Programs Committee

Regent Stuart chaired this portion of the meeting.

Disestablishment of Arizona International College (AIC)

Former Regent John Munger addressed the Board to give his perspective of AIC. He said he understands the financial problems. He said AIC was never intended to be a burden on the University of Arizona. It was intended to eventually be on its own; a different kind of college to offer a choice to Arizona students. He asked the Regents to continue AIC and ask the legislature to fund it as a fourth university. He believes the experiment of a different type liberal arts college has been successful.

Regent Jewett said he had served, as a citizen, on a committee to pick corridors in the Tucson area where it was believed AIC would have the greatest chance of success. He asked why the Regents had placed AIC at the Research Park as the committee had determined that was not one of the better sites. Regent Munger said the Regents had no money for buildings and buildings were available at the Research Park. Also, the Regents had agreed prior to any work by the committee that AIC would be located at the Research Park if it were purchased. This was part of the agreement to start AIC and to secure the Research Park. The Regents were surprised when the committee was asked to consider various sites.

President Kirk's explained the history of AIC funding and why he believed it would not become self-supporting. He stated the financial necessity for the disestablishment. Provost George Davis explained the rationale of closing AIC for financial reasons and the opportunities available for AIC students at the University of Arizona.

Regent Signac said the letters and emails from supporters of AIC had raised some good questions that should be addressed, such as faculty spending more time teaching and advising. She said it appears there are some students who have been successful at AIC who will need extra help to succeed at the larger university.

Regent Amos said AIC was originally proposed to help with enrollment growth. ASU East, AIC, and the expansion of distance learning would accommodate enrollment growth. He said he believed AIC was an outstanding example of a liberal arts college. He asked the Regents to table the issue and appoint a commission to study the issue of whether there is still a need for a fourth university and whether AIC would meet that need.

Regent Robinson said, in support of the faculty and students who were not aware they were under a probationary period, the Regents should allow a grace period or table the issue to allow more discussion as to how AIC can be salvaged in some form. Regent Moeller said he believed the presidents were in a delicate position because of expected budget cuts. He believes the universities have strong presidents who should be trusted to run the universities. They will have to live with the budget cuts they make. Therefore, he will support President Kirk's request.

Regent Amos said he believes a college like AIC is very important as the biggest complaint the Regents receive is faculty spend too much time in research and not enough time teaching. He moved to form an independent commission, with Regents involved if they wish, to evaluate the need for AIC or a fourth university. The recommendation would be made to the Regents before

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May of 2002. The motion was seconded by Regent Robinson. The motion failed with Regents Gignac, Herstam, Jewett, Molera, Palacios, Stuart, Ulrich, and McKay voting no and Regent Amos and Robinson voting yes.

Regent Stuart said he was a college graduate with a liberal arts degree and understood the value of such. However, in this case he believes the cost of AIC is too high and tabling the issue will only postpone the inevitable. Therefore, he moved to disestablish Arizona International College and its degree programs: the Bachelor of Arts in Fine and Performing Arts; Humanities; Language and Culture; Liberal Studies; Natural Sciences and Mathematics; and Social Sciences. The College and its academic programs will be phased out according to the detailed plan being developed by the AIC Transition Team. The motion was seconded by Regent Herstam and passed with Regent Amos voting no.

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