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ABSTRACT

The founders of General College, at the University of Minnesota, established the school in 1932 out of a belief in democratic access to higher education, the need to simplify the academic bureaucracy, and the desire for a liberalized curriculum. During its first 13 years, the college assumed and maintained three basic priorities: open admissions, research into student characteristics, and a student- and life-centered curriculum, based in part on the Stephens College for Women model and further developed through foundation-sponsored institutional research. Largely attributable to the skill of Deans Horace T. Morse and Alfred L. Vaughan, between 1945 and 1965, the college gained stability and acceptance, as witnessed by rising enrollments, a steadily declining proportion of borrowed faculty, and administrative independence from the University in 1951. In the 1960s and 1970s, student protests and President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society Program did alter the college's direction, through programs such as Upward Bound and Head Start, though the college had already been tracing the educational path recommended by national studies during this period. Since 1975, in spite of diminished resources, the college has responded to current student needs and maintained its emphasis on educational evaluation. Throughout its 50-year history, policies relating to continuous student research, flexible curricula, individualized degree programs, centralized personnel services, effective teaching, and student-centered programs have helped the college remain faithful to its founding doctrines. (DAB)

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newsletter

Bruce Hixson, Editor

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GENERAL COLLEGE: THE OPEN DOOR THROUGH FIFTY YEARS: 1932-1982

Norman W. Moen

The General College officially began celebrating the 50th anniversary of the College on October 27, 1982 at a reception and dinner held in the University Campus Club. Professor Norman Moen provided the opening address "Evolution of the General College: The Open Door." This issue of the Newsletter is a transcription of that address.

Professor Moen's presentation ought to be viewed as significant to a variety of audiences for several reasons. First, he has served as the primary chronicler of the College's history over the past three plus decades as Assistant Dean and the founder and editor of the General College Newsletter and other college publications. Second, as one of the senior members of the faculty he has been able to provide insights concerning how the College came into being and what factors of need and service have sustained it over its 50 year history. Third, his background in developing and teaching courses for the College of Education on the history of higher education in the United States has enabled him to view the General College in the context of innovative education in the nation.

His extensive knowledge of higher education is reflected in the first two sections of this manuscript: "The Founders" and "First Years 1932-1945." His role in the administration of the College is reflected in sections three and four: "Stable Years 1945-1965" and "Challenging Years 1965-1975." In the final section of his talk he gives the reader a view of how the College has responded to current student needs in a period of diminished resources.

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GENERAL COLLEGE: THE OPEN DOOR THROUGH FIFTY YEARS: 1932 - 1982

by

Norman W. Moen

The Founders

First Years 1932 - 1945

Stable Years 1945 - 1965

Challenging Years 1965 - 1975

Assessment-Adjustment 1975 -

The Founders: The academic movers and shapers who founded General College all came to the University during the six-year (1911 - 1917) tenure of President George Edgar Vincent. When James Gray, historian of the University, contemplated Vincent he remembered the remark made by a hard-to-impress United States senator after hearings confirming Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., as secretary of state. Stettinius was as rich in ability and achievement as he was distinguished in manner and appearance. "There," said the senator, "you see what God can do when He really tries!"¹

According to another writer, Vincent's arrival on campus marked "...the second founding of the University." The new president, he said, transformed "...a loose confederation of disparate colleges into a self-conscious, cooperating, and purposeful institution of higher learning."² Among his other important achievements, Vincent established the Graduate School and renovated the colleges of Law, Medicine, Education, and Liberal Arts.

And it was Vincent who brought a trio of remarkable administrators to Minnesota: Guy Stanton Ford became first dean of the Graduate School in 1913; John Black Johnston assumed leadership of the College of Science, Literature, and the Arts in 1914; and Lotus Delta Coffman arrived in 1915, upon recommendation of Ford, who knew him when both taught at the University of Illinois, to take over the College of Education. The nature of their work led these men to consider matters relating to the structure of the University. The changing times forced them to give thought to admissions policy. Collegiate enrollments were then rising sharply. As final vestiges of the open, western frontier disappeared toward the end of the 19th century, Americans began to seek in higher education the upward mobility which many of them earlier found on America's relatively unoccupied lands. Colleges and universities grew steadily after 1900. By 1920, the nation's campuses held 600,000 students; by 1950, the total had reached 2,600,000.

