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**ETHINKING**  
**SUNY**

**THE BOARD  
OF TRUSTEES**

**STATE UNIVERSITY  
OF NEW YORK**





SUBMITTED TO

**THE HONORABLE GEORGE E. PATAKI**

*Governor of the State of New York*

**THE HONORABLE JOSEPH L. BRUNO**

*Temporary President and Majority Leader  
of the New York State Senate*

**THE HONORABLE SHELDON SILVER**

*Speaker of the  
New York State Assembly*

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

DECEMBER 1, 1995

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**PREFACE**

*Rethinking SUNY* is respectfully submitted by the State University Board of Trustees in response to a call from the New York State Legislature requesting a “multi-year, comprehensive, systemwide plan to increase cost efficiency.” As appointed overseers of the State University of New York, the Board of Trustees has a continuing responsibility to assess its use of the state’s investment and to seek positive changes to ensure that we are delivering the most effective services to the taxpayers and the students of the State University of New York.

Since its founding in 1948, the State University of New York has offered intellectual and cultural growth to millions of citizens who otherwise would not have received it. That farsighted investment in ourselves and in our collective future has been repaid many times over in a better educated, more productive citizenry. Consistent with that tradition of almost fifty years, the State University’s major objective remains public access to high-quality education. To achieve that goal in a climate of constrained resources, it will be necessary to become more self-sufficient and entrepreneurial, more focused, and more creative. We will need greater management autonomy to do so.

Underlying *Rethinking SUNY* is the theme of increasing efficiency by empowering campuses to directly manage more of their academic and financial affairs and by eliminating current disincentives to the prudent use of campus and system resources. As a result, campuses will have greater ability to achieve efficiencies of operation and to focus on academic quality. With new management delegation comes also greater campus responsibility and accountability.

The Board has endeavored to meet the legislative charge clearly and directly, mindful of the Legislature’s concern that the plan be developed in pursuit of the “highest quality and broadest possible access consistent with the State University mission.” (*Appendix A.*) Four Board committees carried out the *Rethinking SUNY* review in full consultation with the university community. (*Appendix B.*) This report outlines subject areas and broad directions that will guide SUNY in the years ahead.

As a comprehensive multi-year systemwide plan, the recommendations contained in *Rethinking SUNY* are anticipated to lead to cost savings beginning in 1996-97 and growing in the ensuing years. However, this multi-year report does not enumerate anticipated 1996-97 savings; rather, it presents the means whereby such savings might be achieved. Specific estimates of cost savings will be included in subsequent budget requests.

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**The State University’s major objective remains public access to high-quality education**

## MISSION AND VISION

In 1985, the Legislature approved a restatement of the State University mission that proclaimed SUNY should provide “educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population in a complete range of academic, professional, and vocational postsecondary programs.” (*Appendix C.*)

The Board of Trustees reaffirms its commitment to SUNY’s legislatively articulated mission and will continue to re-examine the State University in light of challenges posed by the twenty-first century and by the public demand for the most effective use of tax dollars. We endorse the following seven propositions:

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**The Board of  
Trustees reaffirms  
its commitment to  
SUNY’s legislatively  
articulated mission**

- The State University exists to provide access to educational services of the highest quality.
- Increased differentiation of campuses is fundamental to realizing the synergies achievable as a system.
- Undergraduate education is our highest priority.
- Graduate, professional, and research programs are essential to the mission of the State University and to the economic vitality of New York.
- Associate, baccalaureate, and graduate programs all play a vital role in work force development and the economic health of New York State.
- Clearer academic standards and better means for measuring performance are central to increasing accountability.
- The Board of Trustees has a responsibility to plan, prioritize, and allocate resources to programs and campuses.

