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COMMENTS:

Discussant

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It is a privilege to participate in The Ohio State University Centennial College of Law Program and to respond to Mr. Darrell's excellent presentation on the role of the universities in continuing professional education.

My own experience in this field has been largely concerned with university developed and presented management development programs offered to executives from business or public enterprise. Currently, I am involved administratively with the continuing education program of the College of Administrative Science of this University, designed for executive personnel in business and government, for professionals in the field of social work and for labor union members and their organizations. It is from the point of view of these experiences that I would like to direct my remarks.

One of my good friends, Dean James R. McCoy (Ohio State University) is fond of observing that the life of any administrator is one of a mad race between retirement and obsolescence—and that the manager is indeed fortunate if the race ends in a photo finish.

This is just another way of saying that the central fact of modern society is the accelerating pace of change and the unprecedented increase in the rate of accumulation of new knowledge. Change, of course, is not new. What is different now and probably for the future is the increasing rate of change—in terms of technology, in terms of social and economic change and in terms of the fast growing size and complexity of organizations. All these factors exert growing pressures on professional administrators in every field and in all organizations to seek better, more effective responses.

Each year we spend increasingly larger sums on higher education. Assuming no major change in approach by the institutions of higher education, it is clear that this investment will need to be accelerated just to stay abreast of student population growth. At the same time this investment in the individual will surely depreciate as a result of the knowledge explosion unless steps can be taken to prevent or slow intellectual obsolescence. While there is no simple or complete answer to winning the race between professional obsolescence and retirement, certainly some contribution can be made through a systematic program of continuing education providing life long learning opportunities for adults for application in both their professional and personal lives.

Dr. Lowell R. Erlund, Dean, Oakland University, speaking at the University of Nevada last spring remarked that professional people above all

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others should be most amenable and responsive to the need and opportuni-
ties for continuing education. He added parenthetically that universities
have not been notable, however, for their success in imbuing their products
with the idea that continued professional development must be a systematic
course of action in the professional's future. Yet for a number of reasons
much of the student's education may need to take place over the years after
completing his degree work. For of that which is learned and relevant
much is forgotten, much is soon obsolete and much of the knowledge
which he will need is not yet known.

The institution of higher education, it is assumed, seeks to serve its var-
ious publics through its limited relevant research and instructional resources.
If it views education as a lifelong process it must seek to serve as one of its
major publics its graduates and others who no longer attend school or
college as a major occupation. The needs of this group, for upgrading,
updating and improving competence differ in good part from those of
younger full-time university students. Thus, there is a considerable range
of program activity that may be undertaken by universities in continuing
education and there are strong pressures from some segments of the com-
community demanding that the university provide such programs. The ques-
tion is not whether the university should provide such service but rather
what objectives and clientele should it serve and how should it best serve
them. The university must decide the role that it will play in continuing
education, the nature and degree of commitment that it will make and the
type of administrative organization that it will use in operating such pro-
grams.

A position paper of The Division of General Extension Association of
Land Grant Colleges and State Universities presents a general concept of
university continuing education as both philosophy and function. As a phi-
losophy, university continuing education sees the campus as a community
of scholars making itself as useful as possible to the total society from which
the institution draws its inspiration and support. As a function, univer-
sity continuing education seeks to identify public problems and public needs,
to interpret these concerns to the university, to focus university skills and
resources upon them and thence to translate university insights into edu-
cational programs.

At The Ohio State University a major commitment has been made to
the maintenance of a significant continuing education program as evidenced
by the level of participation of faculty and participants, by the existing
administrative organization and by the recent completion of a multimillion
dollar Center for Tomorrow which is the main support facility for on cam-
pus continuing education. At present, the University organizational ap-
proach to continuing education as a function is to centralize policy and
decentralize operation of most programs to the colleges. Thus, while a
few continuing education programs are conducted at the university level, most of the programs are developed and presented by the individual colleges—Engineering, Medicine, Law, Pharmacy, Administrative Science, etc., and the bulk of these programs are continuing professional education programs.

Since operationally, continuing education is decentralized at Ohio State, just as the University must decide on the role it will play in this field, so too must the individual colleges decide as to the extent of their participation in terms of their related publics. A positive decision to engage in continuing education in a significant way calls for, in my judgment, (1) commitment on the part of the faculty as the key resource to be actively involved in continuing education, (2) design of clear objectives and policies, and (3) establishment of an organization to implement such objectives, promote continuing education as a function, to work closely with clients and to assume the administrative, logistical and coordinative tasks that are required.