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Rising enrollments failed to daunt Vincent. Son of Bishop John H. Vincent, a founder of the popular combination of theological training, general education, and cultural enrichment known as the Chautauqua System, Vincent himself became a proponent of academic outreach, education for the masses, or as Gray writes, "...educational opportunity for those whose early training had been meagre or spotty."³ After working for Chautauqua, for a time under its education director, William Rainey Harper, Vincent followed Harper to the University of Chicago and then moved from that institution to Minnesota. It was Vincent who devised University Week, a program taking clusters of faculty directly to Minnesota communities large and small for several days of lectures, plays, recitals, or short courses. It was Vincent who founded Minnesota's General Extension Division.⁴ But Vincent left the University before the real enrollment crunch began after World War I. The problems attending this rapid growth had to be confronted by the deans he had recruited.

These administrators realized that the University of Minnesota is not compelled by law to maintain open admissions. The territorial act chartering the institution established a Preparatory Department, but explicitly designated it an expedient--a temporary agency to function until the state public high schools matured. The Morrill Act of 1862, which came later, does not mandate open admissions in land grant colleges--witness Colgate, Michigan, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology--land grant colleges all.

These administrators also realized something else: during the years after World War I, only 50% of the freshmen pouring into the University ended as graduating seniors.

The statistics bothered Dean Johnston. On one hand, Johnston appeared to join Vincent in taking a liberal, inclusive view of admissions policy. He spoke of the responsibility of the University to return to the "...large scale laboratory of social intelligence" men and women "prepared to engage with wakened imagination in the everyday work of the world." He held that "...everyone should be educated in proportion to his capacity limited only by the economic resources of the nation."⁵ On the other hand, he well knew that neither the College of Science, Literature, and the Arts, nor any other unit of the University, paid any attention to preparing young people to "engage with wakened imagination in the everyday work of the world." His own faculty may not have regarded the attrition rate with equanimity, but neither did it take action to end this waste of human resources.

Dean Johnston began to investigate, personally, ways of dealing with the situation. "According to his capacity..."--that phrase caught his eye. A scientist specializing at the University of Michigan in neuro-zoology, Johnston set himself the task of devising an objective measure of capacity to succeed in academic work. Ultimately, he emerged with a scale composed of such elements as data from the Army Alpha, Edward L. Thorndyke's psychological tests, and high school grade averages. Soon Johnston was suggesting that persons ranking below certain points on his scale could save time and embarrassment by not attempting to matriculate in the University at all, because the primary business of the university is professional education or graduate study--fields in which low-scoring applicants in all likelihood could not succeed.⁶

Dean Johnston, rugged and principled, may have harbored thoughts about raising admission thresholds, but the dean of the College of Education,

L. D. Coffman, most certainly did not. Coffman was born on a small farm in southern Indiana. He attended a one-room rural school, completed secondary education while supporting his widowed mother, became a country school teacher himself, and worked through bachelor's and master's degrees via correspondence and summer studies. His field of concentration during the two years he spent gaining a doctorate from Columbia was educational sociology. His thesis, "The Social Composition of the Teaching Population," demonstrated that all too often students in higher education are doomed to failure because their primary and secondary education has been grossly inadequate.⁷

Perhaps his personal history combined with the research for his dissertation to form Coffman's populist view of the University's true mission. Writing about student attrition after he became president in 1920, Coffman said:

The problem was not one of exclusion, not at the University of Minnesota. It should not be, I venture to add, at any institution that conceives its task in terms of the twentieth century and with the regard to all the individual differences that still must find in education common denominators for citizenship of a democracy. Indeed, an educational system that even in its highest reaches seeks to give every student the fullest and richest opportunities to which his ability and his considered purpose entitle him is in itself the highest expression of democracy.⁸

There it is--the Coffman Credo: belief in democratic access to higher education. Minnesotans, in his view, should be able to enter the University and progress within it as far as ability, performance, interest, and personal circumstances permit.

One recent scholar calls Coffman the most successful public university president of his time. Perhaps he acquired the personal qualities required for this achievement during his earliest days. Picture Master Coffman presenting himself as a first grader at the door of his country school. Other boys of all ages gather--Sam, Jim, Pete, and Jerry. "What's your name?" they ask. "My name is...Lotus..." Clio draws her kindly veil over the ensuing scene, but the year I spent as a teacher in a one-room, rural, Yellow Medicine country school--19 children in eight grades working in a little white building on the prairie--helps me picture it vividly. Boyhood ordeals may have contributed toward creating the ambitious, driving, iron-willed administrator who, though modest, "established his power...and held off challenges more effectively than did most of his peers."⁹ Close friends of his mature years called him Jack.

As his tenure as president advanced, Coffman moved vigorously to put educational principles into practice. He found the structure of the University cumbersome: an academic bureaucracy capable of frustrating rather than facilitating students in their quest for education. He confided all of these problems to a task force of seven deans, giving them the assignment of "simplifying the educational programs of the University, of removing administrative barriers, and of considering more liberalized and coherent course offerings than the present ones."¹⁰ The chairman of the group was Dean G. S. Ford.

