



Annual Report for 2006-07

Case Western Reserve University:
Institute for the Study
of the University in Society

IN NOVEMBER 2006, I had the opportunity to make a presentation at a research seminar sponsored by the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations. My subject was “The Uses of Institutional History: Understanding Experience to Improve Organizational Performance.” Central to the discussion were a series of questions that relate closely to the work of the Institute:

- *Do a mission-driven organization’s experiences have implicit value, or should externally defined needs and priorities drive its planning? This question took on added import as a result of the discussions during the report year about the institution’s decision in 2003 to rebrand itself as “Case.”*
- *How can a nonprofit manage a systematic program to order records and memories of organizational experiences? Can it be done economically? The real issue is whether an institution can thrive without doing so.*
- *Are we sure enough about ourselves to impose order on events that often seem so random? If so, whose notion of order? An institution’s long history may become hostage to the issue of the moment. An antidote is to incorporate views of people with contrarian or at least contrasting perspectives on how the institution has developed.*
- *History often involves narrative, but narrative has limitations as a learning tool because it tends to be judgmental. How does an institutional history approach divisive or controversial topics? Focus on understanding the context around controversial issues. This will be easier if the institution regularly involves diverse voices in its leadership.*
- *Any history will be more effective when people are pulled to it by their own interests than when it is pushed at them. How can that be done? Identify the links between an understanding of the institutions history and heritage with the skills and perspectives needed to manage and lead in the current environment.*

Photograph above, from Edition #9 of the “Campus Markings” contest, shows detail of the columns supporting the portico over the main (west) entrance to Adelbert Hall, completed in 1882. For more information, see the ISUS web site.

During the year ending June 30, 2007, we had more than enough opportunities to address these issues in our own institution and in the work that occupied our time. It was once again a period of major developments for the University, though it brought less dramatic change for our own program than was true in the prior year. Overall, the work of the Institute moved forward amid somewhat more regularized calls for assistance in other arenas.

University History Project

During the report year, the balance of interviews needed for the University history project were completed, including conversations with two key figures who had been unavailable previously. Other research-related activities included reviewing selected documents in University Archives, Special Collections at the Kelvin Smith Library, the Western Reserve Historical Society, and other repositories. The main goal for the year was to advance the writing of the principal text for the new history, and we made important progress toward that end. As will be explained later in this report, however, other matters also intervened.

As in prior years, work toward an updated history of the institution included a number of related activities that are designed to support our information gathering and to help build interest on and off campus in the development of Case Western Reserve University through the years. During the report year these activities included:

- Maintenance and continued development of information about the University's history on the ISUS web site (www.case.edu/artsci/isus/isushome.htm). Project Assistant Lynice Willis is invaluable in managing the web site.
- Formal and informal presentations about aspects of the University's history to groups such as the following:
 - Four presentations on the history of the University for families of entering first-year students at the orientation session in summer 2006
 - "Meet the Faculty" sessions for incoming first-year students, focusing on "myths, mysteries, and mayhem" in the history of the University
 - "A Brief History of Harcourt House," delivered to the members of the Estate Planning Advisory Council gathered together at the President's residence
 - Tour and history of Amasa Stone Chapel and Adelbert Hall for students in Baldwin-Wallace College's course on "Cleveland's Sacred Landmarks"
 - Mini-College for Family Weekend, presenting the history of the University as seen through the eyes (and words) of former students

- “The Uses of Institutional History: Understanding Experience to Improve Organizational Performance,” presented at a research seminar organized by the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations (noted above)
 - Presentations and discussions with students in several classes, ranging from a SAGES First Seminar to graduate courses in the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations
 - Broadcast discussion of “the History of University Circle as a Place and a Concept,” one of six radio interviews conducted by Professor Gladys Haddad to constitute a “virtual” 2007 Western Reserve Studies Symposium (information on the entire series, with access to recordings of each installment, may be found at www.case.edu/artsci/wrss/)
- Concept, initial script, on-screen appearances, and substantive oversight of a DVD version of the University’s history, nearly complete as the report year ended. Production is being done by Natalie Bauman, an independent producer, working with Mike Kubit and his excellent staff in MediaVision. The basic 26-minute historical narrative will be supplemented by interviews with faculty, alumni, and others on specific topics of interest. The basic narrative will be made available to PBS outlets and be streamed over the University’s web site. Lara Kalafatis allocated funds from the University Relations budget to underwrite the project.
 - Continuation of the “Campus Markings” contest during the report year, featuring the 7th, 8th, and 9th editions (total of 36 images) of this competition to identify photographs of architectural details of the University campus. Entries came from students, alumni, faculty, and staff. The contest encourages members of the campus community to become familiar with the University’s physical environment, much of which has important historical ties. Photographs for the 10th edition have been taken and printed, and will be up for entries in fall 2007.
 - Operation of the small gallery of images located near the Institute’s offices on the fourth floor of the Sears Library Building. In addition to displaying images from the current “Campus Markings” contest, the gallery offers visual and textual snapshots of the University’s history. During the report year, we featured a display of selected designs of bridges in Cleveland executed by James T. Pardee, an 1888 alumnus of the Case School of Applied Science, who within a few years of graduating became the city’s principal bridge engineer. He later went on to a distinguished career as the research leader of the Dow Chemical Company, founded by his classmate, Herbert Henry Dow.
 - Participation in the work of the Records Disposition Committee formed by University Archives to advise on retention policies and decisions for materials produced by offices across the campus.

