THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON:
AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

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Your charge to us was "... to make a critical examination of the federal structure and operation of the University of London, including relationships between the centre and the Institutions, and the federal decision-making process." During July and August 1988, we interviewed some 40 School, Institute, and Senate House officials, and collected extensive documentation. In October, we conducted follow-up interviews and attended meetings of the Court and the Joint Planning Committee.

This report presents our understanding of the University's organisational environment and of its governing structures and processes. In it we offer our observations on major issues of federal governance facing the University and how they might be addressed.

Although we have attempted to become informed concerning the characteristics of British higher education and of policies currently being discussed, we do not presume to any great understanding of these. Our report presents an American perspective on the federal university. We have not attempted to tailor-make this study to be consistent with British, as opposed to American, practice. Nor have we attempted to make it acceptable to governmental agencies responsible for the University. Indeed, we lack the knowledge to make such attempts. And

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1 Authors of The Multicampus University: A Study of Academic Governance (1971) and Managing Multicampus Universities (1975). Vitae are provided in an appendix. Page references in this report are to the 1971 study.
in any event, the higher education scene in Britain is changing so rapidly, even as we write, that firm assessments are difficult, if not impossible.

We hope, however, that our views may prove useful to those responsible for shaping the organisation of the University of London. Our goal is to suggest ways in which the University can more fully achieve the potential—inherent not automatic—of a federal academic institution, a multicampus university.

The Multicampus University: The Concept

In *The Multicampus University*, we suggest that, although there are few philosophers of multicampus or federal systems, a common rationale or set of assumptions underlie their origins and continued existence:

> In sum, the multicampus university is designed to promote specialization, diversity, and cooperation—a division of labor and alternative approaches to education in a coordinated, intercampus context (p. 9).²

The underlying organisational premise of the multicampus university, we state, is that:

> ... planning, budgeting, and coordination can be most effective in an institution which has the power of governance. Not only should planning in such a context be better informed and more realistic, but there is added assurance that the plans will be implemented. By placing several campuses and programs under a common framework, the scope of planning and implementation is enlarged . . . [providing] a middle ground between the monolithic single state system and the unplanned confusion of separately governed campuses, a middle ground which has undoubted advantages. Among them are opportunities for specialization and innovation; the creation of a critical mass of educational resources not available

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² Martin Trow reminds us that the meaning of "diversity" may differ markedly between Britain and America: "I've already spoken about Britain's uneasiness about diversity, and its tendency to substitute for diversity what David Riesman has called 'marginal' differentiation," minor differences within the same structure of values regarding mission, governance, cost and standard. Real diversity would mean institutions and programs of sharply varying cost and quality, and the surrender of the academic gold standard and the honours degree as the standard for all institutions in the system" ("The Robbins Trap: British Attitudes and the Limits of Expansion." Paper prepared for a seminar at the University of Sussex, 4 July 1988, pp. 11-12).
to a single campus; economies of scale; quality control; the promotion of
differential dimensions of quality; and an effective division of administrative labor
between system and campus executives (pp. 432-33).

In the 1970s, the potential of a multicampus university in the United States had nowhere been fully achieved. But in the 1980s progress toward these goals has been such that the multicampus or federal pattern of organisation is dominant in the public sector of most American states. Virtually every leading public university (Ann Arbor, Austin, Berkeley, Chapel Hill, Madison, and many more) is a member of a multicampus system.

But what about London? Does the American model have any relevance or suggest any lessons for the University? Our conclusion is unequivocally "Yes." Indeed, the potential for a university system in London is even greater than would be the case in an American state: (1) The proximity of the individual Schools, Colleges, and Institutes affords unparalleled opportunities for student and faculty interchange and for intercollegiate facilities and resources. (2) The smaller scale of many of the individual units presents an opportunity for cooperation and coordination to achieve an effective critical mass in many aspects of the overall educational enterprise.

Formal organisation alone will not determine the place or future of the University of London or of any university in society. Organisation and environment interact:

None of the alternative patterns of organization is better or worse in abstract. They take shape and can be evaluated only in terms of the environment within which they are set. Particular sets of political and social circumstances may dictate a pattern of organization which could not survive in a different context.

The organization of higher education, therefore, is critical in combination with its environment. Organizational form affects the access and power of the different participants in academic governance with respect to specific decisions. It influences the agenda of all institutions of higher education, the manner in which that agenda will be handled, and the very substance of educational plans and programs. Organizational form affects the goals and values that control the life of the universities and colleges--singly and collectively--and will determine to a
We have no doubt that the potential of the University of London is greater than the sum of its parts. The critical question is whether the University will, in fact, be given the opportunity fully to achieve its promise. It will not have this opportunity if a hostile external environment fails to recognise the value of a federal system as a critical link between the individual Schools and governmental agencies. Nor will the opportunity arise if faculty and administrative leaders at the Schools do not consider themselves an integral part of a collaborative endeavor. The two sections that follow discuss the University's environment and its internal structures and processes. The final two sections contain our observations on the federal system in this context.