Continuing Education has had a substantial development in the College of Administrative Science and its predecessor, the College of Commerce and Administration. About two years ago, The College of Administrative Science was created as a successor to the former College of Commerce and Administration as a result of the university academic reorganization. The Division of Continuing Education which had been established in 1960 as part of the former college retained its identity in the new one. Importantly to continuing education the mission statement of the new College states that its goals are "educating and training future and present professional practitioners, and teachers and researchers in the related areas, while pursuing research to generate increased knowledge. . . ." Included among the College's detailed objectives is the statement that the College accepts responsibility for "... (6) enriching and enlarging of the College's continuing education program."

The College's Continuing Education Committee widely representative of the faculty has set forth goals and principles of operation for the continuing education program of the College in the form of a statement of Objectives, Policies and General Procedures. The general objectives paragraph states that: within the educational goals of the University and the College, it is the objective of this area to provide university level education to those segments of society relevant to the college's areas of knowledge. This shall be done in such a manner as to:

1. Maximize educational service, not otherwise available, to business, labor, government and social service organizations.
2. Best utilize the limited and specialized resources of the college consistent with its other goals.
3. Disseminate the newest knowledge as it is constantly refined by the research activities of the college.
4. Link the college to the community it serves by cooperation with various education-oriented groups.
5. Reflect credit and prestige on the university, the college and its faculty.
6. Provide feedback to the college of significant developments and results.

The Continuing Education Division of the College is presently organized into five major program areas—Business Management Programs such as the Executive Development Program and others for the professional advancement of managerial personnel. Contract Programs in logistics and procurement management offering non-credit short courses in logistics management under contractual relations. Labor Education and Research Service—offering programs on campus and in communities throughout Ohio for labor union members and their organizations and conducting research in industrial relations to improve the quality of labor education. Public Administration continuing education programs for administrators of public enterprise particularly at the state and local government levels and the Continuing Education Program of the School of Social Work offering continuing professional education for social work organizations.

A general summary of the continuing education activities of the College during the fiscal year of 1970 lists a total of 108 programs attended by 9,953 participants. Sixty faculty and professional staff were employed full time in the Division of Continuing Education. Fifty-four professors in the College participated in the development of and instruction in those programs while thirty-three faculty of other colleges in the university taught in these programs.

The continuing education organization of a university or college can operate in various ways. It may, for example, be an autonomous extension division which functions as a parallel unit to the academic organization providing program development and instruction directly to clients. It may operate solely as a coordinating unit through which faculty can interface with clients in the development and presentation of programs. Or more likely it may function in terms of some combination of these extremes. However it operates it must provide a responsible point of contact at the university for continuing education program sponsors and offer access to professional program design, coordination, instruction and evaluation. The important thing is that it function to expedite the transfer of university scholarship into practice and knowledge of the problems and know-how of the practitioner into scholarly research and instruction.

While we attempt to do this in various ways, we have found advantages in our continuing education program in having a professional staff trained both in the substantive or professional area and in modes of continuing education to work with faculty and client during both program development and presentation. Among the advantages in addition to facil-
ivating faculty-client relations are interchange of program techniques, more effective utilization of institutional resources such as instructional media and conference facilities, more effective program administration and better development of the short term learning experience.

In the Business and Public Management areas most of our continuing education efforts is toward intensive, integrated residential programs of about five to ten days in length with an instructional day of about five hours. In the labor studies field our Labor Education and Research Service offers a long term non-residential Union Leadership Program, short courses and week long institutes. These statewide programs are conducted both on campus and elsewhere in the State. All of our programs are non-credit. We do not presently give grades or pass formal judgment on work performed. Such non-credit professional education can be tailor made to the educational needs of the group. It is responsive to change and immediate in providing an effective educational product.

In summary, I would like to emphasize the importance of a careful definition of objectives and policies of continuing education and the establishment of a professional continuing education organizational unit in the successful functioning of a professional continuing education program. This management approach should strongly assist in providing a fruitful environment for continuing professional education. Such an organization can provide the coordinating mechanism for faculty to work closely with clients to determine real educational needs and assistance in designing a meaningful learning experience. It can encourage the best resource people among the faculty to instruct in the program. It can administer the program providing close attention to every detail so that the instructional faculty are provided every assistance. It can review and evaluate programs to provide feedback to the faculty for subsequent improvements. It can, importantly, maintain continuing relationships with sponsors whether they be associations, companies or government agencies. It can do these things effectively and economically.