The official name of the task force was Committee on the Administrative Reorganization of the University, but it was commonly referred to as the

Committee of Seven. In February, 1931, the Seven recommended that a new unit, University College, be established to assist students interested in designing non-traditional but valid individual programs involving study in more than one college or department. This was their response to the problem of administrative barriers and programmatic inflexibilities.

A year later, in February, 1932, Chairman Ford reported that blueprints for another addition to the campus were complete. In a formal statement to the faculty, the Seven said, in part:

The Committee on Administrative Reorganization is now ready to outline plans for a new unit to be called the Junior College of the University....

We know that only approximately 50 percent of entering students reach graduation. We know that in the first two years there are from 1,800 to 2,000 students who do not pass into the junior year. We know that there are some who may even put in four years or more and graduate who would be equally well served and equally well prepared for the part they will play in their communities by two years of work so directed that it would serve this purpose. And we know that if this can be done it will be a great saving of time and money to them and to the state....

We seek the only true democracy that should prevail in education, and that is the fullest and richest opportunity for every student to obtain the training to which he is entitled after a careful consideration of his needs and abilities.¹¹

The work and courses offered will take into consideration... those registered in this new college. Consideration will be given their needs from the standpoint both of general education and of vocational interests. In the latter matter the University is not at present prepared to enter upon an elaborate and diversified program of vocational training for periods short of the conventional four years. The immediate possibilities are such courses as will aid in vocational choice and provide a training that will initiate the student into the basic processes and methods of the major occupations open to those who carry on most of the world's business. Thus students may be assisted in solving their own problems and those of their own communities without elaborate, expensive, and long sustained special or professional training.

It may be remarked in this connection that apparently we are producing more lawyers, doctors, engineers, and teachers than are required, whereas the market for intelligent citizens is limitless and their production costs to the state offer possibilities in the economy of time and public expenditure. Such synthetic, general, and orientation courses are already available to a limited extent; others have been planned but never offered; still others must be devised in the light of experience and demonstrated needs.¹²

In short, the University was about to broaden both its academic program and its services to Minnesota by establishing an open-door college with a new and innovative curriculum.

On February 11, 1932, five days after the charter of the new college was published, the Board of Regents appointed Malcolm Shaw MacLean its first director. MacLean was a former newspaperman who worked his way through Hamilton College and the University of Michigan before taking a doctorate in English from the University of Minnesota. Roland Guyotte, Student of higher education and professor of history at the Morris campus, tells us that MacLean was an advocate of "real world" experience who liked to talk about his experiences as a sheep herder in Colorado. His work at the Extension Center of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, helped prepare him for work with non-traditional students and programs at Minnesota.¹³

Dr. MacLean described what it was like to create a new college for the University within a period of months:

I was excited, thrilled, and mighty scared as I settled into a tiny office in the Administration Building. I was allowed one secretary and stole June Whitney from Dean Lyons of Medicine to his sorrow and our great benefit....In the spring, Fred Hovde [subsequently president of Purdue] came back from his triumphs at Oxford. Deans Ford, Leland, and I confronted him with the choice of teaching chemical engineering or joining our tiny crew as assistant director. He threw in his lot with us.

The months that followed were hectic times of dreaming dreams and facing tough realities. The realities were x number of students to be taught a battery of courses in September; a miniscule budget; the necessity to make up our staff by teaching ourselves (Ed Williamson and I gave a course in Occupations--The World of Work, and Fred did the Physics and Chemistry) and by persuading deans and chairmen to let us borrow, without compensation, some of their best teachers. We had to make over battered old Wesbrook Hall just evacuated by dentistry, cluttered with pipes and wires, broken plaster and splintered floors. Our dreams were of a new and better kind of general education, suited to the times and to students hitherto neglected and to be taught by master teachers.¹⁴

The new college, quartered in the second floor and attic of Wesbrook Hall, opened its doors fall quarter, 1932, with an enrollment of 489 students.

First Years 1932 - 1945: According to its charter, the program of the Junior College was to consist of "a new and better kind of general education," but building such a program presented problems. MacLean and his advisors had various reasons for not imitating existing models at Columbia, Sarah Lawrence, and Bennington, Hutchins' work at Chicago and that of Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan at Saint John's seemed incongruent with the academic preparation of Minnesota public high school graduates. Meicklejohn's experiments at Amherst, and particularly his Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, did not appear practical for a project involving considerable numbers of students.

In addition, MacLean's first instructors were borrowed from other units of the University. They did not hold rank or tenure in the Junior College. These professors allowed themselves to be recruited for temporary teaching in the new unit because they wanted to cooperate in an educational experiment, or because they wished to test novel approaches in their subject fields, but not because they sought career advancement. As a consequence, the program of the first half-dozen years was somewhat patchy. At the same time, however, progress toward placing the curriculum upon a sound, clearly defined philosophical basis was being made.