**STRUCTURE**

The State University is now engaged in a wide-ranging review of its degree programs

It will be Board policy for campuses to ensure that courses are available so that students can complete their programs within four years

**Academic Specialization.** The State University is now engaged in a wide-ranging review of its degree programs at the associate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. The objective of the review is to eliminate programs of questionable quality as well as unnecessarily duplicative programs, especially those with low enrollment and high costs. Distance learning technologies, which will require new investment, will be employed in efficiently maintaining the greatest possible access to degree programs.

Part of the process of refining the distinctiveness of campus and sector missions will be a thorough review of admissions policies and procedures at the state-operated campuses, with the aim of maximizing the ability of students to meet high academic standards with less required remediation.

**Learning Productivity and Time to Degree.** The Governor and Legislature have asked that the State University examine learning productivity and time to degree. Nationally, 45 percent of students graduate from baccalaureate programs within six years. The State University exceeds this average, with 60 percent of its students earning degrees within this time. We will develop options to help shorten time to degree. It will be Board policy for campuses to ensure that courses are available so that, with appropriate planning, students are able to complete their programs of academic study within four years.

Many students are supported by the state in earning credits that far exceed their degree requirement. Given limited state resources, we will consider a policy that would charge full cost tuition for non-transfer resident students in full time baccalaureate programs unnecessarily enrolled for more than nine semesters and accumulating more than 140 semester credits.

We will develop programs which would encourage qualified high school juniors and seniors to earn college credits. As more entering students come to SUNY having already earned college credits, more students will be likely to complete degree programs in less time and with more advanced work in their programs. In addition, the State University will strongly encourage the schools to ensure that their graduates are provided with the academic skills and knowledge requisite for college-level work.

Shortening time to degree will require increased innovation in instruction. An aggressive commitment to on-campus instructional technology can have many benefits, such as greater flexibility for students in the pace of instruction; multiple modes of delivery of course content; and allocation of more faculty time to direct student contact.

**Community Colleges.** The Board recognizes that community colleges are vital and efficient access points to the University as well as important work force training facilities. The Board will take appropriate actions to ensure:

- That community colleges be identified and operated as centers of excellence for lower division education.

- That community colleges continue as centers for work force training.
- The “seamless” transfer of academically qualified community college graduates as third-year students at state-operated campuses, with appropriate credit for prior work.

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**Community colleges  
will be operated as  
centers of excellence  
for lower division  
education**

In light of the special access mission entrusted to community colleges, we recommend that market forces, interpreted by the individual campuses, be a determining factor for setting tuition rates and that the tuition cap for community colleges should not exceed the level for the lowest state-operated associate degree. Maintenance of adequate financial aid for both full- and part-time students must be available in amounts large enough, for long enough durations, and with an emphasis on grants, as opposed to loans.

It is important for the economic health of the state that community colleges be key players in work force development. SUNY will establish statewide plans for work force development and for Tech Prep and School-to-Work initiatives, which will reduce the number of underprepared students entering higher education and the work force. In addition, the community colleges will collaborate with high schools, BOCES, and the business community to meet regional needs for specialized technical programs.

A working group of community college presidents is preparing a position paper on the role of community colleges in the State University system. Its report will be presented to the State University Board of Trustees early in 1996.

**Hospitals.** SUNY has three University Hospitals, at the Health Science Centers at Brooklyn and Syracuse and at the University Center at Stony Brook. As state-operated units, they lack the freedom to compete in today’s highly competitive and rapidly changing health-care marketplace. (*Appendix D.*) To survive, they must be granted new management flexibility.

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**We believe that the  
University Hospitals at  
Brooklyn and Syracuse  
should be devolved  
into locally controlled,  
voluntary, not-for-profit  
corporations**

Two independent national accounting firms reviewed the financial status of the University Hospitals at Brooklyn and Syracuse. Given widely accepted assumptions about the direction of Medicare and Medicaid, present market activities, and the eventual elimination of state subsidies, they concluded that as currently configured each institution will continue to experience ever-increasing financial losses. By the year 2000, the Brooklyn and Syracuse hospitals will experience combined annual operating losses of \$73 million.

