a college degree while becoming a construction technician, an engineer’s aide, a nurse, an accountant, a teacher, or an insurance executive.

In the Commission’s judgment, now is the time to end the artificial and pernicious distinction between “college level” occupational training and “vocational” training that is somehow thought to be below collegiate dignity. If the skilled trades are to be dignified, if a massive over-supply of manpower educated in traditional academic programs is to be avoided, if the flood of 18-year-olds who neither desire nor can profit from traditional college is to be stemmed, if we are to profit from the experience in agriculture where land-grant colleges willingly accepted responsibility for training new segments of the citizenry at the collegiate level—then the comprehensive university as the locus of wide post-high school training makes real sense. Here is UNO’s challenging opportunity to serve the state and to lead the nation. Recommendations made later in the report reflect this concern of the Commission.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AFFECTING FUNCTIONING OF UNO

In this chapter, the Commission identifies ecological and environmental factors influencing the functioning and possible directions of UNO. The basic areas involved include the economy of the Omaha Region, the life style of the students, the human and social deficiencies in the environment, the serious immediate problems affecting UNO students, faculty, and administration, and the significance of Omaha's size.

### 1. The Economy of the Omaha Region

The potentialities for the development of educational programs at UNO, as well as possible barriers to developments in particular directions, are likely to be closely correlated with the trends forecast for the economy of the area. Although skill acquisition is by no means the sole or, in many instances, even the primary objective of post-secondary educational experience, students are ill-served, indeed, if the university prepares them for non-existent or vanishing jobs. For this reason, the Commission has given careful attention to the kind of employment opportunities that are expected to expand during the present decade.

The state of Nebraska and the Omaha Metropolitan Area and Region are part of the West North Central Region as classified by the Census Bureau.<sup>1</sup> As a region, it has been heavily oriented to agriculture and, on balance, is an exporter of raw and semi-finished materials. Further, it has been a net exporter of people for the last 80 years (with the exception of 1930-35). During the same period, and particularly since 1940, heavy shifts from rural to urban areas within the region have occurred. Along with this shift, the revenue accruing to value added by manufacture and to the rendering of services has increased both absolutely and relatively, while agriculture's revenue has declined relative to the total income.

The cities of Lincoln and Omaha that represented 25% of the state's population in 1950 included 33% by 1970. While the state of Nebraska was growing some 142,000, Lincoln and the Nebraska portions of Omaha grew some 195,000.

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<sup>1</sup> North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota.

Attention may now be turned to events occurring within the Omaha Metropolitan Region (cf. Table No. 1). Within the 19 counties in Iowa and Nebraska, the decline in agricultural employment is highlighted. In 1940, agriculture accounted for 27% of total employment. By 1970, it had diminished to a little more than 10%, and to an estimated 8% in 1980. This corroborates the increasing urbanization of the Omaha Metropolitan Region.

TABLE NO. 1

Omaha Region Employment, 1940, and Estimates 1970 and 1980  
Percentage Gain 1940-1970, Percentage Gain (est.) 1970-1980  
and Percentage in Each Class

Major Class	1940		1970		1980		1940		1970	
	Employment	1970	Gain (Loss)	%	Est.	Gain (Loss)	%	1970	1980	% of Gain Non-Agri. Employment
Agri., Forestry	54,300	30,500	(23,800)	(44)	27,000	(3,500)				
Mining	8,400	19,400	11,000	131	21,300	1,900	10	9.0	5.6	
Construction	20,800	52,200	31,400	151	58,300	6,100	12	25.5	18.0	
Manufacturing	21,000	25,100	4,100	70	23,500	(1,600)	(6)	3.3	(4.7)	
Transportation & Utilities	38,500	57,100	18,600	48	61,600	4,500	8	15.2	13.2	
Trade	9,100	17,600	8,500	93	19,800	2,200	13	6.9	6.4	
Finance, Insurance, Real Est.	38,600	72,200	33,600	87	90,700	18,500	26	27.4	54.0	
Service	8,100	24,100	16,000	200	26,800	2,700	11	13.0	7.9	
Government	198,800	298,100	99,300	50	328,800	30,700	9			
Totals	144,500	267,600	123,100	85	301,800	34,200	13.0	100.0	100.0	
Non-Agri. Empl.										
<b>Sub Class</b>										
Food & Kindred Products	10,700	18,400	7,700		17,200	(1,200)		6.3	(3.5)	
Printing	2,900	4,800	1,900		5,300	500		1.5	1.5	
Electric Mach.	300	8,800	8,500		11,900	3,100		6.9	9.1	
Railroads	10,400	7,100	(3,300)		5,000	(2,100)		(2.7)	(6.1)	
Trucks	3,300	5,900	2,600		5,900	.....		2.1	0.0	
Communications	2,800	4,500	1,700		4,500	.....		1.4	0.0	
Utilities	2,300	5,000	2,700		5,600	600		2.2	1.8	
Bus Service	4,500	10,300	5,800		14,700	4,400		4.7	12.9	
Educ., Med. & Prof. Service	16,200	46,200	30,000		59,900	13,700		24.4	40.0	

