

A report prepared for
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New Directions for the
University

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ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC
POLICY SCIENCES AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

by
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The General Plan

Every field of knowledge is mirrored in the policies of governments and para-governments. Conversely, all public policies -- whether local, national or supra-national -- reflect various fields of knowledge. No university has thus far fully organized itself with regard to this fact. The usefulness of doing so increases year by year. The University of Maryland, with a strong tradition of local, national, and world-wide operations, has reasons to be the first to do so.

The University can organize effectively for its policy operations by 1) setting up a Center for Public Policy Operations as a top-level office extending from the central academic administration; 2) stimulating the development in a Public Policy Node in every substantive department of the University to receive initiatives and support and to generate public policy services of research, advice, and instruction for the Center and for outside interests; and 3) establishing World Policy Nodes (directed by the Center and managed by University College) in the ten or more cultural regions of the world for the same purposes plus the placement abroad of students and staff for their own studies and research.

The Broad Scope of Public Policy

"Public Policy" refers to governmental and para-governmental conduct dominating the behavior of a people on an issue. There are as many policies as there are issues; the number is indefinitely large. Concerns of public policy hence coincide with and are as important as the concerns of politics and government -- peace and war, welfare, education, equal opportunity, energy resources, industry and wealth, environmentalism, the arts, etc.

Frequently, apolitical and suspicious educators attack public policy studies as an adulterated subject-matter, as contrary to history and the liberal arts, as a threat to pure science and research. Their observations are often correct, but they are mistaken in principle. Public policy is a broad branch of the applied sciences. Most disciplines in fact are articulated around general social needs. Fundamentally, any pure proposition is convertible into an applied proposition; the pure proposition says, " 'A' is a function of 'B' "; the applied proposition says, "To achieve 'A', do 'B'." Thus all public policy academic operations should be logically defensible on educational grounds; then the question resolves into: "Is it good or bad education?", which is always a necessary question.

Problems of Public Policy Centers Elsewhere

"Public policy" has some connotations of a magical term. Besides its inherent logical and functional meanings, it has been used to expand the budgets of departments, reach out for government contracts and foundation grants, appease special interest groups, create reputations for professors, and commemorate deceased statesmen. Understandably, then, most establishments for public policy studies at universities have failed or are going nowhere.

Even where these predictable but extraneous motives have been under control, policy study groups have failed. They may be too narrow, as when they focus upon the U.S. Presidency or Foreign Policy, and thereupon provide merely substitute courses in political science, or a visitors' club. They may provide technical services for a state Legislature, or study elections, or promote the civil service, or even act as budget watchdogs: these are all valuable functions in themselves, but do not fulfill the need for a large and concerted view of all areas of policy and a rally and stimulation of the university's multiform resources for guiding the processes of policy.

Still other public policy centers address current issues but in a superficial way. This is hard to avoid, because current issues are popular subjects, promoted on

all sides, and discussed at an easy low level of science and philosophy. An issue that is current but trivial should not engage an institution that is supposed to be far-ranging and digging into the roots of social problems. In one sense, no issue is trivial, especially to those concerned, but one does not swing Brookings Institution onto the study of the Baltimore traffic problem.

Finally, a common problem of policy centers is their organization, which may at one extreme become a tightly enmeshed activity of a political science department or law school, or at the other extreme a diffuse, desultory discussion group of scattered academic interests that gives, by the way, a cafeteria master's degree.

Four Elementary Principles

A university moving into the area of public policy forcibly can observe certain precautions, besides those already implied.

Avoid a structure that exposes the University to charismatic leadership uselessly. The glamour and publicity that may be attendant upon the head of a large, active policy center is counter-productive. An Executive Committee with a term-serving chairman is bound to be more representative of a university's potential and constituency, more flexible, more unassuming than a single head.

Open up public policy operations. Let proposals, finances, study and consulting designs, methodology, and findings all be publicly accessible and available. Give no private and secret advice. Avoid private-serving or secret research.

Commit the whole University to a policy posture. It has been said, every tourist abroad should be a diplomat and every soldier a psychological warrior; if so, every faculty member should be a public policy maker. This is especially true in crisis, and an endless crisis is at hand. One might conceive of more -- of a university basically structured along policy science lines. But this is unnecessary, and anyhow impossible. It suffices to bring enough influence to bear throughout the University to counter the normal academic inclinations to withdraw from policy problems into remote specialization and indifference.

