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PSH Proposes Expansion Plans

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Penn State University officials recently announced on September 19 that they are prepared to expand the Harrisburg campus from a two- to a four-year institution within two years if they acquire the necessary resources.

PSH Provost Dr. Ruth Leventhal testified last month before the House of Representatives' select committee studying the feasibility of a four-year institution in Harrisburg and told legislators the university wants a clear indication from the public that expansion of PSH is needed and desired before investing money and resources into the project.

PSH and other local colleges began studying expansion possibilities after the Harrisburg *Patriot* published an editorial in January 1990 about construction of a new "Harrisburg University." The editorial concentrated on requests by the State System of Higher Education (SSHE) for funds to provide additional student capacity by rehabilitating existing facilities.

The *Patriot* suggested that the SSHE should consider building its first urban campus to accommodate minority students and let students take advantage of the government resources close-by.

Following the *Patriot* and other editorials on the issue, the House of Representatives established a select committee to study the feasibility of building a four-year institution in Harrisburg while local colleges studied expansion possibilities.

"Penn State Harrisburg has been responsive to the increasing need for providing a more comprehensive presence in this part of the state," Leventhal testified before the House select committee.

She cited acts of legislature in other states that added lower divisions to formerly two-year schools, "in order to be more responsive to economic development needs of that state."

Expanding PSH does not require an act of legislature but the university needs new resources, which Leventhal sees as the major obstacle standing in the way of an expansion decision.

"The will and the way is there, we just need the resources."

The actual initiation of the project depends on where the resources are coming from and when, she said.

An increasing number of mid-state students continue to leave Pennsylvania to attend college and only 200 of nearly



Dr. Ruth Leventhal speaks to a House of Representatives select committee about expanding PSH.

9,000 Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) continue their education at PSH, Leventhal said. Minorities and non-traditional students have unmet educational needs that could be met by a lower division expansion of PSH, Leventhal said.

If PSH expands, the institution will accommodate a mix of traditional and non-traditional students as it presently does.

"It is important not to lose focus on the non-traditional student and transfer student," Leventhal said.

Penn State Harrisburg has also studied other needs assessments and demographic studies from the State Data Center which indicate targeted needs for a four-year research university presence at the state capital, she said.

"...despite the fact that there are nine private colleges, three two-year colleges and two state system universities, we are experiencing an overcrowding and an out-migration of young people in Pennsylvania, and this is demographically projected to continue and get worse."

She cited needs that are not being met by current institutions, such as a four-year research institution for economic development in the region.

Other needs include an institution where Harrisburg residents can easily access college degrees, retraining for future jobs as technology changes and present jobs become obsolete, and additional space at a four-year low-cost

institution.

"Our studies indicate that these expressed needs and desires could be met very economically, very expeditiously and at the highest level of quality by lower division expansion of Penn State Harrisburg," Leventhal said.

Penn State University is preparing a feasibility study on the issue of expansion to a four-year institution, which is expected to be completed in January 1991, testified Gregory Knight, vice provost and dean of undergraduate studies at Penn State.

Knight also told the House select committee that PSH could begin offering classes to a freshman class of about 300 students within the first two years of a decision to expand.

The committee also heard testimonies from Messiah College and the Dauphin County Office of Economic Development. They presented findings of a needs assessment survey on education and job training in the midstate area, which found justification for an education and training resource center in the Harrisburg area.

Expansion takes two years to completely implement and consists of four stages--acquiring resources, planning, recruiting new faculty, and recruiting new students, Leventhal said.

If PSH decides to expand, the campus will offer the same majors as it presently has.

"We would meet the regional needs as we assess them," Leventhal said in regard to the possibility of additional majors being added to the PSH offerings. She said PSH would continue to expand over time and faculty would continue to make academic decisions.

Leventhal said PSH could begin offering classes to freshman and sophomores with the present facilities but "in the long run we clearly need the new library learning center," she said.

"There are a number of services offered on a limited basis or not at all that would be needed for freshman activities," said Dr. James South, Associate Provost for Administrative operations at PSH. He said academic support services, an advising center for students with unclaimed majors, and physical education programs to fulfill university requirements are examples of such programs and services.

"We're doing what good managers should do and looking at the situation strategically," said Glenn Knight, Director of Community Relations at PSH. He said expansion of PSH has been addressed by different people for the past eight or ten years, but never did anything because of the relationship with HACC.

The reason PSH offers only upper division curriculum presently is because

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Professors Speak...

Hussein Must Go

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Three Penn State Harrisburg professors, born in the middle east, have a vested interest in what is happening in their homeland.

Through personal experience, engineering professors Alireza Rahrooh and Alex Aswad and marketing professor Kaynak have felt a presence of war few can receive from the Associated Press or the BBC.

The three agree on one matter; Saddam Hussein must be stopped. His stronghold on Kuwait, his insistence upon destroying the Persian Gulf oil fields, and the economic turmoil in the Middle East must soon become a thing of the past.

"Hussein needs to be stopped now before a lot of innocent people are killed," Rahrooh said.

A native of Kourdistan, an area populated by four million between Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, Rahrooh is concerned that his homeland will be victimized once again by the gunfire between its warring neighbors especially if it involves the chemical warfare threatened by Hussein.

Rahrooh added that if Hussein is not stopped he will probably do the same thing to Saudi Arabia that he is currently doing to Kuwait.

Professor Aswad said that since Hussein came to power, he has sent

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