The Organisational Environment

The context within which the University of London must plan and must operate is one of extraordinary uncertainty. In a similar context, a beleaguered university president in the United States described his plight: "Administering a college today is like playing chess on the open deck of the sinking Titanic. To make matters worse, the rules seem to be changing as the game proceeds" (p. 383).

We do not expect Senate House to emulate the Titanic, but current and pending changes in Britain are of critical importance. We cite major changes here merely to indicate our awareness of them:

- Increased attention to student access, resulting from the growing disparity between a shrinking pool of the traditional 18-year old college-entry age group and employer demands for graduates.

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3 The extraordinary variety among and within different nations is brilliantly described by Burton R. Clark in *The Higher Education System: Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective*, University of California Press, 1983.
Fiscal stringency and a lessening of governmental support, coupled with demands that universities seek increased funding from private sources.

Proposals that student and parental support provide a significant proportion of the current grant.

Replacement of the University Grants Committee by the University Funding Council (UFC) and the introduction of "financial memoranda" as to how the recurrent grant is to be spent.

Shifts in the basis for allocating research support, both with respect to the recurrent grant and as between the UFC and the research councils.

Creation of the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC), with resulting predictions that the "binary principle" will decline in significance.

Increasing importance for higher education of the European Economic Community as 1992 approaches.

Changes in governmental support of medical care, with significant ramifications for the funding of teaching hospitals.

It is within this changing environment that the University of London's own structures and processes must be considered, both for current effectiveness and for usefulness and viability in an uncertain future.
The Organisational Structures and Processes

University structures and processes are at least as complex as its environment. Five seem of particular importance.

Asymmetry and Continuous Change
At least 31 units (and more, depending on what is counted) comprise the federal university. These include:

- seven multi-faculty colleges without medical schools;
- four multi-faculty colleges with medical schools;
- four free-standing medical schools (the only four in England);
- three postgraduate medical units (one a federation of eight institutions);
- a veterinary college;
- an agricultural college; and
- eleven universitywide research institutes.

All of these units have a direct reporting relationship to the central governing bodies in Senate House.

The University was even more disaggregated prior to the mergers of recent years that combined both multi-faculty colleges and medical schools. The extent of restructuring has few, if any, parallels among Western institutions. It has taken an extraordinary toll on administrative and academic time and energy, and has been a significant drain on financial resources.

There is talk of further restructuring--i.e., a confederation of Senate Institutes; regional clusters of medical schools and hospitals; five or six multi-school "campuses" ("Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences: The View Ahead," Barron, 16 July 1988). Royal Holloway and Bedford New College has approached Imperial College over the possibility of a future merger (THES, 8 July 1988).

In sum, the University has been on an extended shake-down cruise for the last decade or more. It is a credit to all concerned that, in the midst of this massive reorganisation, the educational enterprise has continued to function as effectively as it has.
Medical Schools and Hospitals
Medical schools comprise a major part of the federal university. They add complexity in their relationships with the Department of Health Services, as well as with the Department of Education and Science and the University Grants Committee. Moreover, the teaching hospitals with which the medical schools are affiliated have their own governing councils. As a medical dean remarked, the medical schools are "hopelessly intertwined" with these often centuries-old hospitals. The special role of the medical schools within the University is evidenced by the existence of a "Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Medicine," a position considered as permanent, unlike other positions carrying the "Pro" title.

Councils, Charters, and Statutes
Virtually all Colleges, Schools, and Institutes have their own governing councils, boards, or committees, usually established by formal charters or statutes. Councils and charters are evidence that the University of London is a "loosely-coupled" federal institution, perhaps more accurately defined as "confederal." The substantially independent legal status of most units of the University strongly inhibits the degree to which it is able to plan and manage. In this respect, the University may more closely resemble an American statewide coordinating agency (e.g., the California Postsecondary Education Commission) than it does a multicampus governing board (e.g., the University of California). The University is itself governed by a detailed volume of statutes, difficult to amend and often a pale representation of actual operations.

Senate House
To an outsider, the organisation of Senate House is difficult to fathom. This may be especially true to an American, although more than one British observer expressed uncertainty as to the division of labor among senior offices and officers. The "bicameral" division of labor between the Court and the Senate appears clearer on paper than may be the case: one top-level academic administrator placed the Senate under the Court in drawing an informal organization chart.

In contrast, the Joint Planning Committee (JPC) combines both academic programme and resource allocation judgments within a single body, albeit one that formally must report to both the Senate and the Court. However, the de facto distribution of authority reflects the fact that JPC members are major participants in the two parent bodies.
Two aspects of the Senate stand out: First, the elaborate super-structure of the Academic Council and its sub-committees, Faculties, Boards of Studies, Academic Advisory Boards, and the like. Second, the extent and variety of activities--academic and non-academic--that fall under the jurisdiction of the Clerk of the Senate. As explained to us, the Clerk's wide range of activities arises from his responsibilities for administrative support of the Senate Institutes, responsibilities analogous to those of School administrators for their departments.