In handling policy studies, include as a matter of course a treatment of alternatives. Insist in the beginning upon strong and explicit justification for a study or activity, and upon the incorporation of a devil's advocate (a 'null hypothesis') in all projects. If this is done as a matter of principle and rule, much trouble can be avoided from certain sponsors of policy studies who are aggressive and foresee their case as scientifically weak. It also ensures a stronger and more logical logic in undertakings.

A Center for Public Policy Operations

An Organization for Public Policy Operations at the University of Maryland is visualized as a system of research, consultation and teaching that follows the University structure as a separate, coordinated, responsive, and outward-looking set of complementary activities.

The postulated Organization consists of three general elements: A Center for Public Policy Operations; a set of University Public Policy Nodes; and a set of University World Nodes of Public Policy. These will be treated here in turn .

The Center is envisioned as a Committee-headed institute reporting to the President of the University. The Executive Committee is composed of the chiefs of academic and research affairs at the University and three policy science executives. It reports, organizes, formulates fiscal and substantive policies and directives, audits, and evaluates. For all other purposes, the Committee is composed of the three policy science executives, and their decisions are final within their scope. One of the executives is elected Chairman of both forms of the Committee for a three-year term by the full five-member Committee.

The Center's tasks are two:

A. To organize, stimulate and support the public policy operations of all departments and similar units of the University. This includes lines of public policy

coordination throughout the on-campus activities of all geographically distinct units of the University, and the off-campus public policy operations of University College.

B. To conduct all-University types of projects ('peak projects') that include: a) total appraisals, research, consultation, conferences, and operations involving numerous disciplines, and b) studies of the peak organizations of society and of general issues of the society, such as the total role of the legislature, the place of business, the participation of the public in politics, and the general welfare.

The University Public Policy Nodes

A node is "a central point in any complex or system," among other things. The term is used here to designate the sub-centers for public policy operations that occur in connection with the existing centers, that is, departments and similar units, which are themselves nodes. If a Department of Physics, for instance, is conducting a study of "earthquake prediction in the Lower Mississippi Valley" this would be a project of the Physics Public Policy Node. And so on with all other units. (The example here is chosen just because it may appear to be "non-policy" and "pure science, but it is in fact "applied" and much affected, too, by political, environmental and sociological influences.)

Generally it may be expected that any department will

include at least one scholar who is "policy-oriented". It may be expected too that this person would tend to assume responsibilities for representing the department in University affairs concerning public policy, and if chosen would bring to bear in University-wide councils the attitudes and experience and aspirations of the department. Whether the departmental representative should be selected by election, appointment, nomination from the Center or otherwise is not a crucial question here, provided only that it be understood that each unit should have its representative.

The departmental representative would collect and relay all-University and sectional information and points of view to his colleagues. He would alert them to opportunities and report on their work and opinions to the Assembly of Representatives for Public Policy Operations. Some part of this would constitute his report to the Center office on his unit's work.

The Assembly would consist of representatives from all units. It essentially hears, discusses, reflects, and reports. It can be delegated the power to pass resolutions, which would have troublesome aspects, as typically occurs with assemblies, but can also provide support, reassurance, and strength to public policy operations (see below, First Steps.)

World Nodes of Public Policy

There is no world university although every great university has world-wide connections and one, sponsored by the United Nations and located in Japan, is specifically denoted as such. For a generation the University of Maryland has operated a world-wide network of schools and classes through its University College, hence has available a strong base. The world crisis now fully begun has ended a temporary isolationism in America and is moving the government toward the posting of large military and civilian contingents abroad. The world oil economy is only part of a much greater world circulatory system that maintains the heart of America.

It appears that there will be an increasing need for teaching, research, and policy studies abroad, under conditions more difficult than those of the past generation. Any centers set up are likely to be more closely scrutinized than before by host countries, and there is an increased element of risk attendant upon foreign operations. Yet it has been shown time and time again that the American presence abroad can be a moral, scientific, and humanistic presence, typified by professors, students, and technicians, and fairly divorced from a military and diplomatic presence.

