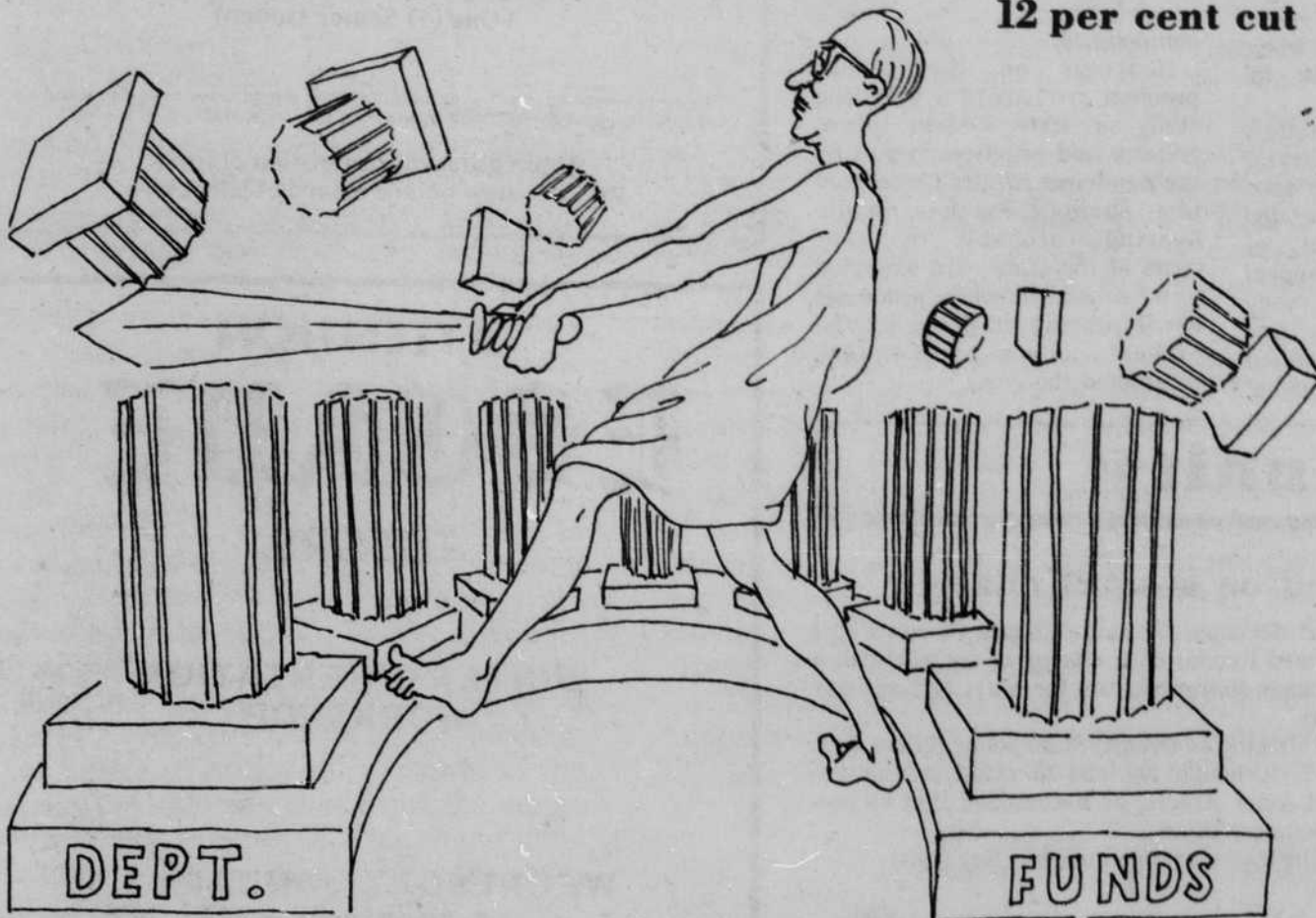


# Minnesota Plan: solving the money crisis

## 12 per cent cut



To meet the University of Oregon 1972-73 budget crisis, University President Robert Clark is combining both internal and external reviews of all departments on

campus, academic and non-academic. Clark has asked each department to determine what 12 per cent of its budget is of lowest priority (above)...

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The University of Minnesota took up this plan last July and it is now in its finishing stages. The University is just now taking the plan up as one method of solving the financial emergency.