The "dual headship" represented in the statutes by the Vice-Chancellor/Principal combination appears to be unique among British Universities, and derives from a period prior to the advent of a full-time Vice-Chancellor. Many of the Principal's duties now appear to resemble those of the Secretary of a College, responsibilities for the business and financial concerns of the central offices that are analogous to those of a Vice President for Administration in an American context. (As we understand British terminology, the title of Secretary to the University might more accurately define the post.)

Curricular Changes
The origins of the University of London are in its responsibility for administering examinations and awarding degrees. The world-wide respect afforded a "University of London degree" is clear evidence of the importance and continuing relevance of this function. To many the "London degree" remains the defining characteristic of the University.

However, the context in which this responsibility is fulfilled has changed markedly. School-based degrees and course-based programmes are on the increase, in contrast to University programmes and syllabi common to all schools. Changes in the organisation and operation of the Senate and its many subordinate agencies are inevitable and are currently under active consideration.
Observations

Our observations about the federal system—perceived problems, issues, and questions—fall into some six overlapping categories. All are relevant to the question of whether the University of London will be allowed to realize its potential as a federal system. All are important, but the first two are more important than the others.

- The Department of Education and Science and the University Funding Council, to name the two most critical elements of the University's organisational environment—must allow the University the flexibility to plan and sufficient budgetary authority to implement its plans.

- The University's own structures and processes must recognize the status and prestige of the Schools and the Heads of Schools as major participants in universitywide policy decisions.

Power is not a zero-sum game. A strong federal system will enhance the effectiveness both of the national government's management and of the Schools' operations.

Academic Planning and Resource Allocation

In The Multicampus University in 1971, we stated that planning—the promotion of intentional change—is "one of the most frequently given reasons for the establishment and continued existence of the multicampus university" (p. 215). Writing at almost the same time, the Murray Committee, appointed to evaluate the governance of the University of London, stated its

... belief that policy planning on a University basis is the fundamental raison d'être of the federal system and that it is in the fields of development planning, the determination of priorities and the promotion of intercollegiate cooperation that the main need and justification for a federal authority lie (#360).
The effective exercise of the planning function is fraught with difficulty:

Academic planning and program review are at the center of a continuing struggle for influence that engages all groups with a stake in the multicampus university—students, faculty, administrators, legislators, special interest groups, and the general public, to name only the most obvious (p. 215).

This "struggle" is clearly evident in London. The University finds itself between Schools pressured by resource constraints and the threat of an increasingly assertive central agency, the University Funding Council (UFC). Although the UFC is not yet officially in existence, concern is widespread that it will not be reluctant to impose its own detailed judgments on what the University of London is doing and how.

The issue will soon be joined. On the one hand, the Vice-Chancellor recently stated his intention "... to establish a coordinated federal planning process on a regular basis" (Report to the Court, 13 July 1988). On the other, the Government has indicated its desire that grants to universities be made the subject of "financial memoranda," setting forth conditions which the institutions are expected to meet.

What will be the relationship between the University's plans and the UFC's funding decisions? Writing in 1972, the Murray Committee stated:

If the federal authority is to determine general policy and priorities, it must clearly have financial powers and sanctions. It must have effective responsibility for matching material resources with academic planning; for the formulation of the financial needs of the University as a whole; and for the distribution of the resources made available to the University as a whole (#105).

This need for matching financial resources with academic plans had been stated earlier by the Hilton Young Committee in 1926 and by the Saunders' Committee on Academic Organisation in 1966. There is no reason to believe it is less important in 1988. Without significant authority over resource allocation, planning lacks operational power.
The critical word is "significant." No one would believe or assert that the Court could or should have unlimited authority over the distribution of the overall University budget. National policies will, of course be controlling. But the ability to match planning decisions with resources is critical. Whether the UFC makes its allocations directly to the Schools or through the University of London is less important than whether the planning decisions of the University are accepted and accorded priority, whether the University is empowered to make adjustments at the margins, and whether it is itself provided a measure of risk capital, of seed money to invest on behalf of the entire University.

Without overstating the case, the raison d'etre of the University of London expressed by the Murray Committee in 1972—effective and enforceable planning—is seriously at risk. Is the UFC going to assume the responsibility for "planning for the University," with all that implies? The answer will depend in important measure on the wishes and beliefs of those in the Schools and Colleges. Do they see their fortunes as fundamentally intertwined? Will they accept an interdependence that can have substantial payoffs, not just for the particular institution but for the University system—and for the nation? Specifically, will the Schools and Colleges accept and endorse the extra, intermediate level of funding authority that we believe is required to sustain the federation?

In this connection, the phrase "top-slicing" seems both symbolically and conceptually flawed. The basis for the "federal" share of the budget should derive from a concept of "value-added" not "subtraction." If, indeed, the federal structure cannot prove its value both to the UFC and to the Schools, antagonisms to Senate House is inevitable and probably destructive.

