

Pour ce qui est du comportement du réseau, le Conseil dresse un bilan évolutif des inscriptions, des diplômés et des enseignants tout en dénonçant l'insuffisance actuelle des prévisions scientifiques dans tous les domaines.

Il décrit ensuite l'évolution récente de la recherche universitaire (consolidation de la recherche libre, priorités de la recherche orientée, contribution grandissante du gouvernement provincial, etc . . .), de l'éducation permanente (intégration progressive de l'éducation des adultes, généralisation des services, efforts pour augmenter la qualité) et de la formation des maîtres (prise en charge complète de la formation des enseignants par les universités et collaboration de celles-ci aux plans directeurs).

Afin de mieux différencier les établissements du réseau, cinq critères (population étudiante, éventail de programmes, niveaux d'études, effort de recherche, aire desservie et population-cible), ont été retenus pour servir de base à la définition des axes de développement propres à chaque institution; ces critères devraient permettre également de juger du bien-fondé des transformations institutionnelles ultérieures. Viennent ensuite les principales caractéristiques, missions et orientations des sept universités du réseau.

Dans ce quatrième cahier, le Conseil adopte le thème bien connu de Peter Drucker "planifier c'est informer". Cette information largement diffusée, sera étudiée et critiquée s'il y a lieu par les individus et services concernés qui l'utiliseront comme guide. L'information est donc la clef de voûte de cette planification incitative. En deuxième lieu l'analyse et l'évaluation continue du système, à l'aide d'instruments plus scientifiques, semble être actuellement la seule issue pour empêcher le système universitaire québécois de tourner en rond. Comme l'écrit le Conseil au sujet des rapports annuels que publient autant les gouvernements que les universités: "il est impossible à leur lecture d'établir le moindre bilan qualitatif des activités écoulées, tellement sont imprécises les informations révélées et obscurs les objectifs que l'on est censé poursuivre". Ce rapport entendait ébaucher de tels instruments d'analyse et d'évaluation et, même si l'on y retrouve plus souvent que nécessaire des rappels de positions antérieures ou des jugements de valeur, on peut dire que le Conseil des Universités a atteint son but.

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Council of Ontario Universities, *Review 1972-73 to 1974-75*. Toronto: 1976. 78pp.

Two notoriously difficult undertakings in university systems in North America are the establishment of cooperative relationships between individual universities, and the harmonizing of legitimate interests of governments who see the universities as public-serving institutions and the equally legitimate aspirations of universities for autonomy. Controversies are exacerbated in times of financial restraint such as are typical of the '70s. Even at the best of times voluntary coordination of operational aspects of universities and colleges has been seen to occur usually under threat of government intervention.

Given the array of forces which work in opposition to cooperative action it is encouraging to read the Council of Ontario Universities *Review*. The COU was formed in 1962,

originally as the Committee of Presidents of Provincially Assisted Universities and College of Ontario. The constitution and name were changed to present forms in 1971. Given that its object is to promote cooperation, one must forgive the tendency of the agency to report its achievements in glowing terms, for the record gives credence to the claims.

The report begins with an interesting history of the origins and developmental stages of the Ontario Council on University Affairs (not to be confused with COU) created by the Government of Ontario in 1974 to act as a source of advice to government concerning universities. That the creation of an advisory body was of great interest to the COU is apparent from its attempts to influence the nature and terms of reference of the agency. Proposed initially by the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario as one of four parallel agencies responsible to the Ontario legislature through a Minister of Post-Secondary Education the body would have had both advisory and executive powers. The COU strongly supported this recommendation on the understanding that the new council would seek systematic planning advice from COU and work closely with it in the implementation of plans. In essence the COU saw the proposed council as a buffer agency (similar to the now defunct Alberta Universities Commission) which could provide some degree of insulation from the government. However, the government chose to make the powers of the council strictly advisory, thereby permitting itself direct access into the affairs of the universities.

The COU was clearly chagrined by this decision, and the first third of the text of the report is aimed at putting the record straight from its point of view, and, by inference, in placing full responsibility for the current difficulties faced by the universities upon the government. The report then proceeds to document the accomplishments of the COU in coordinative efforts between universities, which have occurred under the aegis of its Advisory Committee on Academic Planning (ACAP). ACAP was formed in 1968 to “guide the development of provincial discipline groups and to coordinate the work of rationalizing graduate studies in the province.”

Under the threat of government embargoes, ACAP has initiated a system of shared responsibility for the development of graduate programs which features, in the words of the report, “a process of self-evaluation and self-regulation by the university community of major scope and significance,” the aim of which is to avoid unnecessary duplication while maintaining quality programs. The agreed upon processes and procedures for assessment of programs, planning new programs and implementation are outlined in the report.

In the third chapter the initiatives of ACAP in promoting inter-university cooperation in the realm of academic support are described. Libraries, computers, instructional methodology and admission application services have been foci of attention. Together with the major achievement of program coordination these appear to evidence a significant breakthrough in intra-system cooperation, and between institutions and government. For example the Program for Instructional Development is directed by a joint committee of COU and OCUA, and has been financed entirely by the government in the amount of \$950,000 for the period 1973-76.

An extensive appendix gives more details of the council’s activities. In a short post-script to the report the author cites a paragraph from COU’s constitutional mandate: “to promote cooperation among the provincially assisted universities of Ontario, and between them and the government of the province, and, generally, to work for the improvement of higher

education for the people of Ontario.” While no pretensions are made that no friction points exist, the report offers hope for those who believe that workable compromises can be found in a developing system of higher education.

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