Role of the Research University in Society

Interest in the contributions, costs, and benefits of research universities remains strong among civic, business, and government leaders, but there is too little understanding of the origins and ways of these extraordinary institutions. During the report year, work in this area took several forms:

- Presentation on “The Uses of Institutional History,” noted above, designed to spark discussion among faculty and students about how a research university gathers and distributed information about its past as a means of promoting higher performance in the future.
- Presentation on strategic and public policy issues affecting this and other research universities to students enrolled in Mandel 401, “Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector.”
- Participation in the institutional planning process as a member of the Steering Committee appointed by the President and the Provost to guide this effort. Discussed further below.

Other Activities

University Strategic Plan: Since November 2005, I have been active as a member of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee for the University. For most of that time I have served as primary drafter for the plan at the request of the Provost, who also extended my term by six months to account for the initial demands of this assignment. Attached is a description of activities during the report year taken from the “Report of the University Plan Steering Committee,” which I prepared in May 2007 for use with the Board of Trustees’ Committee on Academic Affairs and Student Life.

Teaching: On an overload basis, I taught a new University Seminar in the SAGES program in spring 2007, USSO 269, “Create-A-College.” In one semester, the 16 students in the seminar conceptualized and fully planned a new, freestanding university, including: governance and administrative structure; location; academic emphases; financial overview; tuition and financial aid policies; student life; campus design; relations with the surrounding community; approaches to major donors; and other considerations. They decided on a private research university somewhat like our own, so we took a field trip to Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh to provide them with a view of another similar institution. In addition to papers and presentations they completed throughout the course, at the end of the semester they presented their plans to an external panel consisting of members of the Ohio Board of Regents, the Board of Trustees of the University, and other knowledgeable experts. Osceola University is (theoretically) ready to launch in Orlando, Florida, a location chosen by the students

during the second week of class (early February), when Cleveland's weather featured single-digit temperatures and double-digit snowfalls.

Branding: Beginning in summer 2006, I served as a member of the Branding Task Group appointed by Interim President Gregory Eastwood to evaluate the logotype and word mark introduced in 2003 and to recommend actions the University might take to address negative feedback from alumni and others. The Group was co-chaired by Trustees Tim Callahan and Ted Schroeder, who also named an advisory group of students, faculty, deans, and others to work with the Task Group. Under the Task Group's guidance, University staff designed a new identity system that restores the full name of the institution for general use and also introduces a new logotype, replacing the "fat surfer," as the 2003 logo was called. At its June 2007 meeting, the Board of Trustees endorsed the new system, and it is being implemented in a manner that minimizes out-of-pocket expense.

Other Areas: As in prior years, I serve as Campus Faculty Representative for the Udall Scholarships and the Truman Scholarships, national programs that select undergraduates each year to receive special grants to support graduate study or other activities. In the case of Udall, the focus is on students interested in environmental or Native American issues, and in the case of Truman, in public service and government. The Faculty Representative works with students and the national staffs of the programs.

Administrative Developments

Beginning in July 2005, I have worked on a half-time basis, a change that was made a year earlier than had been anticipated when the ISUS project was initially approved. The change came in response to the University's need to conserve funds in light of its general financial stress, one of many cut-backs introduced across the campus in waves over the past two years. Project Assistant Lynice Willis's engagement in the project was reduced from 50% to 5% at the same time, and the Research Assistant position that had been held since 2003 by a Ph.D. student in History was eliminated. Sharmon Sollitto, who serves as Contributing Editor with responsibility for transcription and editing of transcripts of interviews, works on a voluntary basis. In 2005, Provost John Anderson extended my anticipated retirement date from June 30, 2007, to December 31, 2007, to account for my early initial engagement in the strategic planning process. The budget for ISUS is administered through the Office of Planning and Budget.

Acknowledgements

The work of the Institute depends on the help and support of persons too numerous to list in this report, but it would be inappropriate to conclude without mentioning several people whose contributions were particularly valuable during the report year. They are, in alphabetical order:

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Natalie Bauman, Holy Cow Creative
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Gregory Eastwood, Interim President, 2006-07 (now Director of the Inamori
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Jean Gubbins, Center for Institutional Research
William Fickinger, Physics Department Historian
Gladys Haddad, History Department and Western Reserve Studies Symposium
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Tom Vince, Western Reserve Academy
Lynice Willis, ISUS Project Assistant

To all those who have contributed through their cooperation, advice, participation, or other assistance, and for this opportunity to be engaged in the satisfying work of helping the members of one of society's most valuable institutions understand its own heritage more clearly, I am profoundly grateful.

Richard E. Baznik
Director, Institute for the Study of the University in Society

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For more information about the work of the Institute for the Study of the University in Society, visit our web site (www.case.edu/artsci/isus/isushome.htm) or get in touch with the Director at 216-368-2339 or richard.baznik@case.edu.