MacLean was an admirer of W. W. Charters, former director of the Center for Educational research at Ohio State University and later of Stephens College for Women at Troy, Missouri. Charters believed, with John Dewey, that high schools and colleges should concentrate upon preparing people for life in modern American society, a curriculum-planning approach which sometimes is referred to as the instrumentalist view of general education. Under the direction of Charters, a program of study was installed at Stephens which grew out of a nationwide survey of the educational needs of upper-class women in the 1920s. Stephens therefore claimed to have a "functional college curriculum," the first in America if not in the world. Courses of study emphasized preparation for living. They were designed to reflect findings of formal educational research.

MacLean sent his daughter to Stephens. The college dean, B. Lamar Johnson, was his close personal friend.¹⁵ His description of general education, written for an early bulletin, echoes Dewey and Charters:

The University Junior College is designed primarily to provide broadened intellectual training to that large body of students who seek an overview of modern life and of man's activities rather than specialized training. Its courses are synthetic, not specific....It seems desirable for students who cannot spend the full four or more years in college to devote their limited time to such a complete and rounded program instead of to a fragment of a longer and specialized process. [Such a program] should serve to satisfy his intellectual curiosity and to train him for enlightened living in his family, social, and citizenship relations.¹⁶

What MacLean now needed for his new college was a University of Minnesota study similar to that carried out for Stephens.

It was at this juncture that President Coffman provided very material help. Coffman was well aware of work on student characteristics and the compatibility of curriculum and student needs carried on during the 1920s and 1930s. He brought Melvin Haggerty to this campus, the first educational psychologist to join the University faculty. He established the Bureau of Educational Research, which he and Leonard V. Koos headed jointly for a time. Koos, who was recruited from the University of Illinois by Coffman, became a national authority on the two-year college and one of Coffman's most influential advisors..

More than this, President Coffman was knowledgeable about developments across the country, having conducted surveys of education in several states. He served on the board of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching,

became a member of the Educational Policies Committee of the National Education Association, and held office as president of both the National Association of State Universities and the American Council on Education. With Coffman's connections, it is not surprising that the Carnegie Foundation financed appreciation courses in music and art for the new college. Former President Vincent was a help, too, for he left Minnesota to work for the Rockefellers' General Education Board. This agency contributed \$25,000 a year for five years to fund systematic evaluation of the program to date as well as studies of the characteristics and educational needs of students.

From its earliest years, therefore, what came to be known as General College assumed three basic and continuing characteristics: open admissions; research into student characteristics; student-centered, life-centered program of studies.

The 1938-1939 academic year could be called a watershed in General College history. On one hand, with the death in 1938 of President Coffman, the college lost one of its most interested, consistent, informed, and powerful supporters. On the other, foundation-sponsored research was beginning to provide empirical data capable of authenticating and directing curriculum development. The grants enabled MacLean to launch two studies.

The first, which the faculty referred to as the "adolescent study," focused upon students then enrolled in General College and upon their parents. It was both a personnel and a curriculum survey. It was designed to yield descriptive information which could be used to evaluate the current program of the college, and be translated into guidelines for future curriculum offerings designed to meet specific educational needs. The project was initiated in the summer of 1935 by John G. Darley (later chairman of the Department of Psychology in the College of Science, Literature, and the Arts, and subsequently dean of the University's Graduate School) and by Kathleen McConnon. Both were newly appointed instructors and research counselors in General College. The adolescent study was completed by Cornelia Taylor Williams (later head of counseling and advising in General College) and reported in her These We Teach.¹⁷

Companion research, customarily referred to locally as the "adult study," was designed by two other new General College faculty members: sociologist Raymond F. Sletto and political scientist Thomas J. B. Wenner. Its purpose was to test the effectiveness of undergraduate curriculum and instruction at the University of Minnesota by requesting evaluations and suggestions from 1,600 former students, some of whom had been away from the campus five or ten years and all of whom had been enrolled in one of the four largest undergraduate divisions: the Colleges of Science, Literature, and the Arts; Engineering; Education; and Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics. Specialists designed the questionnaires and the format for follow-up interviews. Results yielded information about general characteristics, personal life, family life, occupations, and community involvement. The study was completed by C. Robert Pace (subsequently of the University of California, Los Angeles) and reported in his They Went to College: A Study of 951 Former University Students.¹⁸

Application of these arduous, pre-computer surveys to the General College program (the two volumes became pioneer classics in the field of educational research), as well as lesser studies carried out within the college, was the responsibility of home economist and curriculum specialist Ivol Spafford,

formerly of Ohio State University, who became Curriculum Coordinator under MacLean. The book she edited and wrote in part, Building a Curriculum for General Education: A Description of the General College Program, was published in 1943.¹⁹

Broadly speaking, the General College general education described by Spafford rested upon a "life-centered" curriculum featuring courses clustered in "orientation areas" and in subject-matter fields. The four fundamental, special areas were Vocational Orientation, Home Life Orientation, Individual Orientation, and Social-Civic Orientation. The general education subject-matter fields were more conventional: Biological Science, Physical Science, General Arts, Human Development Studies, and Literature, Speech and Writing.

