

New Directions

CHARLES STURT
UNIVERSITY

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER ON DEVELOPMENTS AT CSU

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THE CHALLENGES BEFORE US IN 1991

A message from CSU Vice-Chancellor, Professor C D Blake

In any history that may ultimately be written of Charles Sturt University, 1990 will be seen as the year in which the University's foundation was laid and its framework constructed. While it was certainly an extremely demanding year, I believe that all the effort was worthwhile. If CSU had not established university-wide academic and administrative structures then it had little prospect of becoming a credible and effective University.

Notwithstanding our efforts in 1990, the challenges we face in 1991 and beyond are even greater. Our primary tasks this year are first to establish what type of university we want CSU to become and then to develop a range of strategic plans to achieve that objective; second, we must give the academic and administrative structures we have established on paper in 1990 organisational and operational substance, and make them work.

In establishing the type of university we seek to become it is important that we strive to balance ambition with realism, that we recognise our heritage and objectively assess our strengths and weaknesses and our developmental opportunities and potential. While we now carry the title of 'university', we should not necessarily aspire to become like Sydney or Melbourne Universities or any of the other older and traditional universities. The funding realities are such that an aspiration of this kind is doomed to failure. CSU must become its own type of university. We need to clearly identify how we can best serve the Australian community and, in doing so, gain a justifiable reputation for excellence. In 1991 the University must make a number of critical and difficult decisions, particularly on its course and research profiles. These decisions will determine how we develop and how we are likely to be regarded by our peers and the wider community at the end of this decade.

Academic Planning Seminar

As a first step in developing a strategic plan for the University I am convening an academic planning seminar in Canberra on 11 and 12 March, 1991, involving some of the University's senior academic administrators, in particular, the Faculty Deans. The following external participants will provide briefings on the future prospects and challenges for higher

education in general and CSU in particular:

Professor Ian Chubb, Chair, Higher Education Council

Mr Bruce Milligan, Head, Higher Education Division, DEET

Mr Bill Daniels, Principal Adviser, Higher Education Division, DEET

Ms Trish Moran, Branch Head, Higher Education Grants and Finance Branch, DEET

Mr John Parr, Acting Branch Head, Higher Education Policy and Grants Branch, DEET

Professor Russell Linke, University of Wollongong

Professor Geoff Wilson, Chair, Research Grants Committee of the Australian Research Council

Mr Bill Mutton, Branch Head, Policy and Review Branch, DEET

Mr George Zuber, Branch Head, Institutional Development Branch, DEET

Professor Max Brennan, Chair, Australian Research Council

I believe that the University should, as a consequence of these briefings, be better placed to assess realistically the external opportunities and constraints that will significantly influence what type of university we can aspire to become. Day Two of the seminar will involve CSU staff only and will be concerned with initiating a strategic plan for the academic development of the University. I will ensure that details of the outcomes of the seminar are circulated to staff.

Management Workshops

Developing a vision of the type of university we wish to become will be a theoretical exercise unless we act to ensure that the vision can be brought to reality. Paramount among these actions is to make the new academic and administrative structures work effectively. In support of this objective I have decided that there will be a number of management workshops throughout the year. The first of these workshops, on the management of faculties, will be held in Canberra from 27 February to 1 March.

While I have only canvassed some of the issues we need to address in 1991, it is my intention this year to bring regularly to your notice matters that I believe are of importance to the future of the University. I am confident that we will meet the challenges before us and emerge at the end of 1991 as a university better equipped to meet the needs of our students and the growing competitive pressures in Australian higher education.

Issued by the Division of the Secretary