

## From the Editor's Desk

The moment of truth is approaching. In a few days, after a last check of details—is the material complete; are the articles in their proper order; are all the i's dotted, the t's crossed?—the content of the first issue of the first volume of *Metropolitan Universities* will go off to its publisher. The editor's work is done. It is too late to make any but the most minor changes: the die is cast, and the fledgling product of our labors is on its way. An exhilarating moment, and also a frightening one. Our hopes and our expectations are high, as is our excitement about our new adventure. Will our excitement be justified, our hopes realized? Will *Metropolitan Universities* reach its intended audience? And will that audience be pleased by what it receives?

We won't know for several months, and in the meantime we will be working on the next issues, about which more details will be offered presently. What we do know, as of this moment, is the extraordinarily positive response we have had from all sides with regard to the creation of a journal devoted to the nature and the challenges of metropolitan universities. We were, all along, convinced that there exists a *need* for such a journal. The reaction to the announcement of its creation encourages us to believe that there exists, as well, a *demand*. We have heard from many colleagues that they welcome a forum for the discussion of issues germane to metropolitan universities. They also tell us that a journal with that title and content will help to enhance the recognition of the special mission of these institutions.

Note throughout these remarks and elsewhere in the journal, including its title, the use of "metropolitan universities" not "the metropolitan university." There exists no single model for the metropolitan university, no uniquely defined set of programs and activities, no blueprint for the ideal organization and mode of operation. Among the several hundred institutions that fall into this broad rubric, both in this country and abroad, one finds not only a great variety in detail, but differences as well with regard to some basic issues, if not in kind then in degree. Few would cavil at the statement that metropolitan universities have a special obligation toward the population of their region, but there exists a range of views as to the degree of this relationship. Broad consensus exists, as well, about the need for metropolitan universities to pay attention to the dissemination and application of new knowledge and to contribute to the economic and cultural development of their area. But on this issue as well one finds differences of opinion as to the degree of emphasis, and a wide variety in the proposed manner of implementation. The content of *Metropolitan Universities* will reflect

this diversity, as indeed is shown by the articles in this inaugural issue.

### *The Content of the First Issue*

The theme of this initial issue is identity and culture. We hope that the content will provide a broad-brush overview of the nature and mission of metropolitan universities, a sense of their basic institutional character. In their aggregate, the articles in the issue indicate a number of common attributes shared by all these universities, in spite of their many differences. All are characterized by diversity: diversity of students, diversity of scholarly and professional activity, diversity of constituencies. All accept, albeit to different degrees, the challenge of responsiveness to scholarly and instructional needs of this multiple clientele. All insist on retaining their most basic characteristic: that of being true universities.

It has been said that the decline of the railroad companies in this country came about because these enterprises failed to recognize that their basic mission was transportation, not railroading. They confused the mode of implementation of their mission, which of necessity must change with technological and societal change, with the mission itself, which remains essential. Metropolitan universities are determined not to fall into a similar error. Their fundamental mission is that of all universities: the disinterested pursuit and promulgation of knowledge. They must retain their central purpose and focus if they are to remain the principal societal mechanism for the objective criticism of prevailing views and practices. But metropolitan universities recognize that they must change the way in which this knowledge-centered mission is pursued. The nature, uses, and clientele for knowledge are evolving; the effective interpretation and dissemination of knowledge have become as important as its creation, and an ever more diverse clientele needs university-level education. The form must adapt as the function changes.

The initial article by Charles Hathaway, Paige Mulhollan, and Karen White sounds this basic theme clearly and eloquently. It is central to their vision of metropolitan universities as the pivotal institutions of higher education of the next century. Henry Winkler's contribution reinforces both the basic conception of the character of metropolitan universities as well as their growing importance within the system of higher education, as indicated by the rapid increase in the attention they have received during the past ten years. Mayor Jean Doré of Montreal provides an explanation of why this has happened: he and his counterparts in cities everywhere are increas-

ingly looking to their metropolitan universities for a broad variety of knowledge-based services. Daniel Perlman expands on this concept with his description of the multiple and diverse relationships of metropolitan universities with their communities. And John Bardo's sociological analysis explains our choice of label for our institutions and for the title of the journal: neither the problems of the city nor their solutions can be confined within the traditional urban boundaries. We need a metropolitan perspective that subsumes but is not limited to an urban focus.

The faculty is, of course, central to the endeavor of any academic institution. In metropolitan universities, members of the faculty bear the principal burden of institutional change, having to adapt and expand their scholarly and pedagogical skills to meet a diversity of challenges for which their traditional training has not prepared them. Gordon Haaland, Neil Wylie, and Daniel DiBiasio call for adaptation in institutional organization, the definition of scholarship, and modes of faculty assignments and evaluation. Patricia Plante expands on these issues by asking a two-part question: What should a contemporary metropolitan university expect of its faculty? What should a contemporary faculty expect of its metropolitan university?