We considered several options to preserve these hospitals, including devolution to a public benefit corporation or devolution to a not-for-profit (501 (c)(3)) corporation. We believe that the University Hospitals at Brooklyn and Syracuse should be devolved as soon as practical into locally controlled, voluntary, not-for-profit corporations. This structure will best allow the hospitals the freedom to respond to local circumstances and market conditions and at the same time to remain closely affiliated with our Schools of Medicine.



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The State University is encouraging strategic alliances that will link together some of its campuses

With regard to the University Hospital at Stony Brook, a similar external financial review is being conducted. Pending the outcome of that review, the Board initially recommends that Stony Brook participate in legislation to grant it the management flexibility and authority needed to become a partner in a regional health care delivery network of Suffolk County providers.

**Strategic Alliances.** The SUNY system is made up of many relatively small campuses. This structure has the advantages of local access for students (especially for place-bound students), of regional employment, and of widely distributed economic impact across the state. Unfortunately, it is also financially inefficient due to the cost of maintaining and operating a widely distributed physical plant and because faculty and professional employees of smaller campuses lack the economies of scale inherent in large student bodies.

The challenge is to make these units more efficient. To do so, the State University is encouraging strategic alliances that will link together some of these smaller campuses as well as develop partnerships with the private sector. The pilot project will potentially include the upstate Colleges of Technology as well as the Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome. We will work with these campuses to minimize the need for redundant administrative services. An initial investment will be needed in the assessment of educational needs and the acquisition of technologies to facilitate transmission of administrative and academic information.

**Statutory Colleges.** The Statutory Colleges include the College of Ceramics at Alfred University and the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture and Life Science, Human Ecology, and Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

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The percentage of the SUNY state appropriation dedicated to Statutory Colleges has increased significantly in recent years

Funds allocated to these units are based on allocation methods different from those for SUNY's state-operated campuses. When the majority of funding for all units came from state tax dollars, a sustainable funding pattern emerged. However, the dramatic increase in reliance on tuition at the state-operated campuses has adversely affected that pattern. While we recognize the quality of the programs at the Statutory Colleges, some of which are unique and involve special missions, it remains a fact that the percentage of the SUNY state appropriation which is dedicated to the Statutory Colleges on a "pass-through" basis has increased significantly in recent years; conversely, the percentage of that appropriation which remains with the state-operated campuses has declined. To illustrate the problem, in 1988 tax dollars for State University's core operating budget were \$1.18 billion, with statutory colleges receiving \$108.4 million. By 1995 the numbers were \$733.1 million and \$118 million, respectively. The meaning and implications of these numbers are viewed differently by the Board and Cornell. We have initiated discussions with Cornell University, and will shortly do so with Alfred, in order to clarify the issue and to work toward financial solutions which are sustainable in the operating and capital budgets of both the state-operated and the statutory campuses.

## OPERATIONS

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We are committed to the goal of restructuring and completing a 30 percent reduction in system office positions within the next two years

**System Administration.** The Board has charged the chancellor and system officers to examine system administration in the belief that it can be made smaller and more efficient. Last winter, Chancellor Thomas A. Bartlett constituted an internal working group to make recommendations as to how the system office might best be changed. The Board also formed a task force of representatives of each campus sector to examine all aspects of system administration and to make independent recommendations for its downsizing and restructuring.

These two separate, ongoing reviews point toward a more focused system office which is more responsible for policy and monitoring educational results than for processing and which is less controlling of campus operations. The Board of Trustees and system administration are committed to the goal of this restructuring and to completing a concomitant 30 percent reduction in both state and non-state supported system office positions within the next two years.