If the University is to survive in its present form, an intervening layer of fiscal authority must be accepted both by the new UFC and by the Schools. And acceptance may well depend on the issue of "communication." Whatever the case in the past, we find no justification for denying to the Schools the bases for their grant allocations from UFC and Senate House. Secret calculations are necessary, we were told by some respondents, because neither the Vice-Chancellor nor the Heads of Schools would be able to withstand the pressures of Deans and faculty members that would result from open formulae. Arguably, there may be some chief executives in British higher education who would simply pass on grants to their departments, but we did not meet any in the University of London. We are unaware of any justification for a governing system that assumes weak institutional leadership.
The price of acceptance, both internally and externally, of the federal role in resource allocation is complete openness. Open communication has the twin virtues of avoiding misunderstandings that lead to mistakes and of improving the quality of decisions at School, federal, and governmental levels. More importantly, open communication is a key, if not the prime, factor on which trust and confidence in the budget process and loyalty to the institution can be built.

Is Senate House effectively organised to fulfill this planning and resource allocation role? Are the various institutions of governance that fill the Statutes central to such a role, complementary, or, in fact, a detriment? At the end of this inquiry, we are not sure. On paper, the governing structures appear unduly complicated and redundant. To paraphrase Harry Truman, "It is not clear where the buck stops."

Given the centrality of sound academic planning to the effectiveness of the University of London, the role of the Joint Planning Committee (JPC) cannot be over-emphasised. Indeed, in this context JPC appears to be the most important of the Senate House agencies, able by virtue of joint memberships to obtain approval of its planning decisions by both Court and Senate. If this assessment of JPC is correct, the present location of its secretariat within the Court department may be inappropriate, unduly subordinating the JPC's primary academic role. We suggest consideration of the appointment of an experienced faculty administrator as Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Academic Planning. The existing planning staff would be transferred to that new office, along with, perhaps, other analysts from the Academic Registrar's office. Alternatively, responsibility for supervising the planning function could be assigned to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Whether the present composition of the JPC is optimal is a different question. Given the bifurcated statutory authority of the Senate and the Court, there may be no present alternative to the status quo. Whatever the case, and while we stress the essential leadership role of the Vice-Chancellor, the bulk of academic planning will continue to rest with the Schools, individually or collectively. The role of the centre is to coordinate, energize, and facilitate School planning. Only by "collaborative planning," both among the Schools and between them and the centre, can decisions be reached that have a chance of being implemented.
The role of the centre is also important, of course, with respect to capital planning. Long-range strategies involving acquisition, development, and—especially in the London context—disposition of property are critical to effective programmatic and financial planning. There are many legal complexities surrounding property ownership at the various units of the University. But this only accentuates the need for the centre to provide overall policy guidance and technical expertise, to maintain a master inventory of holdings, and to promote opportunities for more efficient use of property, both at and among the Schools and Institutes. To do this effectively may well require added resources at the centre. Not to do it will inevitably cost far more.

The Federal University: The Role of Heads of Schools

In University Statutes, the Collegiate Council is described as the main vehicle "to encourage cooperation between Schools" and to promote "coordinated policies or actions between or on behalf of the schools," duties critical to the success of the federal university. In theory, the Council is the forum for the Vice-Chancellor and the Heads of Schools to meet collaboratively to promote the University's welfare. For some observers, at least, this appears to be far from the case. Instead, in the words of two respondents: "The Collegiate Council is a talking shop." "The Collegiate Council is a dustbin where you send things to lose them."

We cannot assess the strength of these opinions. But the formal, mixed membership of the Council necessarily reduces its usefulness as a critical linchpin between administrators at the centre and at the Schools.

The Council may serve useful statutory functions in the overall academic super-structure of the University. More is needed. The Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Schools must be able to communicate frequently on matters of common concern. Such meetings are taking place at present. They should be made a more formal part of the academic organisation of the University.

Although the asymmetry of the University's organisation poses a question of who should sit at the table, such matters are not insoluble. For example, a "Council of School Heads" might include only the multi-faculty colleges. The heads of the several medical units, both free-standing and those within a multi-faculty campus, could constitute a second group, meeting regularly with either the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Medicine or, when warranted, with the Vice-
Chancellor. Directors of the Senate Institutes, whether joined in a federation or not, could constitute a third group.

Regardless of the organisational make-up of the smaller units, the over-riding goal should be to provide the Heads of Schools a more visible and formal place within the federal structure. The University of London cannot exist as an effective institution without their full and active support. Rectors, Provosts, Principals, and Directors are not only Heads of Schools. They are, save the Vice-Chancellor himself, the most important officers of the federal university. They share a dual responsibility for the School and the larger institution, just as the Vice-Chancellor, while responsible for the University, must represent the needs of the individual institutions.