For the most part, the curriculum was free choice and almost entirely without prerequisites. Each subject was intended to be as compact and as practical and applied as possible. At the outset, courses carried no specific credit, and work was graded Pass, Fail, or Honors. An Associate in Arts degree was awarded whenever a candidate performed satisfactorily in six comprehensive examinations based upon the orientation and general education areas or clusters of courses. Good teaching was emphasized with much attention given to laboratory or studio instruction and numerous audio-visual aids. (Now part of Continuing Education and Extension, the large and vigorous Audio-Visual Library of today originated in General College.) The college maintained its own reading room with course-related materials on open shelves. Every teacher was an advisor. A special counseling office with a professional staff, the first on campus, was an integral part of the whole program.

The foundation grants mentioned above also funded appointment of coordinators in the major comprehensive examination areas. These administrator-teachers interpreted results of the studies to course instructors (most of whom were borrowed from other departments), developed and taught the core courses, supervised experimentation, and helped formulate objectives and design organizational structure for the curriculum.²⁰

Still another person added to the faculty in the wake of the foundation grants was a specialist in educational research and higher education who was fresh from doctoral work at Harvard. Ruth E. Eckert, later director of the Bureau of Educational Research and Regents Professor of Education, had the assignment of studying the characteristics of General College students and evaluating the effectiveness of the educational programs provided for them. Her findings are reported in Outcomes of General Education: An Appraisal of the General College Program.²¹

The prospect, and the actuality, of American involvement in World War II interrupted the promising progress of General College. Administrators MacLean and Williams left for military or war-related activities. Horace T. Morse assumed responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the college in 1940, assisted by a physicist who had been a member of the faculty since 1935, Alfred L. Vaughan. Their task during the war years was extremely demanding as the campus was denuded of students, and instructors taught for a year or less before being summoned to national service. Moreover, some University departments could not be as generous in lending instruction as they had been in the past.

Yet the program continued on course in spite of difficulties. New

occupational sequences were installed. Credits were assigned to courses beginning in the fall, 1943, term. Requirements for the Associate in Arts degree became more explicit: completion of 90 credits; satisfactory performance on four (instead of six) comprehensive examinations; three quarters of physical education; and a complete physical examination at the Health Service. A General College recognition society, Beta Phi Beta, was established in 1942 to reward scholastic achievement, service to the college or to the University, and evidence of good character and citizenship.²²

All in all, General College ended this chapter in its history with a material sense of maturity, certainty, and direction. It knew its students. It knew the strengths and weaknesses of its program. It survived the upheaval of the war years. Although its standing with the University declined after Coffman's death in 1938, its reputation outside Minnesota sustained it in the face of home critics.

Stable Years 1945 - 1965: Life in General College during the two decades following, World War II was hectic and demanding--too many students, too little money--yet the college gained independence, acceptance, and stability through these years. When MacLean resigned in 1940, direction of General College became the responsibility of an all-University advisory committee the chairman of which, Dean T. R. McConnell of the College of Science, Literature, and the Arts, held personal responsibility for the younger unit. That same year Morse became assistant director under McConnell, and Vaughan was made secretary of the advisory committee. Also in 1940, Guy Stanton Ford, by this time President of the University, assigned to General College and its 21 faculty members a separate budget drawing independently upon general University support funds. Dr. Morse became associate director in 1942. In 1946, when he was made dean, Dr. Vaughan was named assistant dean.

The final step toward complete independence within the University system came on March 26, 1951, when President James Lewis Morrill discharged the advisory committee in a letter reading, in part:

Originally appointed in 1940...the General College Advisory Committee, which was a presidentially commissioned group, rendered important service to the College and to the University as a whole, notably in the realm of policy making.

The General College now enjoys full status as an administrative and instructional unit, comparable with the other Colleges of the University, with a faculty to whom it is important to assign full responsibility for policy making, curriculum, etc. I have reviewed with Dean Morse the history and present operation of the Advisory Committee, and it seems to both of us no longer necessary to call upon this Committee for continuing service.

Accordingly, the General College Advisory Committee is now discharged.²³

Thus, after 1940, General College had its own budget; after 1946, it had its own dean; after 1951, it was free of its supervising committee.