**Systemwide Administrative Productivity.** In rethinking SUNY's operations, the Board's primary goal was the redesign of administrative processes to maximize operating efficiency at system and campus levels. We want to make it possible for campus presidents and their colleagues to operate more efficiently and to reinvest the savings on their campuses to achieve higher quality. Underpinning this effort are four guiding principles: reduced monitoring of routine decisions and transactions; increased management flexibility; increased cooperation among all units; and a consistent focus on enhanced academic quality and student achievement. (*Appendix E.*)

The Board believes that the State University's operational functions should be reorganized to achieve the following:

- Decentralization of processes and functions that do not benefit from central review or support.
- Elimination of processing and approvals that do not add value.
- Recognition that campus operating environments properly vary according to size, complexity, and campus need.
- Sharing of support services among campuses, where cost-effective without diminution of quality.

To achieve these objectives, it is necessary for the State University to have the following:

- Changes in policy, law, and procedures that inhibit effective management.
- A consolidated fund that will allow the State University to allocate, interchange, and spend appropriations as needed.
- Allowing campuses to carry forward operational surpluses from year to year so that they can plan on a multi-year basis and can reinvest savings for academic quality.

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Our primary goal is redesign of administrative processes to maximize operating efficiency at system and campus levels

- Simplified and reorganized review and approval processes of the State University by other state agencies.
- Support for, and state funding of, critical investments in technology and process redesign.
- Continuation of quality assurance efforts to enhance State University's services.

The opportunities for savings outlined here are dependent on realization of new operating freedoms.

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Measures of academic productivity must be qualitative as well as quantitative

**Increased Teaching Productivity.** The Legislature has specifically asked that the State University examine faculty productivity as part of this report. Given diminishing resources, we believe that State University faculty should be at least as productive as their national counterparts. In most respects our faculty already meet that goal; they teach as many courses as their national counterparts and spend as many or more hours in the classroom. But when measured by student contact/credit hours, i.e., the number of students each faculty member has in his or her classes, SUNY faculty are not as productive.

The Board recognizes that measures of academic productivity must be qualitative as well as quantitative; that is to say, we must be as concerned about the quality of our students' educational experience as about quantitative comparisons. The State University will consider a plan which would internally reallocate a portion of its campus budgets into a pool to reward campuses for increased faculty productivity. A plan for the allocation of these incentive monies will be developed in consultation with campus presidents and presented to the Board. We also intend to encourage SUNY faculty and staff to explore innovative ways of teaching that will help achieve new levels of quantitative and qualitative productivity.

**Academic and Administrative Technology.** Improving the technology infrastructure will be critical to the State University's success in increasing academic and administrative productivity. Technology can permit greater sharing of both academic and administrative resources and provide a cost-effective way to expand statewide access to SUNY's programs and facilities. Technology will not only enable us to operate more efficiently, it can also increase faculty and learning productivity. We are in the age of information; our future depends upon our having the technology necessary to use this information. If properly implemented, return on investment, both on money saved and quality enhanced, will be significant:

- Streamlined administrative support systems.
- Increased sharing/exchange of courses across campuses.
- Enhanced access for place-bound students.

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**Improving the technology infrastructure is critical to increasing academic and administrative productivity.**

- Increased availability of state-of-the-art library and information services among campuses.
- Improved learning productivity and shortened time-to-degree.

To accomplish the above, the Board will prepare and thoroughly vet a multi-year technology investment plan in support of its academic and administrative productivity objectives.

**OPERATING REVENUE  
AND TUITION**

**We will continue to support affordable tuition and seek adequate funding of state and federal financial aid**

Meaningful access arises out of the covenant among taxpayers, students, and their families that all share a benefit from and a responsibility for the cost of an affordable public higher education. Underpinning access has been affordable tuition and the state and nation's historic support of financial aid programs, including both grant and loan programs serving students and their families. At present, 73 percent of all SUNY students receive some form of financial aid. To preserve access, the Board of Trustees will continue to support affordable tuition and will seek adequate funding of state and federal financial aid programs, including the state's Tuition Assistance Program.