This dualism is not without problems. The findings of our American study have striking relevance, we believe, to the London scene:

Growing external pressures seem certain to increase demands upon the system executive to exercise "educational leadership." Yet any response he might make to these demands will run head on into the often tenuous and fragile exercise of that leadership by the campus executives, who themselves need every bit of substantive and symbolic authority they can muster. A division of labor is essential, but it requires a high degree of sensitivity and flexibility on the part of both executives, a tolerance for ambiguity as to their respective authority, and a considerable measure of personal trust. This is a high order, as the experience of more than one multicampus system is clear. That it is not impossible is also apparent. What cannot be demonstrated is a formula for success, good for all systems and all times (p. 387).

What is certain, however, is that, in the selection process for Heads of Schools, recognition should be accorded, not only their executive responsibilities for the individual institution, but their universitywide role. In a typical American multicampus context, this is symbolised by the authority of the system executive, following extensive campus consultation, to nominate the campus head to the governing board. Within the University of London, where appointment authority rests with the Council of the College, the Vice-Chancellor, and, perhaps, the Chairman of the University Court, might be accorded a formal role in the selection process, serving as co-opted members of the School’s search committee.
In further recognition of the dual nature of their role, we suggest that Heads of Schools be invited to attend meetings of the Court. Present procedures deny Heads of Schools the opportunity to participate in discussions concerning major universitywide issues. And—perhaps more important—they deny them the opportunity to contribute to matters relating specifically to their own institution. It is not conducive to healthy "federalism," we submit, to have such issues filtered up and down through the Senate House structure. Furthermore, it places those Heads of Schools who are temporarily members of the Court in a potentially awkward position vis-a-vis their absent colleagues. The formal minutes of the Court are an inadequate substitute for the openness necessary to build trust, confidence, and loyalty.

Differentiation of Function; Research Selectivity; Bibliometrics

in the United States, some universities are regarded as "research universities," while others are considered—and funded—as basically "teaching" institutions. In Britain, the University Grants Committee (UGC) treats all universities in Britain alike in their basic grant. All British universities are—at least in theory—treated similarly in terms of student/faculty ratios and basic support, while academic salaries are settled on a national level.

Discrimination among institutions does occur, however, in that portion of the grant attributable to research. The element of the research allocation based on the so-called "Judgmental Factor" is of particular interest in the context of governance and the respective roles of the UGC or the UFC and the University of London. Amounting to some 3-5 percent of the total UGC allocation, these funds represent almost the only "free" or "risk" money available to the universities; their importance should not be underestimated. The selectivity involved in the "Judgmental Factor" has led the UGC into a degree of central evaluation of individual institutional programmes that is foreign to American experience. The issue is best illustrated by the UGC's collection of detailed information on the scholarly publications of each faculty member in the country in a given discipline, all to be part of a subject-by-subject rating of "research excellence" across all universities. The exercise extends the methodology known as "bibliometrics" to a belief that excellence can be quantified by objective formulae.

The American observer, Martin Trow, comments:

[There] have been recent changes in the relation of colleges and universities and the state, and the tendency for the state to begin to make decisions, or to apply criteria in making judgments of the institutions’ own decisions, in the kind of detail and degree of specificity that may reduce the institutions’ own discretion. I note, for example, that a recent document of the DES indicates that new structures of
accountability will include assessments by state agencies of whether the universities (or the state, it's not clear which) are getting "value for money" (Accounting 1987). This somewhat ominous phrase suggests that it is not difficult for someone to decide what value has been gained for the expenditure of a certain sum of money on higher education. The trouble with that notion is that any assessment of the outcomes of the work of colleges and universities must be a fraction, and I believe a small fraction, of the actual effects and achievements of those institutions. ("The Robbins Trap: British Attitudes and the Limits of Expansion." Paper prepared for a seminar at the University of Sussex, 4 July 1988, pp. 12-13).

The University of London has a substantial stake in the outcome of this debate. Will the new UFC exercise "research selectivity" with respect to the University as a whole, or separately evaluate programmes at each of the Schools? In either case, will the University of London be permitted to "discriminate"—that is, to exercise its own judgment in its resource allocations among Schools? Or will it be bound by institutional ratings based on national evaluations? The seeming technical neutrality of the "Judgment Factor" should not mask its substantial ramifications for the governance of the University.

The Polytechnics, the Future of the "Binary System," and London

The "binary principle" which differentiates the university sector from the polytechnics is under challenge. Once the new polytechnic funding council is established and central governmental funding becomes dominant, there will be a predictable increase in pressures for equal financial support—at least for the teaching function—and for parity of status. Those in the university sector fear that parity will be achieved at their expense.

Without suggesting the desirability or possibility of a consolidation of universities and polytechnics within the London region, we see increasing opportunities for "trans-binary" cooperation. The advantages of the successful multicampus university—can, with imagination and leadership, be extended to other institutions as well. There is already evidence of this in medical and continuing education, and other examples no doubt exist. When one adds to the universities and colleges, London's unequalled resources of museums, libraries, learned societies, laboratories, and creative arts, the possibilities for inter-institutional collaboration are virtually beyond description.
The University has not only an opportunity, but an obligation to play a leadership role in
London higher education. As the dominant and senior institution, it is uniquely positioned to
stimulate the creation of a London-wide vision of educational opportunity and cultural
enrichment.