Between 1940 and 1970, the greatest relative gain was in government (including military) which tripled in the number employed. The greatest absolute gains were in services (including education and health) and in manufacturing. It should be noted that along with agriculture, employment by railroads also declined between 1940 and 1970.

The projected growth of the Omaha Metropolitan Region is estimated to be at a slower rate between 1970 and 1980, but

within the substantial absolute growth very profound changes are to be expected. More than 80% of the growth between 1970 and 1980 is forecast to be in occupations requiring high levels of technical skill. Food processing, a major manufacturing employer of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, will decline. The machine tool, electric machinery, and electronics industries which require skilled technicians will grow substantially.

The growth of skilled needs, however, will be most dramatic in the service sector. This sector that accounted for 27.4% of the employment gain between 1940 and 1970, will account for 54% of the estimated employment gain between 1970 and 1980. Within this sector there will be opposing trends (cf. Table No. 2). For example personal household service has declined 43% between 1940 and 1970, and will decline by nearly 9% between 1970 and 1980. Thus, household help, which constituted 21% of service employment in 1940 is estimated to decline to less

TABLE NO. 2

Omaha Region: Employment Within Service Sector 1940  
and Estimated 1970 and 1980

	1940	1970	Gain (Loss)	1980	Gain (Loss)
		(Est.)	1940-1970	(Est.)	1970-1980
Lodging	7,860	8,600	740	9,300	700
Business Service & Repairs	4,510	10,300	5,790	14,700	4,400
Amusement & Recreation	1,780	2,400	620	2,500	100
Private Households	8,270	4,700	(3,570)	4,300	(400)
Education, Medicine & Professional	16,200	46,200	30,000	59,900	13,700

than 5% of service employment in 1980. Business service and repairs on the contrary has grown by 130% between 1940 and 1970, and is estimated to grow by some 44% between 1970 and 1980. In 1940, this subgroup constituted about 11% of service employment, and an estimated 16% by 1980. This subgroup is largely composed of technically skilled persons.

By all odds the most significant growth in the service sector will occur in education, medicine and professional. Between 1940 and 1970, this group grew by 185% and it is estimated to grow by 30% between 1970 and 1980. This subgroup constituted 42% of service employment in 1940 and will reach an estimated 66% in 1980. The great bulk of these positions is filled by persons with a baccalaureate degree, and, of this group, more than two-thirds require post-baccalaureate training.

It is difficult to be precise about the skill training and post-baccalaureate needs of a future labor force, but it is estimated that 27,750 of the 34,200 new jobs expected in the next decade will require skill or collegiate training. Eighteen thousand

should require skill-training and 9,750 should be for the collegiate-trained. In the present labor force, approximately 45,000 jobs are held by collegiate degree holders, and 115,000 others require skill training. This amounts to 160,000 out of the estimated 268,000 non-agricultural employment of 1970. Between 1970 and 1980, assuming a normal rate of attrition and 45 years in the labor force, there will be a replacement need for 25,000 skill-trained positions and for approximately 10,000 baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate replacement positions. Because of advancing technology, these estimates are on the conservative side.

Thus, it would appear that in the Omaha region between 1970 and 1980 a minimum cumulative total of 43,500 skill-trained workers, and 19,750 persons with baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate training will be needed. Herein lies the challenge for the university in the areas of post-high school, baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate education.