State University tuition levels for undergraduate and graduate students have increased by 58 percent since 1992. Such dramatic increases make financial planning difficult for students and their families. A better approach is to increase tuition based on a gradual, predictable basis. We believe that the State University must strive for a predictable balance among tuition increases, financial aid, and tax dollar support, in order to protect both access and the quality of academic programs. Tuition increases should take into account, among other things, a range of cost indexes (including, for example, the Higher Education Price Index and the Tuition Price Index) as well as the cost of providing educational services. The University should always consider the availability of grants/loans when establishing new tuition and fees.

**Most other higher education systems have authority to set differential rates of tuition; we recommend that the State University be given the same authority**

SUNY's tuition and fees at the baccalaureate level are now approaching the northeastern average of \$4,015; at the doctoral campuses, SUNY tuition is below that of other institutions in the northeast. Most other public higher education systems in the United States have the authority to set differential rates of tuition; we recommend that the State University be given the same authority. Differential tuition would be established by the Board using rates that better reflect differences in cost, support campus flexibility, and allow the Board to address University-wide priorities and needs<sup>1</sup>, including necessary student financial aid. The Board will determine what portion of differential tuition will remain at the campuses; it will also mandate that some portion of retained differential tuition be devoted to financial aid.

**Entrepreneurial Revenues.** The University must become more entrepreneurial and self-sufficient. In a time of rising costs and declining state tax dollars, the Board fully recognizes and supports State University's need to increase its levels of non-state funding. To build on and expand these efforts, the Board recommends that system administration and the campuses identify appropriate long-term revenue goals. The Board will ask that some portion of the entrepreneurial revenues generated by campuses be used to support financial aid.

<sup>1</sup>The retention of tuition (in whole or in part) by the campuses would not create new funds or relieve the Board of its task of determining priorities. Among other things, the Board will still need to set some tuition ceiling for all campuses and/or sectors in combination with an established enrollment target/range in order to ensure access and to provide for effective and efficient campus planning.

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**Sponsored programs  
directly benefit New York  
by providing a major  
infusion of new capital**

As noted earlier, other entrepreneurial opportunities exist that would require new statutory flexibility to enable the State University to pursue the sale or lease of campus properties, facilities rental, enhancement of self-supporting operations and partnerships, imposition of fees and rents, and contracting of services. The Board of Trustees will establish appropriate guidelines.

Sponsored programs, i.e., grant and contract income, directly benefit New York's economy by providing a major infusion of new capital for the state; by employing more than 8,000 individuals in research-related non-state jobs; by providing badly needed training monies; and by providing the critical base on which New York can build high-tech industries. Campuses will be encouraged to increase efforts to attract external funding.

## CONCLUSION

We have presented a comprehensive, multi-year systemwide plan for the State University which is ambitious and far-reaching. It acknowledges the present climate of constrained financial resources while attempting to minimize its negative impact on access and quality. However, working together with the Governor and the Legislature:

- We can have campuses with the autonomy to become all that they can be, with a more efficient and responsive system administration.
- We can achieve efficiencies in instructional delivery and administrative transactions while preserving affordable, quality higher education for our students.
- We can overcome some of the inefficiencies of small campuses and give them the opportunity to serve as intellectual resources and important economic engines for local communities and our state.
- We can preserve the excellence of our hospitals. They can provide better services to their communities in a more cost-effective manner, but only if they have the freedom they need to compete in a changing health-care environment.

Responding to your charge, we are rethinking SUNY. We are charting a direction toward a more efficient and responsive State University of New York.

**APPENDIX A    The Charge to the State University of New York  
(Chapter 82, Laws of 1995)**

§ 135. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the board of trustees of the state university of New York shall develop a multi-year, comprehensive, systemwide plan to increase cost-efficiency in the continuing pursuit of the highest quality and broadest possible access consistent with the state university mission. Such plan shall be submitted no later than December 1, 1995 to the governor, the speaker of the assembly, and the temporary president of the senate. In developing such plan, the trustees shall solicit the participation and contribution of the university community in its entirety and consider ways to:

- (a) enhance the application of technology for academic and administrative purposes;
- (b) increase learning productivity, including reducing time to program completion;
- (c) increase faculty productivity; and
- (d) enhance the overall quality of degrees offerings by strengthening academic specialization.