To urge such a role is not to narrow the international horizons of the University. It is, rather,
to assert the University’s responsibility as a world-class institution for the intellectual health and
vitality of its home base. No single School or College is equipped to address this challenge.
The federal University of London can.

The Federal University: The Senate
Academic decisions have steadily devolved to the Schools--e.g., course and programme
approvals, appointments, and examination procedures. But the academic "super-structure"
originally created to deal with these detailed matters remains on the books--a legacy from
another era, much of which is no longer regarded as relevant.

None of this is new. In 1982, the Committee on Academic Organisation chaired by Sir Peter
Swinnerton-Dyer reported that, as decisions are devolved to the Schools: "... The time must
soon come when a comprehensive review of the rationale and working of [the] Boards of
Studies system becomes inevitable" (#80). Six years later, such a review is underway.
Professor P J Grant, Chairman of the Academic Council, in writing to the Boards of Studies,
states: "... the detailed academic business coming routinely before Boards of Studies will
inevitably continue to diminish ... Is a Board of Studies in your 'subject' still appropriate?"
(Draft letter, 20 June 1988).

One School Head questions whether some Boards of Studies and other institutions of the
Senate have become simply "turf-protectors" instead of "change-agents." If these concerns
about Senate structures and processes are to be taken seriously, and it is clear that they are,
only fundamental changes in present practices will enable the University effectively to meet the
challenge posed by Pro-Vice-Chancellor Dorothy Wedderburn:

... the educational climate is changing [far and fast], particularly in respect of
more flexible means of access, credit transfer, course structure and content. If
the University responds to this changing climate it could again stand at the
forefront of educational progress in Britain; my fear is that if it does not, it will
run the risk of being overtaken by other more imaginative institutions, and of
being ignored by potential students who will not apply" (Letter to Vice-Chancellor, 6 April 1988).

Strong words that suggest the need for strong action.⁴

It is far beyond our competence to suggest precisely what will be required to "streamline" the academic super-structure. In 1982, Swinnerton-Dyer's committee suggested steps to be followed and concluded: "it is time for the University to consider how much of the old apparatus is still needed, and to dissolve what is not" (#82). Admittedly, important steps have been taken, but in 1988 the formal structure remains unchanged. How much of it should be retained? How much is irrelevant or, indeed, as was suggested more than once, an impediment to innovation and change? An effective universitywide academic structure is essential to the success of the University. To return to our "federal" theme, the goal should be to maximise the Senate's contribution to the promotion of specialisation, diversity, and cooperation?

The Federal University: the Senate Institutes and the Library

As important as is the first-degree collegiate role of the University of London, its unique role as a federal university may rest on its post-graduate research and teaching activities. It is in this context that one speaks of the University as a world-class institution. It is with respect to research and post-graduate work that the Schools of the federal university can provide a critical mass of specialists, equipment and libraries. And proximity to the many ancillary institutions of world renown--e.g., museums and learned societies--that comprise the broader, international scholarly community is unique to London. It is the federal university that can stimulate and nurture collective activity across School lines. When possible, it can provide the seed money to initiate such projects.

Within the University of London, collective activity is pursued through such avenues as multi-school research proposals and attempts to rationalize computing and other high-cost equipment, matters of particular relevance to the scientific and engineering faculties. Of immediate interest is the proposal that the existing Senate Institutes be organised into a

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⁴ Martin Trow notes: "Around the edges of almost every institution there is evidence that British higher education is becoming more diverse in response to myriad uncoordinated decisions by different institutions and academic units. For the first time it is becoming necessary to ask of British higher education not merely 'what should be done' but 'what is going on?'" ("The Robbins Trap: British Attitudes and the Limits of Expansion." Paper prepared for a seminar at the University of Sussex, 4 July 1988, pp. 26-27).
"cooperative federation"—the University of London Institutes for Advanced Study or "ULIAS." ULIAS would be ". . . as the Institutes singly have been—"a means for making the best use of the research potential of all the Schools, for the benefit of both teachers and students of each of them" ("Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences: The View Ahead, #37). An additional benefit to the federal structure should not be overlooked. We cannot assess the extent to which present support services provided by the Clerk of the Senate might be devolved to the federation, but fixing responsibility for the several Institutes in a single body should reduce the load on Senate House. This is not to endorse symmetry as an organisational goal for its own sake, but to recognise the heavy demands on the "span of control" that the present extraordinary level of asymmetry creates.

Our inquiry does not include the governance of the many libraries within the University system—at the Schools, within the Institutes and at Senate House. We are struck, however, by the seeming total dismissal of the recommendations of Bernard Naylor in June 1987 calling for an amalgamation of the Institute libraries with the central Library in Senate House. We note especially his comment that:

... in concentrating so much attention on the running of research libraries (which are not in themselves research activities but only ancillary to that purpose) Institutes run the risk of being distracted from what should be their primary purpose (#29).