The urban university can play a broad and relevant role in the community. It can, and should, play the role of educator in a world where both skill and intellect will be needed to cope with emerging problems. The UNO must be sensitive to the emerging and continuing trends in employment in the area. Technical vocational training, however, is no longer enough. Skills are needed, and skill training is needed to avoid creating backwaters of immobile and unskilled persons. But beyond this, all of us are increasingly concerned about the quality of life. Thus, man needs not only skill (periodically renewed or revised), but he needs a clearer view and perception of society, its institutions and its problems. Man must have skill to work; he must have appreciation to live. The university can play the most significant of roles in preparing students both for productive work and the relevant life.

## 2. Life Style of the Students

Because of the dual concern the university must have for productive work and the relevant life, systematic and serious attention must be given to the quality of life. Those in the leadership of higher education, as well as the people of the state, would do well to remember that the purpose of higher education is not only to help its students make a **living**, but also to help them make a **life**. In all areas of classroom instruction, therefore, emphasis should be given to how the individual can serve society. To be sure, he must learn to be an efficient producer, but he must also learn to be a thoughtful and consid-

erate consumer as well as a useful and concerned citizen. Education today at all levels must be properly sensitive to the importance which students rightly attach to a sense of values and life style and to the obvious need for all of us to become more understanding human beings.

## 3. Human and Social Deficiencies in the Environment

The Commission recognizes that Omaha is beset with serious human and social problems, as are all other American cities, and along lines that are scarcely unique. Omaha has had outbreaks of racial violence in recent years, and the relationships between whites and blacks, and particularly between blacks and such official agencies as the police department, are volatile. Moreover, in the judgment of interested local parties, the community's cultural services are under-developed; such agencies as exist reflect only a little of the true potential. The supply of housing, for those who live in the poverty areas, and especially for the black community, is far from adequate. Even the means by which to maintain an objective eye on social and economic conditions—a running inventory of community problems, the efforts being made to deal with them, and particularly an assessment of the degree of effectiveness achieved, are lacking. Omaha shares with the nation at large the embarrassing condition of having a significant number of unemployed, and at the same time insufficient trained personnel for many jobs, the area of health services being a conspicuous example.

Undoubtedly, one of the most perplexing social problems facing the community is the tremendous gap between the rhetoric and realities of life in the black community and other poverty areas. The Commission perceives the extreme sense of urgency which must attend the efforts of the university both to heighten community awareness of the gravity of this situation and to make a major response by dramatically expanding educational opportunities for blacks and generally for poverty students.

## 4. Serious Immediate Problems Affecting UNO Students, Faculty, and Administration

Although the Commission's major recommendations will be capable of fulfillment only over an extended period of time, the implementation of even these will be seriously jeopardized unless there is an immediate and effective response to current problems that are seriously impeding the work of the students,

faculty, and administration. The situation is especially grave with respect to parking facilities and space for university expansion. Even though the Commission's recommendations are directed largely toward longer-run objectives, it wishes to go on record here that immediate action is required to resolve these short-run problems if there is to be reasonable chance to achieve the desired goals of the Commission.

#### 5. Significance of Omaha's Size

A final factor, and a very positive one, in observing the environmental conditions, is Omaha's size. Consultants continue to impress upon the Commission that Omaha is still a **manageable** urban area; its institutions are large enough to be effective but not so huge as to be unwieldy and unresponsive to the challenge of change. As one consultant put it: "Combined with the quality of leadership which the city possesses (both black and white) and the urgency of the issues it faces, Omaha can well emerge in the forefront of those American cities which are taking their problems seriously and finding effective options for resolving them."

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of the urban university, the basic premises and educational philosophy guiding the Commission, and the environmental factors affecting the functioning of UNO have now been presented. It is in light of these background factors that the Commission's recommendations must be viewed.

The general thrust of the Commission's recommendations should be clear from the discussion presented so far in the earlier chapters. The Commission wishes UNO to be a quality urban university. To this end, it urges the university to assume the role of a comprehensive university, to attack community problems in a variety of ways, but at the same time to make efficient use of scarce resources in moving toward selective, realizable goals. Critics might perhaps assert that the Commission is asking and expecting too much from UNO. But it is the sober judgment of the Commission that buoyed by the growing goodwill on both sides there can be such an effective marriage of the interests of town and gown that most, if not all, of the recommendations that follow can be implemented and put into effect.