The challenges to the faculty of a metropolitan university exist in its two principal areas of professional practice: the direct instruction it provides and the scholarly activities in which it engages. Both are substantially more varied and in many ways more difficult and more intellectually demanding than in more traditional institutions. The next issue of *Metropolitan Universities* will address itself to the implications of the diversity of its students. The theme of the third issue will be the range of scholarly and professional activities through which a metropolitan university contributes to the development of its region. In anticipation of these extensive treatments, the current issue contains only two pertinent articles. Marguerite Barnett and Donald Phares describe one implication of the diversity of individuals who look to the metropolitan university for instruction: the need to plan and set institutional priorities while yet retaining optimal flexibility of response. William Muse discusses the role a metropolitan university can play in strengthening local industry and points out some of the problems inherent in this role.

### *Future Issues*

Subsequent issues of *Metropolitan Universities* will each deal with one major dimension of the institutions. The second issue will focus on the challenge of the student diversity faced by metropolitan

universities. It will carry articles that explore questions of access and recruitment, of assessment, developmental programs and support services, of institutional adaptation, and of other dimensions of this complex subject.

The role of metropolitan universities in regional development will be emphasized in the third issue. It will explore external needs and internal capacities, discuss ways of communication between the university and its region, examine problems of intellectual property and conflicts of interest, and describe ways of involving students in a variety of outreach activities.

The fourth issue of *Metropolitan Universities* will be primarily devoted to faculty matters: topics such as the pedagogic challenges of a diverse student body; the professional challenges of outreach; and the need for new conceptions of scholarship, new measures and documentation of excellence, and new criteria for promotion and tenure—as well as questions regarding the ongoing development of current faculty and the preparation of future academics.

Tentative themes for our second volume include the interaction of metropolitan universities with local schools; issues of professional and occupational education in metropolitan universities; metropolitan universities as cultural and intellectual resources for their region; and the role of metropolitan universities in continuing professional education, employee development, and other aspects of lifelong learning. Future issues will also provide a variety of opportunities to discuss pervasive matters such as institutional organization, uses of telecommunication and other educational technology, and implications of the emerging internationalization of all spheres of activity.

Each of these aspects of metropolitan universities, inevitably, interacts and overlaps with all other institutional dimensions. To attempt any neat separation of topics would be both futile and unhelpful. The thematic focus of future issues is intended, merely, to provide better insight into the multifaceted nature of our institutions. We hope to further this, as well, by broadening our perspective beyond the campuses and beyond the borders of the United States. We will not limit ourselves to articles by academics for academics, nor to contributions by Americans for Americans. Mayor Doré's contribution to the present issue is a first step toward this goal, which will be furthered by the presence on our editorial board of distinguished individuals from other countries and from nonacademic settings.

### *Contributions to Metropolitan Universities*

*Metropolitan Universities* welcomes contributions in various categories, as described in some detail elsewhere in this issue.

Such contributions, especially articles, should reflect the basic goal of the institutions after which the journal is named: to be useful while maintaining the highest possible intellectual standards. We are looking for articles that reflect excellent scholarship, but we do not consider the journal to be a scholarly publication of the traditional kind. Articles will not have footnotes or a detailed bibliography. But assertions should be justified, arguments explained, pivotal work of others mentioned, and useful additional reading listed.

*Metropolitan Universities* wishes to serve the needs and interests of administrators and faculty members within the institutions after which it is named, as well as their external constituencies and stakeholders. It intends to publish articles that clarify the nature and function of these institutions; stimulate changes and developments (both within and outside metropolitan universities); enhance the mission of these institutions, and provide guidance regarding challenges, problems, and pitfalls. *Metropolitan Universities* wishes to become a forum for action as well as analysis, for prognosis and prescription as well as diagnosis and evaluation. It welcomes contributions that are normative, but insists that they be based on a thorough assessment of past experiences and existing alternatives.

Articles that deal with broad issues, such as educational access or regional development, need to contain sufficient specificity to provide a degree of guidance to those readers who intend to take pertinent action. Descriptions of specific programs, policies, or organizational models developed at a given institution should stress generalizable aspects that are applicable to other institutions.

We welcome, as well, contributions that are of sufficient interest and timeliness to be carried in an issue even though they may not relate directly to the principal theme. We also solicit input into a number of features that will constitute regular components of future issues.

The journal will contain a section of letters in which we welcome critical and constructive comments from our readers regarding the content and plans of the journal. We intend, as well, to carry guest editorials or the equivalent of op-ed pieces and would in particular like to publish contrasting views on complex and contentious issues.

Another regular feature will be called Interactive Strategies. It will carry short descriptions of new projects and programs at specific institutions that are likely to be of interest to other metropolitan universities. Please share with us and with your colleagues elsewhere exciting and promising innovations being developed on your campus. The journal will also publish book reviews, as well as shorter book notes.

One further promise about future issues is in order: comments "From The Editor's Desk" will be shorter!

We want to make *Metropolitan Universities* exciting, interesting, and useful to all who have a stake in these institutions. We need your help to succeed in this venture.

Ernest A. Lynton