## **APPENDIX B**    **The Rethinking SUNY Process**

Four Board committees carried out the *Rethinking SUNY* review: Mission and Vision; Structure; Operations; and Operating Revenue and Tuition. A Steering Committee chaired by Board of Trustees Chairman Frederic V. Salerno coordinated the process.

Consistent with the legislative charge, the wider University community was involved in the review process. Faculty responded to the call to make known their views through the faculty governance bodies. The Board solicited the views of UUP, SUNY's faculty union, and consulted with students and the student governance bodies. A SUNY president served as a resource to each of the four committees. The process also included broad participation by SUNY campus personnel, such as the academic vice presidents, the vice presidents for student affairs, and the business officers.

Discussion documents related to *Rethinking SUNY* were regularly sent to major University constituencies, and all the committee meetings were held in open forum.

Committee membership is listed on the following page.

**APPENDIX B (CTD) Rethinking SUNY Planning Committees**

*STEERING COMMITTEE*

Frederic V. Salerno, *Chair*  
 Roderick G.W. Chu  
 Edward F. Cox  
 Thomas F. Egan  
 N. Theodore Sommer

*Presidential Staffing*  
 None

*Vice Presidential Staffing*  
 None

*MISSION/VISION COMMITTEE*

Roderick G.W. Chu, *Chair*  
 Candace de Russy  
 Arnold B. Gardner\*  
 Diego Muñoz  
 Nancy H. Nielsen

*Presidential Staffing*  
 William Messner  
 (Orange CC)

*Vice Presidential Staffing*  
 None

*STRUCTURE COMMITTEE*

Thomas F. Egan, *Chair*  
 Roderick G.W. Chu  
 Judith L. Duken  
 Erland E. Kailbourne\*\*  
 Edward S. Nelson

*Presidential Staffing*  
 Lois DeFleur  
 (Binghamton)

*Vice Presidential Staffing*  
 Thomas Leamer  
 (Morrisville)

*OPERATIONS COMMITTEE*

Edward F. Cox, *Chair*  
 Candace de Russy  
 Arnold B. Gardner  
 Miles Lasser\*\*\*  
 Edward S. Nelson

*Presidential Staffing*  
 Donald MacPhee  
 (Fredonia)

*Vice Presidential Staffing*  
 Robert Wagner  
 (U. Buffalo-Finance)

Aubrey Bonnet  
 (Old Westbury-AVP)

Frederick Preston  
 (Stony Brook-VP for Student Affairs)

*TUITION/REVENUE COMMITTEE*

N. Theodore Sommer, *Chair*  
 Hazel Dukes  
 Pamela Jacobs  
 Diego Muñoz  
 Harvey F. Wachsmann

*Presidential Staffing*  
 Alice Chandler  
 (New Paltz)

*Vice Presidential Staffing*  
 Ken Levison  
 (Geneseo-VP Finance)

Thomas Kelly  
 (Binghamton-VP for External Affairs)

\* Trustee Gardner will also make recommendations to the Board with regard to statutory colleges.  
 \*\* Trustee Kailbourne has been asked to also chair the Board's efforts with regard to the pilot project involving the Colleges of Technology  
 \*\*\* Trustee Lasser will also coordinate the Board's study of the role of community colleges.