Other developments bear witness to the stability and acceptance General College was winning through these years:

- steadily declining proportion of "borrowed" faculty
- rising enrollments: 1932 - 489
1941 - 732
1952 - 1189
1966 - 3786
- increasing numbers of students in other units electing General College courses
- specific General College courses designated as required studies in certain degree programs of other units
- credits earned in General College widely applied toward satisfying baccalaureate degree distribution requirements

Much of this can be attributed in no small degree to the integrity and high administrative skill shown by Dean Morse and Dean Vaughan.

But Morse and Vaughan have still other achievements to their credit. Heading an open-admissions unit offering a low-budget program of non-traditional studies in the setting of a highly conservative, research-oriented university, they gave painstaking attention to the work of recruiting and orienting able young faculty. They sat in on classes personally, holding critiques or post-mortems; provided peer models; assigned merit salary increases based partly upon effective classroom performance. It is no accident that today the most prestigious all-University recognition of outstanding contributions to undergraduate education in the University as a whole carries a thousand-dollar prize and is named for Horace T. Morse. Comparable contributions to the work of the General College itself are recognized by an annual Alfred L. Vaughan Award.

During these stable years, the two deans helped keep the faculty in touch with national trends by securing funding for the 1949 Minnesota Conference on Building a Program of General Education. The program featured Sidney Hook of Washington Square College, Clarence H. Faust of Stanford University, T. Raymond McConnell, who had become president of the University of Buffalo, and the redoubtable Malcolm S. MacLean, by this time a professor of education at the University of California, Los Angeles.²⁴ They also continued the tradition of maintaining a curriculum expressing student needs by launching a self-study in 1954, as well as an ambitious 5-10-year follow-up of students, under the direction of Student Counseling Division Head, Dr. G. Gordon Kingsley. They participated in the California study of general education, and played leading roles in establishing the Association for General and Liberal Studies.

Much of this interested University administrators and the faculty at large only marginally. Although they paid little attention to specific events or gains, yet they increasingly accepted and supported General College on faith. Faith, that is, in its four chief administrators: Dean Morse, Associate Dean Vaughan, and counseling chiefs Williams and Kingsley. Their granite integrity, meticulous attention to detail, outstanding ability, and love for the University as a whole won for them the deep respect and complete confidence of all

who worked with them. They contributed immeasurably to the strength and utility of General College during these years between 1945 and 1965.

Challenging Years 1965 - 1975: The tensions prevailing upon many campuses from one end of the country to the other during the last half of the 1960s reflected domestic turmoil and a series of momentous events which seemed to turn victory in World War II to ashes. The latter half of the '40s and the decade of the '50s saw communist regimes established in Central Europe, China, and Cuba accompanied by the beginnings of the Cold War with the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Korea, NATO, and American financial assistance to a weakening France embattled with its former colonies in Indochina. At home, Supreme Court decisions such as Shelley v. Kraemer and Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka encouraged Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders to undertake massive campaigns demanding justice and civil rights for by-passed groups. In 1956, President Eisenhower sent a military advisory and assistance group to the southern portion of a newly partitioned Vietnam, and in 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik.

All of this was prelude to the dramatic events of the 1960s.

- 1960 U.S. MAAG in South Vietnam increased to 685; sit-ins begin in South.
- 1961 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 3,200; Kennedy confrontation with Khrushchev in Vienna; Bay of Pigs disaster in Cuba.
- 1962 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 11,000; James Meredith enrolls in the University of Mississippi; Baker v. Carr addresses apportionment.
- 1963 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 16,000; race riots in Birmingham, Alabama; King's massive civil rights demonstration in Washington with its "I Have a Dream" speech; Gideon V. Wainwright addresses legal aid for penniless accused of felonies; president of South Vietnam assassinated; Kennedy assassinated.
- 1964 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 23,000; China explodes nuclear bomb; Escobedo v. Illinois addresses police procedures during arrests; Gulf of Tonkin Resolution gives President broad powers to repel foreign aggression.
- 1965 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 184,000; Malcolm X assassinated.
- 1966 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 355,000, yet TET offensive successful; Miranda v. Arizona addresses right of accused to legal representation during police interrogation.
- 1967 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 485,000; race riots in Detroit, Newark, other cities.
- 1968 U.S. forces in South Vietnam 536,000; Robert Kennedy assassinated; Martin Luther King, Jr., assassinated; Democratic national convention met in a Chicago torn by students and other demonstrators; Chicago 8.

These events, as all then engaged in higher education remember, were accompanied by violent demonstrations, protests, strikes on campuses all over the nation.