The four subcommittees of the Commission proposed more than eighty thoughtful recommendations for the consideration of the Board of Regents and the University of Nebraska administration. Since the assignments to the committees were kept very broad and general, it is not surprising that many recommendations were duplicated in their reports. This was to be expected and simply adds emphasis and authority to the importance attached to the specific recommendations. Even when overlapping and duplicate recommendations were eliminated, however, the numbers remaining were still formidable and undoubtedly propose a breadth of mission and concern for the university that it would be incapable of fulfilling. Since the tasks ahead are many and enormous, and the available resources are likely to be all too meager in relationship to the magnitude of the job to be accomplished, the recommendations have had to be pruned even further. Individual members of the Commission and others, therefore, may find some particular recommendation in which they have a special interest missing from this final report. In the main, however, those recommendations included had major, if not consensus support, and appear to represent issues of great importance and priority for the university response.



The Commission's recommendations are presented under four major headings:

1. Community Services, Community Problems and Their Solutions;
2. Program Coordination and Community Relations;
3. Educational Programs: Participation, Kind, Thrust, and General Structure; and
4. Finances, Resource Use, Budgeting, Evaluation, and Space.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Commission was virtually unanimous in urging that UNO accept fully the challenge of being a quality urban university. In doing so, the Commission believes that UNO must play a major role in identifying community problems and contributing to their solutions.

The Commission makes **three recommendations** toward the achievement of these objectives.

#### 1. **Community Services, Community Problems and Their Solutions**

##### **Recommendation 1:**

**UNO should develop new programs and provide new services focused upon community problems in order to offer fresh insight into these problems as well as to prepare trained personnel to engage in their solutions.**

Particular emphasis should be placed upon the continuing education needs of the urban population and upon research activities in such vital areas as urban education, planning, ecology, business and labor problems, and human communication.

##### **Recommendation 2:**

**The Commission recommends a massive expansion in the role of the university in the community through the establishment of an Institute for Public and Community Affairs.**

This Institute should have its own budget, its own Board of Directors, and an affiliate arrangement with the university that assures staff appointments and teaching assignments for its key people. As an action-research agency, it should mount the university's attack upon community problems by organizing around interdis-

iplinary projects or on an ad hoc basis in order to bring the full range of current knowledge and techniques of the social, behavioral, and management sciences to bear upon the problems encountered.

##### **Recommendation 3:**

**The Commission recommends that a Community-University Council on the Creative and Performing Arts be established to furnish leadership in enlarging and strengthening existing programs and services in the performing arts fields.**

Such a Council might give consideration to the construction of a theater-concert hall in the Fine Arts complex of the university as well as to joint appointments of persons to the university faculty and performing arts organizations such as the Omaha Orchestra and Civic Opera Associations.

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With societal demands upon higher education burgeoning, with resources to meet these needs increasingly limited, and with understanding of university problems often lacking, the Commission places a high priority both on improving program coordination and increasing public knowledge and awareness of the university's contributions. Therefore, the Commission believes heightened attention must be given to planning and coordinating education at all levels. The community must be heavily involved and communication with the university must be further opened up and improved.

The Commission submits **two recommendations** toward the achievement of these objectives.

#### 2. **Program Coordination and Community Relations**

##### **Recommendation 4:**

**The Commission recommends the establishment of four coordinating and planning groups: one to be concerned with education at all levels; a second to oversee university programs; the third to serve as liaison between the City of Omaha and UNO; and a fourth to explore ways of providing meaningful relationships of students to the governing processes of the university.**

A metropolitan Community Educational Council should involve the various educational agencies in syste-

matic planning and division of responsibility for all levels and types of education. A Board of Visitors made up of representative citizens from Omaha and the state should assume responsibility for becoming knowledgeable about the developing programs at UNO and then interpreting them to the community. Because of the mutual interests between city and university, the creation of a liaison committee is essential. Finally, an internal committee of students, faculty, and administrators should be established in order to enhance fruitful and cooperative relationships among the main constituents of the university.

**Recommendation 5:**

**The Commission recommends that the university give fresh attention to the kind of public information program necessary to enlighten the general public as to its aims and purposes and to interpret its current and future role to the people of the area.**

Because UNO is underpublicized, undervalued, and underutilized, consideration should be given, among other things, to the establishment of a "university information center" easily accessible to the citizens of the community, to the publication of a monthly "newsletter" for wide distribution to the public, and to drawing heavily upon distinguished "practicing professionals" from the wider community, perhaps in the role of occasional visiting lecturer.