**APPENDIX C    The Mission of State University of New York  
(Chapter 552, Laws of 1985)**

“The mission of the state university system shall be to provide to the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population in a complete range of academic, professional and vocational postsecondary programs including such additional activities in pursuit of these objectives as are necessary or customary. These services and activities shall be offered through a geographically distributed comprehensive system of diverse campuses which shall have differentiated and designated missions designed to provide a comprehensive program of higher education, to meet the needs of both traditional and non-traditional students and to address local, regional and state needs and goals. In fulfilling this mission, the state university shall exercise care to develop and maintain a balance of its human and physical resources that:

- a. recognizes the fundamental role of its responsibilities in undergraduate education and provides a full range of graduate and professional education that reflects the opportunity for individual choice and the needs of society;
- b. establishes tuition which most effectively promotes the university’s access goals;
- c. encourages and facilitates basic and applied research for the purpose of the creation and dissemination of knowledge vital for continued human, scientific, technological and economic advancement;
- d. strengthens its educational and research programs in the health sciences through the provision of high quality care at its hospitals, clinics and related programs;
- e. shares the expertise of the state university with the business, agricultural, governmental, labor and nonprofit sectors of the state through a program of public service for the purpose of enhancing the well-being of the people of the state of New York and in protecting our environmental and marine resources;
- f. promotes appropriate program articulation between its state-operated institutions and its community colleges as well as encourages regional networks and cooperative relationships with other educational and cultural institutions for the purpose of better fulfilling its mission of education, research and service.”

## **APPENDIX D Management Constraints on SUNY Hospitals**

Presently, SUNY's hospitals are severely hampered by their inability to:

- Enter into contracts in a timely fashion
- Participate in health-care networks
- Contract with their employees (e.g., physicians) in response to the demand for managed care
- Maintain adequate cash reserves
- Access capital
- Participate in the Dormitory Authority's equipment loan program
- Independently purchase supplies and equipment
- Attract and maintain qualified personnel due to civil service restrictions
- Pay the true cost of fringe benefits
- Negotiate labor contracts and manage labor issues at the local level

## APPENDIX E Management Flexibility Recommendations

**Financial Management.** The most efficient way to operate SUNY is to place management responsibility more firmly in the hands of those responsible for delivery of services. Such “responsibility center” budgeting is an incentive-based approach that will empower campus managers to accomplish their missions more efficiently.

Two proposals are key: creation of a consolidated fund that would allow SUNY the freedom to allocate, interchange, and spend appropriations as needed; and the ability to carry over appropriations beyond the immediate fiscal year, which will enhance campus ability to plan for long-term expenses.

**Operations Management.** We propose streamlining contracting and purchasing to support timely and cost-effective use of operating funds. The University should be able to procure goods and services independently and to enter into contracts without prior review and approval of any other state agency. Purchasing would be subject to broad guidelines established by the Board of Trustees, with specific guidelines being set at the campus level.

**Personnel Management.** SUNY seeks regulatory relief from state rules and procedures which constrict the efficient and effective use of resources. The current process regarding classified service positions is overly bureaucratic and inhibits effective use of personnel.

SUNY also seeks multi-year retirement incentive legislation, geared to dates compatible with the academic calendar, which would include the possibility of phased retirements and a benefit structure that may encourage employees to retire before the program expires.

Finally, we seek better ways to manage the payroll, at present a paper-driven process. An automated system would enable more flexibility and timeliness in processing transactions and enhance payroll accuracy.

**Property and Facilities Management.** Presently, campuses are unable to lease land to the private sector for facilities development in support of University activities. Allowing campuses to do so do might cost-effectively enhance a number of academic, research, and public-service activities. In appropriate cases, campuses might also need the ability to sell land, facilities, or equipment not being fully utilized.

Financing and managing the rehabilitation of residential facilities is an unnecessarily complex and costly process requiring extensive review and approval by numerous state and system offices. Campuses should be granted new freedom in managing these projects.

Finally, under state Finance Law, the State University Construction Fund must receive a certificate of approval of availability from the Division of the Budget for each project initiated or bid under the seven separate construction programs that it administers on behalf of SUNY.

Providing one master certificate for the fund's construction programs will help control costs and provide the needed flexibility to undertake facilities projects in the fastest possible time.

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