Students strongly opposed the draft, the war in Vietnam, government secrecy, a society in which some groups had to struggle for basic civil rights, and an educational system which they perceived to be impersonal, irrelevant, devoted more to arcane research than to effective teaching.

The protests were so vigorous, sustained, and extensive that every sort of government agency or professional organization was galvanized into investigating the truth of allegations being made, and into proposing remedies. The American Council on Education, for example, the Carnegie Foundation, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, associations in professional fields or liberal arts disciplines, the President of the United States--all these, and others, appointed consultants, committees, task groups, and commissions to assess the condition of post-high school education and indicate desirable directions for future development. Completed reports constitute an admirable history of higher education in the America of the post-World War II decades, as well as a map for guiding institutions through the seventies and eighties.

Meanwhile, amid all the furor, colleges and universities in the United States were feeling the impact of President Lyndon B. Johnson's domestic program. During all his years in office, Johnson maintained that America was rich enough and powerful enough to fight communism abroad and build a "Great Society" at home--both at the same time. So as crisis succeeded crisis, Congress gave Johnson Medicare, the Appalachia Assistance Act, legislation to counteract urban blight, a higher education act, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and more. Programs were established for dozens of target groups: Head Start, Upward Bound, Newgate, AFDC, Work-Study, New Careers, Martin Luther King Program. The University acquired a Center for Urban and Regional Affairs; departments of Women's, Black, Chicano, and Native American Studies; and a HELP Center. These agencies, programs, and funds were intended to make higher education accessible to members of groups once by-passed by American society. A very large proportion of those in our metropolitan area who sought this access entered the University of Minnesota via the open door of General College.

Representatives of these groups already were enrolled, and we had had some experience working with them, when the numerous investigations of American higher education began to result in recommendations. Although the analysts assembled under a variety of auspices and adopted differing modes of operation, their findings share extensive areas of agreement. They demand, for example:

- easier access for minorities, women, the poor, second-chancers
- programs sufficiently flexible and diverse to meet the needs of a pluralistic society
- accreditation, recognition of non-traditional learning
- utilization of experiential learning
- attention to imparting skills and values
- modernized, extensive, occupational or applied education
- improved classroom teaching
- renovated general education
- innovative degree structures
- individualized, student-designed studies

We applauded these recommendations for they point to paths General College had been tracing for some years. We had been an open-door college, with a free-choice curriculum, since 1932. Since 1972, we had offered student-designed baccalaureate degrees. Always giving close attention to effective teaching, we gave degree credit for non-traditional and experiential learning, and during the 1970s, we embarked upon a variety of applied or occupational education programs. In short, 1975 found us already functioning on the outward edge of the frontiers for American higher education recommended by the national studies.

Assessment-Adjustment 1975: So much has been happening in General College in recent years that we are today in the midst of still another appraisal of our works and ways. To a recent evaluation of our baccalaureate programs, we are adding a student evaluation of our two-year or associate degree studies. We are braced for external evaluators, and preparing for rendering account to colleagues from within the University.

The fact that the Association for General and Liberal Studies held its annual conference in Minneapolis this autumn gave us another opportunity--a unique opportunity--to secure external reaction and appraisal. We invited those attending the conference to come a day early to join representatives from public and private institutions in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area at information sessions conducted at the conference hotel by General College faculty as well as by some other University specialists, in order to relate information about, and secure reactions to, such matters as...

General College students now enrolling in this urban university:
Africans; Blacks; Asian/Pacific Students; Chicano/Latino; Native Americans; Single-Parent Students; Incarcerated Students; Fully Employed Students; Weekend Students.

What we do to recruit and retain these students, as well as the native Minnesota genus: Head Start; Upward Bound, Day Community with its South High School link--the Connection; our Commanding English Program and the TRIO Program--Courses and Integrated Survival Seminars; Tutorials; Counseling.

Our experiments in group advising; orientation to planning individualized baccalaureate degree programs including personal statement, core program, passing the admissions committee, and planning the senior report.

Ways we integrate field experience and internship in our business and urban studies, as well as in our occupational sequences for law enforcement/corrections; human services generalist program; and program for direct service workers in the field of aging.

Our general education approach in sociology, psychology, science, composition, humanities, mathematics, and family life studies.

Our credit-heavy, interdisciplinary courses with themes emphasizing, e.g.,

- the social sciences: Conflict and Social Change
- the sciences: Energy, Its Uses and Abuses
- the humanities: Toward a Good Life

There is more we wish we could have presented: e.g.,

Our experiments in teaching creativity, values, critical thinking.

Our occupational sequences in fire-fighting service; aviation.

Our new student personnel services combining traditional student counseling and the approach we developed during the troubled sixties, which includes social worker service, ethnic group tutors, and advocacy.