We trust that the basis for the rejection of Naylor's proposal is more fully documented than in the brief references known to us.

The Federal University: Senate House
Questions concerning the internal organisation of the federal administration—Senate House—and what might be devolved to the Schools are the subject of a separate detailed inquiry by John Smith, Secretary of Imperial College. We offer only these comments.

There is no hard and fast rule for determining what should be the relative responsibilities of the central federal structure and the Schools and Institutes. The American experience is one of great variety, deriving from the scale, history, legal basis, and funding of the specific multicampus institution. Decisions and administrative arrangements have been based on assessments of both the organisational environment and the demands being placed upon the institution.
In the London environment, such pragmatic approaches are essential. Economies of scale are possible and should be carefully examined. The relatively small scale of many of the constituent institutions and their proximity offer as many opportunities for administrative innovation as in the educational area. One general principle can be suggested, however. The test of the organisational design is not the convenience of the centre but the benefit to the Schools. This does not necessarily mean delegation of authority to the individual Schools nor deny that certain activities can best be done centrally. Either course of action may be appropriate. Moreover, a mixture of approaches other than the centre-School dichotomy may be appropriate. For example:

- A School can be assigned responsibility, with appropriate financial support, for providing an administrative service to other Schools or to the entire University, a "lead campus" concept.

- Specific administrative activities of neighboring Schools can be merged successfully without total amalgamation.

- Senate House can assume a coordinating role for a particular activity, while leaving the primary action at the School level.

Whatever the organisational response to the specific functional problem, a team approach is called for, and the team leader need not be a Senate House officer.

Such a "multicampus" approach would be facilitated by an increase in interchange of administrative personnel between the Schools and the centre. This might involve an exchange for six months or a year between colleagues in a similar functional area. Short-term management institutes involving administrators from Senate House and the Schools would be another. Whether or not a "senior civil service" for the entire University is possible or desirable, any existing barriers to transfer and promotion among campuses and to and from the centre should be eliminated. Here again, the proximity of institutions in London provides a unique opportunity, one with undoubted advantages not only for administrative efficiency and economy but for creating a climate of mutual respect and understanding.
The Federal University: Challenge and Response

In his far-reaching report, "Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences: The View Ahead," John Barron poses a challenge to the federal university:

Against the background of the legal autonomy of the Schools and the practical autonomy of their academic departments, there is need to identify what the continuing academic role of the "University" may be, if any. For the University has no interest of itself, unless it be the interest of the bodies which comprise it, to help their aspirations and to enable them to achieve collectively more than they could have hoped to do as single institutions. (#8, emphasis added)

To address such a challenge, at least two major resources for leadership are potentially available--financial and institutional.

With respect to the first resource, we have earlier suggested that the new University Funding Council should accept--within national policy guidelines, to be sure--the planning decisions and policies of the University. Moreover, the UFC should--as a matter of policy--allow the University to make budgetary decisions which may vary at the margins from those resulting from the formula-driven calculations of the national recurrent grant.

Such flexibility is not only necessary if the University is to continue as an effective federal system, but it is in the national interest. At present, British policy makers at all levels are debating the role and future of higher education--its scope, its organisation, its cost. There can be no single or simple answer. President Donald Kennedy of Stanford University has recently noted that "uncertainty and opportunity are the dominant features of our institutional landscape. [We are] 'incubators of unlabeled eggs'" (Address to Stanford Academic Council, 14 April 1988).

What could be a more sound policy, therefore, than to look to the University of London as a testing ground of alternative approaches to the educational enterprise? It is a ready-made vehicle with which to confront the "unsteady state" of the 1990s. But to survive into the 21st Century it must be encouraged--even expected--to innovate, to risk, to reward institutional
cooperation, to provide, not the answer but multiple answers to the problems confronting higher education--issues ranging from student access to research productivity, from the creative arts to the healing sciences.

Central discretionary support for federal activities could be available, even in the absence of direct governmental funding. Internally, the federal university could negotiate with the Schools and Institutes to reserve for central allocation a share of overhead reimbursement monies from grants and contracts. There are, of course, broader policy questions facing British universities concerning the overhead issue, including its very definition. However, central University offices and facilities do provide a share of research support for which reimbursement is a legitimate claim, the Library in Senate House being, perhaps, the most visible example. It is appropriate, therefore, that a proportion of reimbursement be returned to the centre. To cite an American example, such income could be used, among other things, to aid activities like the humanities that do not ordinarily receive substantial support from governmental granting agencies.

Externally, the University of London could itself seek to expand private and foundation funding for the development of intercollegiate programs. The bulk of private fund-raising in Britain will, of course, be initiated by individual faculty and departments with respect to grants and contracts and by the Schools seeking endowment or capital gifts. But in the context of the University of London, especially, the opportunities for obtaining Universitywide support would seem well worth pursuing. In a quite different but parallel setting, Oxford University is seeking funds from its alumni and others apart from college efforts. The University of London should weigh its opportunities to do the same.