American university offices abroad should now move more emphatically toward a domination by foreign local nationals with a consciousness of world order as the goal.

That is, apart from serving all the individual motives involved in the foreign policy study operations, the abstract goal of the foreign center or node should be the heightened consciousness of a forthcoming world order in which the skills and connections developed at the node would play a substantial part.

This reformed concept of a foreign study center would place controls over appointments, personnel, students, curriculum and materials in the hands of local nationals. It would be like placing ones troops and materiel under foreign command, with only withdrawal as the major sanction. Here there should be enough confidence generated in the authenticity, usefulness, and acceptability of the common messages of science, and humanistic studies, and pragmatic problem-solving approaches obtainable as a result of the American presence to justify and maintain it from the perspective of both the host country and the American University.

The University of Maryland might aim at the establishment of World Nodes of Public Policy at ten world regional centers, one in Black Africa, one in Latin America, one in the Soviet Bloc, one in the Chinese region, and so on (see complete list in Appendix A). Expansion of the program after the first ten nodes are established, might target the one hundred great megalopolises of the world.

Directives for the World Nodes would emanate from the Executive Committee of the Center for Public Policy Operations, but respecting individual Nodes, from each of them so that the Maryland Center would be acting like the Federal Register in a sense, just publishing the rules of the Nodes. Management of the regional Nodes would be entrusted to University College.

If finances permitted, an annual conference of foreign directors and Americans from the ten Nodes might be held at College Park or in one of the regions.

Perhaps the only Americans or other foreigners to be designated to the Nodes, in the beginning at least, would be a senior policy studies specialist, and an assistant who should be a communications technician. American teachers and students would come and go; foreign nationals would dominate, as administrators, teachers, researchers, and consultants. The student body would be mixed.

So far as local conditions would permit, the policy studies undertaken in a foreign setting might be of two types: a) the products of "buzz groups," locally produced informal reports and tapes that would be generally distributed in the region, in America and elsewhere; and b) formal studies, stressing international collaboration and solutions, whether the topic be solid wastes disposal or disarmament.

In general, the University World Public Policy Nodes promise many complications, but the returns to the University, the participants, the foreign regions, the United States, and the cause of world order ought well to exceed their costs in efforts and money.

First Steps

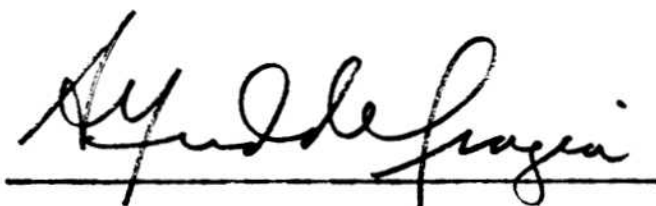
1. The President establishes a pro tem Center for Public Policy Operations at the University of Maryland.
2. The President appoints the five-person Executive Committee.
3. The Executive Committee publishes the goals of the Center and an explanation of how every unit of the University can examine and develop its public policy posture.
4. The President convokes an all-University meeting of one representative from every working academic unit. He shares the platform with the Executive Committee to explain, illustrate, and conduct discussion from the floor.
5. Executive Committee requests all academic units of the University to prepare and submit a report on actual policy-associated activities and potential policy activities, with a public policy budget (along zero-base lines). Bind and publish these reports as a whole, as "A First Inventory of Public Policy Operations at the University of Maryland."
6. The first assembly is formalized into the University Public Policy Assembly with delegates from all units, meeting semi-annually for three days. Program: first day,

comment and discussion on the Inventory and state of the Organization for Public Policy Operations; second day, workshops to criticize individual unit reports; third day, reassembly of the whole to consider a statement of achievements and failings and restate directions and objectives for the short-term and long-term.

7. The Executive Committee allocates funds among the public policy nodes that require aid, as evidenced by the first Inventory. Grants in aid of activities are perhaps more effective than released time as a rule.

8. Given the Inventory, an early task of the Committee would be to prepare an all University Public Policy Operations Budget, standardizing vocabulary for describing resource inputs and production outputs, and detailing humanpower and material needs.

All of the above eight steps may be accomplished in one year.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Alfred de Grazia", is written over a horizontal line.

Alfred de Grazia

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