

In 1954 the University Board of Trustees created and filled the position of Provost of the University. Upon the resignation of Dean and Provost Elvis J. Stahr, Jr., in 1957, I did not feel that I had had adequate opportunity to study the organizational needs of the University, and as a consequence, I did not recommend any one to fill that position. The position was not abolished, and after serious study, I am recommending today that the position be filled--this time very much in keeping with the strict definition of the term "provost" as used in educational circles. I am recommending that Dr. A. D. Albright, Executive Dean of Extended Programs, also be named as Provost of the University, with duties to be primarily in the major functions and programs of instruction and research. The Provost's office will have the responsibilities of planning, coordination, and study of instructional programs, both on-campus and off-campus. It is hoped that the Provost with the assistance of the Deans of the various colleges can soon prepare an inventory of instructional research presently being conducted in the University. It is proposed then that this group of persons charged with the direct responsibility for the academic program of the institution can find increasingly effective means of coordinating the instructional program of the University.

As was pointed out in several sections of the self-study of the University, systematic efforts to improve communication processes are important in any large organization. However, more than the usual effort must be made in universities because of several circumstances which are inherent in these institutions. In the first place, the interests of the several parts of the institution are infinitely more specialized than those of most organizations in modern society. Furthermore, they cover a wider range of subjects. In this respect there is no comparison between most large industrial corporations and a large university organization. Also, the essential but unusual individuality of thought and behavior of the academic person presents specialized problems in communication. Similar problems are often seen in hospitals, in laboratories, and in other highly professionalized areas of both government and the corporation. It is one of the tasks of administration in these large and complex universities to find ways of improving methods of communication in order to create a reasonably cohesive total institution.

It is my belief that the refilling of the post of provost will give more opportunities for cooperative planning for the instructional program of the University and, therefore, improve communications internally and perhaps externally as well.

In naming a provost, we shall be able to shift certain responsibilities and reporting offices to equalize to a greater degree the administrative load of the University. The academic deans will report directly to the Provost in order that the coordination of efforts and communication already referred to may be strengthened. At the same time, the president of the University will be enabled to devote more time and effort to the long-range planning for the University and its various programs.