\* \* \* \* \*

The true character, as well as the heart of a university, are revealed in the scope and quality of its educational programs. Sentiment of members of the Commission was unanimous that UNO should continue as a truly multipurpose university on both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Broad liberal arts offerings should continue to undergird the entire university program. The Commission, therefore, presents **ten recommendations** to the end of extending the educational role of UNO as a multipurpose university.

**3. Educational Programs of the Multipurpose University: Participants, Kind, Thrust, and General Structure**

**A. Participants in Programs**

**Recommendation 6:**

**The Commission recommends that UNO vigorously**

**seek out disadvantaged and minority group students in order to expand educational opportunities for them.**

Means to be used include locating indigenous recruiters in minority areas, educating parents to the importance of college, pre-college counseling in secondary schools, advertising widely an open admissions policy, and establishing a housing officer to aid students from out state. Accompanying these efforts must be strong supporting programs and substantial student financial aids. In the opinion of the Commission the importance of this effort warrants the commitment of staff on a full-time basis.

**B. Kind of Programs**

**Recommendation 7:**

**Bachelor degree programs should be considerably strengthened and broadened in coverage.**

Traditional offerings in liberal arts disciplines should be supplemented by the addition of programs in areas such as construction technology, electronics, and other areas where the needs of the community are not being met. The educational needs of women should be determined and met. Generous support also should be given to the black studies program currently being established to benefit all students, black and white, and to aid in reducing racial tensions in the community.

**Recommendation 8:**

**UNO should undertake an expansion of associate degree programs of less than four years' duration.**

Opportunities should be provided for specialization in such areas as teacher aides, community aides, health worker aides, and in comparable fields with special attention directed toward the technical manpower needs of the industrial community.

**Recommendation 9:**

**The Commission recommends that UNO strengthen present graduate programs and provide new post-baccalaureate offerings in carefully selected areas where the need is clearly demonstrated, is not now being adequately served, and would be most appropriately based in Omaha.**

The Commission believes study will reveal a variety of post-baccalaureate level offerings to assist in industrial, economic, social and cultural development in the area are needed and that such programs eventually should be undertaken. Because of the changing market demand for those earning graduate degrees, however, moves into graduate areas should be undertaken only after careful examination of the costs, the potential demand, and the eventual outlet for such highly trained individuals. Providing these conditions have been met the proposal for a Doctor of Arts degree may have merit.

The Commission commends the UNO faculty, students, and administrators for their desire to maintain and to develop excellence in graduate education and research. Moreover, UNO faculty members increasingly should be involved in graduate education and research as members of the Graduate Faculty of the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the Graduate Faculty of the University System.

### C. Thrust of Programs

#### Recommendation 10:

**The Commission recommends a continuation of broad liberal arts academic training as the core program at UNO.**

Such a base is essential for UNO to be a multipurpose university on both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

#### Recommendation 11:

**UNO should explore with Omaha business and industry the possibility of greatly augmenting a work-study program for students, thus providing alternating periods of employment and study for those taking part in this program.**

Students should learn and receive credit while "on the job" and while taking advantage of the learning laboratory commerce, industry, or urban government can provide.

#### Recommendation 12:

**UNO should place a special emphasis on experimental and innovative ways of improving the learning experience and academic programs.**

Laboratories should be established for experimentation and demonstration in order to develop innovative educational techniques. Programs should be provided and students should be encouraged to spend one academic semester in service in the community for which credit should be granted. Students also should have the opportunity to receive academic credit for appropriate work experience. Opportunities should be offered for students to learn by different methods, as, for example, by direct observation of inner-city problems. Programs should be made more flexible to permit career switches. Credit-by-examination should be encouraged.

#### Recommendation 13:

**The Commission recommends that the Regents support the administration in investing heavily in one or two special "pacemaker" programs having as their objective the attainment of national prominence and respect.**

Programs deserving consideration might be a management-labor institute, a reading clinic, an interdisciplinary effort in urban studies, experiential learning, or some area of the performing arts.

### D. General Structure

#### Recommendation 14:

**The Commission recommends that UNO establish a University College to assist in the expansion of bachelor degree programs as well as those of shorter duration.**

A variety of post-high school sub-baccalaureate programs should be included. Degree credit for proficiency in skills could be awarded by the college in order to shorten the formal educational process for members of the urban labor force seeking to raise their overall skill and knowledge level. Strong consideration should be given to encouraging and to expediting the upward mobility of the skilled labor force. Entry into other colleges of the university would be facilitated by the university college.

