Over the past year or so there has been talk about merging the School of Science with Humanities and Social Sciences. Because the idea seems to have aroused little enthusiasm at the grass roots or any other level, there is danger that it may not be pushed, so that for reasons ranging from apathy to mistrust the project will fade away.

It may be that burial in silence is the fate most fitting. However, I wish that the proponents of change would re-think the matter, for a real problem exists, and they have missed it. The real problem is that even our present two Schools are conglomerations that make little sense. But they contain sub-groupings that do belong naturally together, and I suggest that we ought to be looking in this direction instead.

The arguments one hears for consolidation boil down essentially to: "this is the only way for a real university to be organized". There is also the argument that faculty salaries would be more fairly apportioned among disciplines. We can confidently dismiss that one, and turn to the substantial questions: what is a real university? and how should it be organized?

There are questions to which answers are plentifully available, and only a foolhardy man would be absolutely sure that he could pick the right one. I shall therefore be content with the more modest aim of looking backward, in the hope of gaining useful perspective.

The medieval "universitas" was essentially a guild or corporation of teachers or of students, sometimes of both. Very early the University of Paris developed its Four Faculties, which were imitated by the rash of universities that sprang up in the Germanies and elsewhere. Unless an institution of higher learning had Theology, Law, Medicine and "Philosophy" it simply was not a university. Even today the University of Stockholm, which was founded less than a century ago and has no Theological Faculty, is legally a "Högskola", while Lund and Uppsala are "Universiteter". Much the same is true of the "Hochschule" and "Écoles supérieures" farther south.
Our American universities are apparently much less tidy. The word "university" here can mean almost anything and almost nothing. However, the following would probably describe the basic genuine article fairly well:

An American university consists of a central core of the humanities, the social sciences, the natural sciences and the mathematical sciences, in symbiosis with various professional schools. It provides training and diplomas at several levels, including that certificate of successful apprenticeship in research, the Ph.D.

It is the organization of that central, "non-professional" core which has become a question, not only here but elsewhere. It is analogous to the Faculty of Philosophy in the medieval university, but its direct American ancestor was the primitive liberal arts college (such as Harvard, Yale, New Jersey, or Corvallis) which was established in the wilderness, that the people might have an enlightened clergy. It grew. The new-fangled sciences were eventually added to its original curriculum of Latin, Greek, mathematics, logic and rhetoric. But usually it remained "the College" - though its faculty had increased a hundred fold and it had taken on postgraduate teaching as well as service jobs for new professional schools in engineering, agriculture, medicine, law, business, education, journalism and what-not. The Dean of a typical large College of Arts and Sciences now presides over an empire which no mortal could hope to comprehend intelligently. It is vast in size, overwhelming in its variety and in the complexity of its relationships both internal and external. It is a conglomerate of "departments", "institutes", "centers" and "programs": dozens of them jumbled together higgledy-piggledy.

With the growth of knowledge, both the lordly Philosophical Faculty of Europe and the modest backwoods "academy & college" of America have developed into sprawling monsters. To many they seem not only awkward but unworkable. Thus European Faculties of Philosophy have been divided into Faculties of Natural Sciences, of Mathematical Sciences, of Humane Letters, etc. The University of Chicago formed Divisions (e.g. Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences). It was felt that fragmentation into fewer, more cohesive groupings was preferable to the complete fragmentation that generally prevails in a large, heterogeneous Faculty or College, whose "unity" is specious, at best.

In my own discipline today there is a strong national trend toward forming Divisions of the Mathematical Sciences. Such a division (or school) typically includes traditional "Pure" and
"Applied" Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science. Departments in these disciplines have much in common. They also have broad campus-wide responsibilities: for instance, out of the 6000+ enrollments in our Mathematics courses, 5/7 come from outside the School of Science and 1/7 from other Science departments. (The remaining 1/7 come from our own majors, undergraduate and graduate.) We have far more business with the School of Engineering than with all other departments in Science put together.

Looking at the rest of our "Arts and Science" complex, I can see similar natural groupings in the Biological Sciences, the Physico-Chemical Sciences, the Earth (or Environmental) Sciences, the Social Sciences, Language and Literature, the Fine Arts.

Would it not make more sense to start thinking about some sort of reorganization that is really functional, instead of just "thinking big"?

During his much too short tenure as Dean, Vernon Cheldelin began moving toward something of this kind in the School of Science. It got no farther than a grouping of departments in the catalog. We do not know what he might have accomplished had he lived, but I am sure that his lively intelligence would have produced ideas worth thinking about. We could do far worse than to reconsider his thoughts.

Arvid T. Lonseth
Professor of Mathematics
January 13, 1969
SALEM PROSPECTS + FACULTY APATHY = SALARIES GLOOM

One would think that our faculty would be interested in seeing maximum pressure brought to bear in obtaining betterment of their compensation position. However, the circumstances existing currently cast some real doubt about this presumption. These circumstances, in particular, consist of much-evidenced faculty apathy in the face of grossly inadequate salary actions being contemplated in Salem.

In examining, first of all, the current outlook for our compensation plans' funding, it is necessary to understand that OSSHE requests have centered on obtaining a U of 0 – OSU unweighted salary average (of all ranks) that equals the median of 19 competing institutions' averages. In 1957-58, after just having inaugurated this competitive comparison as a base for argument of our position, we were successful in obtaining a number 8 ranking. In succeeding bienniums, we have steadily lost considerable ground, reaching number 13 in 1961-62 and a still lower number 16 in 1968-69. Some idea as to the size of our deficiency can be gained by noting that our salaries currently are at 95 percent of this special average. In dollar terms, the gap separating us from the indicated goal amounts to an estimated $670. Using a special system in which averages are weighted by the numbers in each rank, our dollar deficiency today amounts to $901 for all ranks and $1,681 for full professors.