An attractive possibility suggests itself as an example: the creation of an endowment for several "Chancellor's Chairs." Symbolising the entire university and commanding the prestige of the Princess Royal and the respect in which she is held, such Chairs could, for example, be awarded on an annual basis to fund a research leave for a distinguished professor. Or the endowment could fund a "University Professorship" involving teaching at several campuses during the term of the award, or fund a "Chancellor's Lecture" to be given by an international figure. Whatever the case, the fund-raising goal would be to take advantage of the unique potential of the federal university and to give it much-needed public visibility, while at the same time contributing to the intellectual life of the Schools.
Institutional devices to promote "federalism" are more speculative. What would seem required is to establish structures that correspond to the realities and demands of contemporary university governance, above and beyond the Statutes. We have already suggested an organisational model that would include several councils of Heads of Schools and Institutes.

A second "federal" development could involve the creation of an Assembly of Council Chairmen. A striking and consistent theme among the Schools is the importance attached to the lay membership of the School councils, most particularly to their chairmen. As with the Heads of Schools, these men and women are part of the leadership structure of the University of London, as well as of their particular School Councils. They could be called on regularly to meet with the Vice-Chancellor and his chairman to discuss the major issues of higher education confronting the University and the nation.

Admittedly, Heads of Schools might be reluctant at first to share "their" chairmen with the broader University. But one would have confidence in believing that the chairmen themselves would welcome and be challenged by the opportunity to share in shaping the direction of the University of London of the 21st Century. Their collective wisdom and stature would add a strong element of independent authority. Their voice would be heard.

A third institution of "federalism" is more symbolic than operational: Foundation Day (which we observed on 13 October 1988). Presided over by the Chancellor, this is the main ceremony held to "showcase" the federal University. Albeit impressive, dignified, and well attended, the event lacked, to our eyes and ears, an essential element--recognition of the Schools and Institutes that comprise the University. Save for a brief note in the program and the perceptive reference by the Princess Royal that she was Chancellor of a "conglomerate," the ceremony appeared to represent Senate House institutions more than the Schools that Senate House serves. Council Chairmen, Heads of Schools, and student and alumni leaders were hard to find; School flags not to be seen. Unimportant? Perhaps. But also, perhaps, a lost opportunity to display publicly the full range and intellectual power of the University.

In closing, we urge that the uniqueness of the University of London within Britain be fully recognised, not only in its mission but in its organisational structure. At present, the formal statutes resemble a patchwork of elements, practices, and procedures modeled after those in
a traditional single-campus university. Such a structure may have made sense when the University performed many of the functions of a school or college. In 1988, much of this responsibility has been devolved to the Schools, yet the formal apparatus remains.

What is required is the creation of a distinctly federal organisation, designed to address the specific challenges confronting the University system, an organisation that will allow the University of London to realise its full potential.

We cannot prescribe or predict in detail what a federal structure might look like in the year 2000. But we can suggest the outlines:

- A governing body responsible, within broad national policy, for making difficult decisions concerning institutional missions and resource requirements and with freedom from external constraint to do so.

- An executive, working with Heads of Schools, capable of presenting policy options to the governing body and with authority to implement their decisions.

- A collaborative federal (i.e., centre-School) structure, one involving faculty as well as administrators, responsible for policy planning, for programme evaluation, and for the promotion of inter-collegiate, all-University activities.

- Schools with full authority to administer internal affairs within broad policies established by the University.

- A faculty encouraged to think collegially and empowered to act collectively about School and University activities.

- A student-body able to take full advantage of the intellectual resources of the entire University.
o A metropolitan community enriched by a great centre of higher education and its power to draw scholars from around the world to its libraries, research laboratories, and classrooms.

o A nation willing to support a world-class institution, comprised of many diverse parts that collectively make an unparalleled contribution to the well-being of the society it serves,

Britain and London deserve nothing less.
APPENDIX A

VITAE

Eugene C Lee is a professor of political science at the University of California at Berkeley. A former vice-president of the university system in the early 1960s, he served as director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at Berkeley from 1967 until June 1988.

Lee received his B.A. degree from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Berkeley, while also serving in the campus administration. Other teaching and administrative posts have been held at University College, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and at the University of Puerto Rico. In 1984-85, he was an academic visitor at the London School of Economics and Political Science and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

Lee has written extensively in the fields of state, regional and local government and politics, and the administration of higher education. He has served as a consultant to many multicampus university systems throughout the United States and to the California Congressional Delegation in Washington, D.C.

Frank M Bowen retired in July 1988 from a position as advisor on higher education to Governor Deukmejian of California, but remains as one of California's three appointed Commissioners on the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education.

Bowen received his B.S. degree from the United States Military Academy and his J.D. degree from the University of Michigan Law School. After a number of years in private law practice in San Francisco, California, he became interested in higher education finance and administration. He has worked as a consultant to the California State Department of Finance, the California Postsecondary Education Commission, the University of California, the California State University, to numerous agencies in other states, and to the Education Commission of the States.