#### Recommendation 15:

**The Commission recommends that UNO bring educational opportunities to the people by further expansion and development of instruction in Program Centers away from the main campus.**

Such carefully selected Program Centers should provide a wide range of academic and professional programs. Consideration might also be given to "roving professorships" to offer credit and non-credit courses in schools, churches, and elsewhere upon request. Program Centers might even be desirable in other cities as well. It also might be helpful to move some of the activities presently housed on the main campus closer to the students being served.

\* \* \* \* \*

The final recommendations convey the Commission's sense of the crucial roles of finance, resource use, budgeting, evaluation, and space if any of the major developments proposed for UNO are to be realized. The current resources of the university must be used as economically and effectively as possible. Even with this assurance, it should be evident that a major commitment of new funds will be required for further extension of old programs and the development of new programs and services. The Commission, therefore, makes **five recommendations** concerning financial issues and measures to assure efficient use of university resources.

#### 4. **Finances, Resource Use, Budgeting, Evaluation and Space**

##### **Recommendation 16:**

**The Commission recommends that the university join with other parties in seeking to develop a community foundation in Omaha.**

The availability from such a source of even a relatively small amount of money to support new community ventures, including those which may be developed by the university in cooperation with other agencies, can be of inestimable value, and can frequently be the basis upon which much larger amounts of money can be generated from national funding agencies.

##### **Recommendation 17:**

**The Commission recommends that UNO commit itself to imaginative, economical and wise use of its resources.**

The latest systems techniques for manpower and financial resources budgeting, administration, and con-

trol should be employed. Present programs and services should be evaluated and screened carefully for their merit and quality. Consideration should be given to the development of a compact to allow southwest Iowa students to attend UNO supported by an Iowa subsidy. A study should be made of the feasibility of providing regular transportation between the two major metropolitan campuses at Lincoln and Omaha. Moreover, the central administration of the university system should make a careful assessment of where the expensive professional programs will be most in demand and can best be staffed. Much can be done to improve and expand programs by a concerted effort to strengthen the professional ties between the faculties of the universities at Lincoln and Omaha. The Commission also sees great potentiality in developing closed circuit (two-way or talk-back) television to permit instruction to originate at either Omaha or Lincoln, with students on both campuses being able to take the course simultaneously.

##### **Recommendation 18:**

**The Commission recommends that the Unicameral be requested to set up a minimum of \$250,000 per year for commitment to new and innovative programs and as an offset to any deficits they might incur in their first years.**

This flexibility is required in the quest for innovation and during a period of rapid change when resources must be moved from the obsolete use to the new needs. Departmental and line budgeting inhibit such flexibility. These funds should be used only on the recommendation of the President and with the approval of the Chancellor and the Regents thus assuring the accountability desired by the Unicameral.

##### **Recommendation 19:**

**The Commission recommends that UNO prepare a Master Plan for educational development that assigns accountability for effective outcomes, and includes performance standards with which to measure actual progress toward achievement of university goals.**

During the coming year, UNO should prepare a Master Plan for development. To command respect, loyalty, and effective performance from the faculty, UNO

should commit itself to the maintenance of competitive faculty salaries. The quality of their teaching and community involvement then should be an integral part of evaluating faculty for rank and compensation.

**Recommendation 20:**

**Finally the Commission recommends that immediate action be taken to resolve the twin problems of space for educational and parking purposes.**

Implementation of the preceding recommendations will be severely handicapped, if not precluded, until these space problems are overcome.

**5. Summary of Recommendations**

A recapitulation of the twenty recommendations provides a summary of the Commission's work.

**Recommendation 1:** UNO should develop new programs and provide new services focused upon community problems in order to offer fresh insight into these problems as well as to prepare trained personnel to engage in their solutions.

**Recommendation 2:** The Commission recommends a massive expansion in the role of the university in the community through the establishment of an Institute for Public and Community Affairs.

**Recommendation 3:** The Commission recommends that a Community-University Council on the Creative and Performing Arts be established to furnish leadership in enlarging and strengthening existing programs and services in the performing arts fields.

**Recommendation 4:** The Commission recommends the establishment of four coordinating and planning groups: one to be concerned with education at all levels; a second to oversee university programs; the third to serve as liaison between the City of Omaha and UNO; and a fourth to explore ways of providing meaningful relationships of students to the governing processes of the university.