How does the Minnesota Plan work? Like this: Each department, school and college on campus fills out a detailed questionnaire, which asks which programs are of higher priority than others. The department ranks its priorities, all of its priorities, from top to bottom.

The department also points out how its budget could be cut by 12 per cent (a percentage which is about five per cent more than is actually needed by the University).

Then the department notes which parts of the cut 12 per cent could and should be restored on a priority basis.

The University administration reviews the detailed questionnaire, and it tentatively cuts the department's money by 12 per cent. Then, it offers each department the opportunity to present a case for the programs it feels should be restored, or new programs which should be initiated.

Most faculty at the University of Minnesota who were interviewed by the Minnesota Daily were satisfied with the basic idea of the priority review currently taking place at UM.

As John Turnbull, associate dean of the UM College of Liberal Arts put it, "Some might say the only fair cut would be 'across-the-board,' while others insist selective pruning would be fairest. I think the plan (UM President Malcom) Moos settled on, while not satisfying everyone, is probably the most broadly supportable."

UM vice president for coordinate campuses and educational relationships Stanley Wenberg said:

"Certainly a central concern was satisfying the legislature that the University was making the effort to control spending."

And that was the prime reason Moos developed the priority review. State legislators has urged the UM to undertake it. In fact, Moos' plan is almost identical to the way some legislators wanted the UM to cut its budget.

UM administrators have kept in mind the general role and mission of the school during its priority review. A memorandum by UM President Moos in July states:

"Every indication is that the University is entering a period of restricted growth, partly because the expansion rates of the economy and population are decelerating, but also because of the changing role of the university in society and of the UM in the developing state system of higher education. These changes will not permit undifferentiated growth."

The memo continues:

"No precise quantitative methods for judging the quality of any particular program exist." But filling out the detailed questionnaire "should be useful to the deans in describing and assessing the relative importance of a given program and for justifying the collegiate proposals to the UM level."

Several criteria appear in the memo for department heads and deans.

The first criterion, "Program Demand and Productivity at Various Levels," outlines the UM's intention to reduce the lower division educational mission—farming it out to state and junior colleges.

"The undergraduate and particularly lower division programs should become a smaller proportion of total UM offerings than at present, as this responsibility is increasingly shared among elements of the state's higher educational system."

This first criterion asks department heads and deans to evaluate:

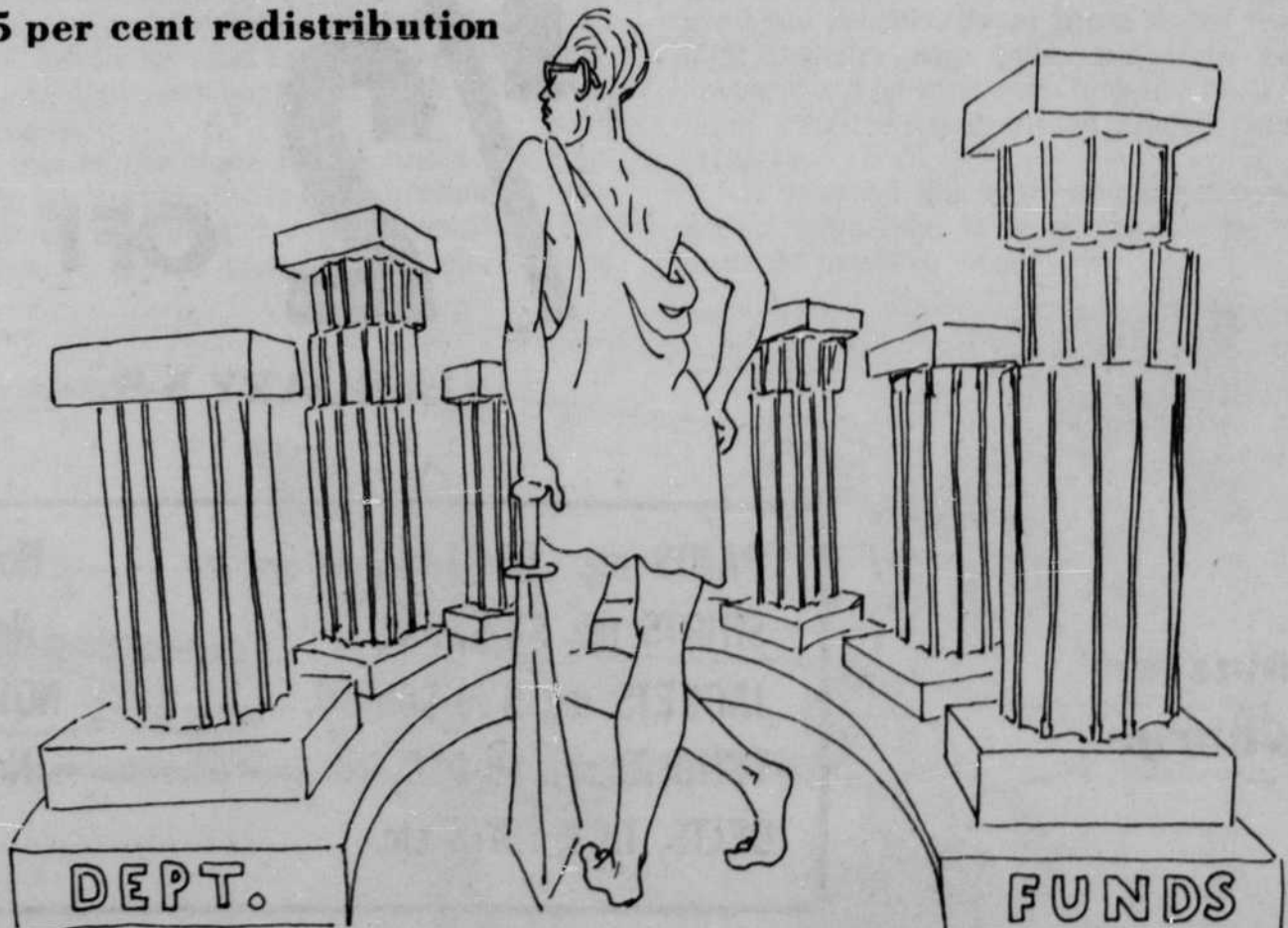
—Enrollment at various levels: lower division, upper division and graduate.