Our Urban Decision-Making Seminar which meets in the Hennepin County Government Center to discuss the case history of an important recent community project--construction of the HHH Metrodome--which was planned by faculty and one of our graduates, and which involves presentations by the owner of our sole daily paper in Minneapolis; media personages from television and radio; chairman of the local AFL-CIO council; city treasurer; city planner; representatives of the Minnesota Twins, the Vikings; Dome Management, etc.

As one looks back upon the fifty years of its history, one cannot help being deeply impressed by the pragmatic vitality of the General College program. Viewing it from the vantage of the Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Commission helps give it perspective. Fifteen years ago, the Commission said in its Philosophy for Minnesota Higher Education:

The primary purpose of education is to meet the needs of individuals. While goals of education may be expressed in terms of contributions to society or to the State, the first objective of formal education at all levels is individual development....Since it is the use of cultivated talents by individuals who can function effectively that most benefits a free society, education designated to meet the needs of individuals best serves the needs of the state.²⁵

This statement, which was published in March, 1968, calls to mind General College beginnings. In February, 1932, the Committee of Seven referred to the proposed new college as part of the University's "constant effort to give some recognition to individual differences and needs, despite the overwhelming number of students with which we have to deal."

As we review the fifty ensuing years, we perceive that from 1932 to 1982, General College remained faithful to the twin doctrines of individual differences and democracy of access to higher education. We see it in its policies and practices:

- continuous studies of student body
- flexible, responsive, free-choice curriculum
- individualized degree programs
- centralized student personnel services
- effective teaching
- student-centered programs

We see it in outreach to the depression generation, veterans of World War II and the Cold War, the poor, the by-passed, the disadvantaged, those rejected by conventional education.

We see it also as we watch our students cross the platform at the commencement programs held throughout the academic year. Here come the future president of a major outdoor advertising company, the president of our largest radio-tv network, the vice president and chief executive officer of our regional telephone company, and that of a major savings and loan association. Here are the director of a Minneapolis art center, the Minneapolis city treasurer, the chair of the Hennepin county board of commissioners, the chair of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, a Minnesota state attorney general, and the University's most recent Nobel Prize winner.

And here, too, are men and women who touch our daily lives and greet us wherever we go: dental assistants, retail sales personnel, aviators, firemen, nurses, policemen, social worker assistants, legal assistants, entertainers, sports stars, and those who join us in ticket lines for Orchestra Hall, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the Guthrie Theatre.

"All creatures, great and small, the Lord God made them all," writes the Welsh veterinarian. And once upon a time some of them knocked upon the door of the University of Minnesota; the General College said, in the words of the Spanish host, "Come in. Welcome! This is your house!"

NOTES

¹James Gray, The University of Minnesota, 1851-1951 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1951), p. 147.

²Ibid., p. 148.

³Ibid., p. 206.

⁴Ibid., p. 213.

⁵Ibid., p. 194. Emphasis added.

⁶Ibid., p. 198.

⁷Roland Lincoln Guyotte III, Liberal Education and the American Dream: Public Attitudes and the Emergence of Mass Higher Education, 1920-1952 (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1981). Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1981, pp. 113-114.

⁸Norman W. Moen, "A Documentary History of General College," General College Newsletter 13:4:6 (February, 1967). Based on documents in University of Minnesota Archives, Walter Library, Minneapolis East Campus.

⁹Guyotte, op. cit., p. 113.

¹⁰Moen, op. cit., p. 6.

¹¹Emphasis added.

¹²Moen, op. cit., pp. 10-13.

¹³Guyotte, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

¹⁴Moen, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁵Guyotte, op. cit., p. 129.

¹⁶Bulletin of the University of Minnesota: The University Junior College, 1932-1933, 35:37:7 (June 6, 1932).

¹⁷Cornelia T. Williams, These We Teach: A Study of General College Students (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1943).

¹⁸C. Robert Pace, They Went to College: A Study of 951 Former University Students (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1941).

¹⁹Ivot Spafford, Building A Curriculum for General Education: A Description of the General College Program (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1943).

²⁰Norman W. Moen, "The History and Prospects of General College, 1932-1982," General College Newsletter, 35:4:1-15 (June, 1979).

²¹Ruth E. Eckert, Outcomes of General Education: An Appraisal of the General College Program (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1943).

²²Horace T. Morse, "The College and the Curriculum," Chapter 20 in Spafford, op. cit., passim.

²³Reproduced in General College Newsletter, 2:8:2 (April 13, 1951).

²⁴Proceedings reported in Horace T. Morse, Editor, General Education in Transition (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1951).

²⁵Norman W. Moen, "The 1966-1968 General College Biennial Report," General College Newsletter, 14:3:1-2 (June, 1968).