**Recommendation 5:** The Commission recommends that the University give fresh attention to the kind of public information program necessary to enlighten the general public as to its aims and purposes and to interpret its current and future role to the people of the area.

**Recommendation 6:** The Commission recommends that UNO vigorously seek out disadvantaged and minority group students in order to expand educational opportunities for them.

**Recommendation 7:** Bachelor degree programs should be considerably strengthened and broadened in coverage.

**Recommendation 8:** UNO should undertake an expansion of associate degree programs of less than four years' duration.

**Recommendation 9:** The Commission recommends that UNO strengthen present graduate programs and provide new post-baccalaureate offerings in carefully selected areas where the need is clearly demonstrated, is not now being adequately served, and would be most appropriately based in Omaha.

**Recommendation 10:** The Commission recommends a continuation of broad liberal arts academic training as the core program at UNO.

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**Recommendation 13:** The Commission recommends that the Regents support the administration in investing heavily in one or two special "pacemaker" programs having as their objective the attainment of national prominence and respect.

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**Recommendation 20:** Finally the Commission recommends that immediate action be taken to resolve the twin problems of space for educational and parking purposes.

## 6. Conclusions

It should be obvious that these recommendations will cost money, indeed a great deal of money if they are to be implemented adequately. But reflecting as they do the broad needs and concerns of the citizens of Omaha and Nebraska, the ultimate barrier should not be resources. The state university does belong to the people and should be responsive to them, and in being so should receive their whole-hearted support and commitment. The Commission believes that a partnership between the university, the community, and the state is developing that can bring citizens into full awareness of the university's role in community and public affairs, and in the general improvement of economic prospects for the state. Since the social, economic, and cultural benefits of the university to the community and the state are virtually incalculable, the Commission looks forward with confidence to broadened and generous citizen support for the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

## Appendix A

# The Commission

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*Chairman*

Mr. John T. Harris, Sr., McCook  
*Vice Chairman*

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Urban Economy—Dr. Randall Klemme, Omaha

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Development and Continuing Education—

Mr. Frank Starr, Omaha

Urban Organization, the Environment and

Social Problems—Mr. Robert E. Runice, Omaha

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*Chief Consultant*

Dr. Hubert Locke, Wayne State University

Dr. Norman Auburn, University of Akron

Dr. David Brown, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

Mr. Homer C. Wadsworth, Kansas City Association of  
Trusts and Foundations

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### *Consultants of the University of Nebraska at Omaha*

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Mr. William T. Utley

Dr. John Nye

Dr. Elroy Steele

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Dr. G. Robert Ross, *Staff Director*

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Consultant  
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Mr. James Murphy  
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Mr. Richard Myers  
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Dr. James Peterson  
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Mr. Donald Swanson  
Omaha  
Mr. Philip Vogt  
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Mr. Harry Allen, Staff Assistant  
Dr. Gene Budig, Staff Assistant  
Mr. Ralph Bradley, Staff Assistant  
Mr. William Green, Staff Assistant  
Mrs. Margaret Wade, Staff Assistant

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### Executive Board

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Mr. Richard Herman  
Mr. Harry Morley  
Dr. Kirk Naylor  
Mr. D. B. Varner  
Mr. Steven Wild

## **Appendix B**

### **SELECTED URBAN COURSES AND URBAN RESEARCH PROJECTS AT UNO**

#### **1. Urban Courses**

Economics of Urban Areas  
Independent Study in Topics on Urbanism  
Urban Economics  
Urban Regional Research  
Urban Geography  
Metropolitan Planning and Development  
American Urban History  
Ethnic Groups in American History  
Municipal Government  
Internship in Local Government  
Interdisciplinary Seminar on the Urban Community  
Urban Sociology  
Community  
Urban Land Uses  
City Planning  
Urban Law  
Police Public Relations  
The Way of a City  
Black Experience in America

#### **2. Urban Research Projects**

An Input-Output Study of the Omaha SMSA  
The Development of Self-Analysis Techniques for Economic  
Areas in Nebraska  
Social Cohesion in Omaha  
Omaha Unemployment Feasibility Study  
Factors Influencing the Development of Omaha  
Omaha Trade Area  
Social Participation and Life Satisfaction of Senior Citizens  
Perceptions of Poverty Families about the Incidence and  
Effect and Redress of Poverty in Omaha  
Unemployment in Omaha in Relation to the Armour Closing  
The Change in Population of the Omaha SMSA  
Aging Group Consciousness