—The possibility of reducing "its instructional effort by reducing the frequency with which a course is offered."

—The possibility of reducing "the variety of its lower division offerings by consolidation and reorganization of two or more courses."

—The market demand "over the next five years for students trained at the program's certificate or graduate degree level."

## 5 per cent redistribution



Then, Clark and the Hearing Panel on University Priorities (HPUP) will cut the necessary seven per cent. Clark and HPUP will then redistribute the

The second criterion in the memo is concerned with uniqueness of programs:

"Has the program developed novel and more effective ways of offering introductory courses that make them significantly different from similar offerings elsewhere in the state?"

The third criterion asks of the proximity of the UM's programs to "the teaching and inquiry missions of the UM."

The memo states, "The relative affluence of the preceding decade may have been the addition of programs, involving small numbers of students and faculty, which are essentially independent from other programs and add a certain modish prestige."

These criteria are just a part of the memo issued by UM President Moos, which is 22 pages long. The memo includes guidelines and a long questionnaire for the departments.

Key Minnesota legislators like the way UM is proceeding with such an overall priority review. State Sen. John Olson, chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee and the education subcommittee of the Senate Finance Committee, said the review is "essentially good" and "looks promising."

Why? Because of its provisions for reallocating funds within the University, thereby assuring the future of high-priority programs.

Olson said, "I like the way the review takes the dead timber out of certain departments. It sure doesn't make sense to offer classes year after year just because they were offered in the past."

Another legislator, concurring with Olson's views, is Rodney Searle, a state representative who is chairman of the education division of the House Appropriations Committee.

He said, "It's about time the UM started thinking about priorities rather than perpetuating unprofitable programs and classes."

Both Olson and Searle worry about the UM cutting off meaningful educational programs which are central to the school's role and mission, however.

Olson admitted that some newer programs might be assigned low-priority status rather than more established projects simply because they have not become rooted in the UM.

"My primary concern has always been for the students," Olson said. "I wouldn't want to be part of anything that would hurt the state's educational programs."

"But I said educational. Sometimes the UM forgets its primary mission—to teach."

Searle said, "I do hope that some good programs are not lopped off because they don't have the support of the hierarchy, although I don't think there's much chance of that. On the contrary, it would be my guess that the UM would be inclined to retrench a bit on its retrenchment."

Priority review at the UM is coming to a close. Departments, schools and colleges at the UM were to submit answers to the 22-page questionnaire by Nov. 1.

University administrators, to be sure, will be watching the outcome of priority review at the UM during the next few months.

remaining five per cent (above) according to re-defined University priorities.

Illustrations by Tim Ferguson.