Looking at what is planned for the upcoming biennium, the Chancellor has courageously asked for moneys sufficient to achieve our target position in 1969-70 and to maintain that number 10 status in 1970-71. On the other hand, the Governor's budget recommendations call for funds that would leave us in number 16 for the first year of the biennium and then advance us one slot in the second year. However, Governor McCall has indicated that his recommendation is part of a long-range plan for gradual attainment of our target number 10 spot by 1975-76. In its particulars, this plan would advance us by one percent per year from the 95 percent level to the 100 percent one. Although these figures proposed for the upcoming fiscal period must of necessity be viewed as merely one input element for the legislature in ultimately making the decision, it is noteworthy that past bodies have rarely raised such sums. In fact, the more common practice has been to lower the amounts that have been requested by the Governor.

Thus, the contemplated action in Salem should be cause for genuine pessimism on the part of all faculty members in the system. These current plans, combined with the record in recent time periods, clearly show a highly injurious tendency to disregard our very reasonable goal of obtaining competitive salary levels. It should be noted that, in the past few bienniums, our alarm over the neglect of our case has been soothed by an appeal to wait out Oregon's revenue troubles induced by a sagging state economy. However, the state's income picture has improved notably in the past year and, accordingly, the contemplated salary treatment under such changed conditions evidences a dangerous inclination to not meet our needs.
One very grave implication follows and that is that Oregonians will have to face the consequences of a second-rate (or, more correctly, a 15th-rate) higher educational system. Although testimonial evidencing often seem difficult to come by, are there any among us who would not agree that compensation scales have very definite ways of getting reflected in the quality of the educational effort? Thus, we are indeed inviting educational inferiority if legislative intent is not challenged.

Turning to the matter of faculty apathy and its contributions to our plight, your colleagues who currently represent your interests in these economic areas are unanimous in the view that lack of adequate professor concern is seriously hurting our cause. Consider, for instance, the weakened position of our Chancellor in attempting to win support for his position on our salaries when he has such meagre evidence of faculty concern. Again, if you were a legislator, and you had the customary spending request dilemmas, would you actually give serious consideration to more higher education salary moneys if there were no vocalized opposition to the lower figures? Concerning this subject of our image with legislators, it is real food for thought that our two local legislators (who, naturally, are higher education friends) have repeatedly expressed puzzlement at the low level of faculty interest displayed in the area of economic welfare.

What are the specific bases for the feeling that there truly is an apathetic attitude present within our faculty? One prominent evidence was afforded by the pathetically low number (not over 35) who turned out for the January AAUP meeting to hear Dr. James Tattersall describe our predicament and ask for our help. Again, it can be seen in the extreme difficulties recently experienced in getting a person to chair a special inter-organizational Faculty Action Committee on Salaries. Similarly, the OSEA Chapter 72 President has received a host of turndowns (and, as of this writing, no acceptance) in his attempts to obtain an OSEA representative for the afore-mentioned Salaries Committee. As another manifestation, a Senator's comment upon the gravity of our salary problems -- at the December meeting of the Faculty Senate -- failed to produce a single response from the assembled representatives. Finally, this apathy is abundantly reflected in the very poor attendance at special faculty organization-sponsored group meetings held in recent years with our local legislators.

In a broader sense, these attitudes are mirrored in the relatively limp support given to the several faculty organizations that have worked so hard on trying to improve our economic status. In case there are any who do not understand how salary betterments are achieved, it is an inescapable fact that we are dependent upon state legislative action for betterment of our financial position. Given these circumstances, it is high time that faculty people realize that membership (and, on occasion, even active involvement) in AAUP, OSEA, and/or AFT adds greatly and vitally to the effectiveness of such organizations in bringing about the required political pressurings. After all, the way the lobbying game is played, it is imperative that the lobbyist speak from a strength of maximum numbers. Too, the more extensive
the participation is in such organizations, the larger the funds become
for supporting the research activities so important in building our case
to be presented. Hence, your membership in these professional associations
is considerably more significant than you might think it is.

You now have the essential facts on contemplated salary actions and
you know how some of the more active observers view faculty attitudes. Is
this stance of indifference the impression we really want to create? If
it is, then we had better be prepared to accept the sorry treatment that
results from legislative review of our case. If it is not, then we need
to start acting like we really are concerned.

There are a variety of ways that our concern can be made known, but
one more concrete way presents itself in the immediate future. At a
special meeting on Tuesday evening, February 18, these matters affecting
our compensation picture and what can be done about flexing faculty
muscles will be treated as part of a presentation on the subject of
"Professional Negotiation and the Professors". This session is sponsored
by OSU Faculty Chapter 72 of the Oregon State Employees Association, in
cooperation with the local chapters of the American Association of
University Professors and the American Federation of Teachers. We hope
you will help in dispelling the notion that we don't care about scrapping
for salaries by turning out in massive numbers for this meeting. Let's
make sure that we show the public and our legislators how concerned we
can get about proper compensation, February 18, Food Tech 117, 7:30 p.m.

If you have unavoidable commitments at the time of this meeting,
your comments on the situation and your suggestions for action can be
forwarded to any of the persons listed below.

Myron Cropsey (OSEA) Ag Eng
Floyd McFarland (AFT) Econ
Bob Newburgh (AAUP) SRI
Les Strickler (Fac Welf Comm) Bus Ad

Lester B. Strickler

January 31, 1969