

The SAMP Decision

To: *The Health Affairs Committee of the Trustees
and Members of the University Community*
From: *Martin Meyerson and Eliot Stellar*
Date: *December 6, 1976*
Re: *The Future of the School of Allied Medical Professions*

After careful examination of all the recommendations, arguments, analyses and advice about the School of Allied Medical Professions (SAMP) we have received over the past few months, we have decided to recommend to the Trustees that we pursue "the Jefferson option." This means we will recommend to the Health Affairs Committee of the Trustees that we not continue at this University the professional education components of the programs in physical therapy, occupational therapy and medical technology, and that we not accept a freshman class into SAMP as we know it now after the class of 1981, which will enter in the fall of 1977. If our recommendation is accepted, we will resume negotiations with Thomas Jefferson University directed toward the transfer of responsibility for the professional education components of these programs. We will seek the establishment of cooperative programs in which students interested in these areas may receive their general education and basic scientific education at Pennsylvania, and their professional training at Jefferson. After the fall of 1977, the admission of freshmen seeking professional training in these areas will be limited to the cooperative program.

The arguments which led us to this conclusion are both academic and financial. We have concluded primarily on academic grounds that the School cannot remain as it is, and we have concluded primarily on financial grounds that we cannot invest resources necessary to upgrade the School to an acceptable academic level. We believe these conclusions are fully consistent with the advice on December 1, 1976, of the reallocation review board.

AN OUTLINE OF EVENTS

We have been working for the last five years under a mandate to pursue selective excellence in our academic programs while solving difficult fiscal problems by reallocating resources from lower priority to higher priority programs. These principles of operation were enunciated by the University Development Commission in January, 1973, and endorsed during that year by the University Council, the Academic Deans, and the University Trustees. In our fund-raising Program for the Eighties, selective excellence and fiscal responsibility were linked as a fundamental part of our appeal to all donors. Finally, the immediate pressures upon the University's finances make it necessary to effect the most stringent economies.

Thus we found ourselves unable to encourage the Dean of the School of Allied Medical Professions, Sidney Rodenberg, when he sought more resources from the University to develop the faculty and the programs of the School. He resigned in August, 1975, and went to a state university which could promise the resources. When the department chairpersons of SAMP made similar requests for more resources for the School's programs, we asked the Vice-President for Health Affairs to undertake a study with the Acting Dean of SAMP, Eugene Michels, to examine the future of the School. In late April, 1976, the Vice-President, after reviewing a variety of options, recommended to us that the School of Allied Medical Professions be phased out over a four-year period, and raised the suggestion that the professional education portion of their programs be transferred to Thomas Jefferson University as an inter-institutional cooperative program.

These recommendations and the broader issue of the future of SAMP at the University were reviewed in a process of data collection and the hearing of testimony by the 1975-76 Steering Committee of the University Council, authorized by the Senate Advisory Committee and the University Council to serve as an interim reallocation review board to provide a formal source of advice on behalf of faculty and students in matters of reallocation of resources. This procedure was established under the auspices of the Steering Committee and the Senate Advisory Committee, was reported to Council, and was published in the *Almanac*. The reallocation review board held 32 meetings, interviewed numerous persons, and reviewed a vast array of documents including materials supplied by the School as well as the appraisals and analyses of others. We found its review to be extensive and thorough, its conclusions generally sound, and its advice persuasive—an opinion that was shared by the deans and the Senate, which commended the committee and generally supported its findings, although preferring the first (upgrading) of the two recommended options. We gave great weight in our deliberations to both its initial August 6, 1976, report and the board's supplementary advice of December 1.

We have also read scores of pages of opinion and analysis; sought the advice of the Academic Planning Committee; met with the Dean, faculty, department chairpersons, and students of SAMP; invited the recommendations of the Council of Academic Deans and a special subcommittee of that Council; heard and reviewed debates in the University Council and in the Senate; sought and received additional advice from the reallocation review board on December 1, and spent a great deal of time alone and together weighing the evidence before us as well as weighing votes, petitions and other expressions of opinion.

After evaluating all of the additional evidence we generally accept the principal findings of the reallocation review board which we believe to be the following:

1. That the educational program at SAMP "brings a great deal to the educational life on campus . . . [and] is a part of the University's attempts to meet a need in health care that is real and that will almost certainly grow in the future." We take this recommendation to mean, at the very least, that opportunities for undergraduate training in health care fields have an important role at the University of Pennsylvania. We should also state our belief that the University is already complying with the spirit of this view in the existing options available for undergraduates through Arts and Sciences and Nursing, and through graduate and joint undergraduate/graduate programs in Medicine, Nursing, Dental Medicine, and Wharton.

2. That " . . . SAMP cannot continue at its present level and still maintain a position of leadership in the field and a standing commensurate with being part of the University." In short, the University of Pennsylvania ought not to continue an entire School which is wholly undergraduate and without an adequate research effort advancing the knowledge base upon which the professions rest. This is in no way a denigration of teaching or of clinical training. It is, rather, to say that serious basic scholarship and advanced education ought to be part of the mission of any school at this University.

3. That " . . . the SAMP senior faculty has not demonstrated strength in research . . . [and there is] little hope that they will be able to provide the necessary leadership for a new graduate program with a strong research component." More simply, the addition of graduate studies and more substantial research requires additional resources. We have no question but that with substantial new resources and additional faculty, the School could develop strong programs of graduate studies and research in addition to its undergraduate clinical training. But we do not believe that the most recent proposal of the School to attain this end without additional resources is acceptable. The board reconfirmed its view and ours in its December 1, 1976, letter to Provost Stellar stating that "the recent SAMP budget proposals, though they would permit the establishment of graduate programs, fall short by a wide margin of the support level that is implied by our report and is intended by the term 'upgrade'."

4. That the resources needed to transform SAMP should be found " . . . without drawing away resources from other vital programs." The board fully recognized, then, that the additional resources needed for an upgraded school would have to come either from the outside, or from the inside—reallocated from some other school or program. Although the Report did, of course, recommend as one option the vigorous pursuit of outside funding, it did not recommend the alternative of building up SAMP at the expense of another school or program.

5. That " . . . at the present stage of health care needs in the Commonwealth and the nation rejection SAMP entirely would negate its principal service function and therefore be irresponsible as well as politically unpopular." We take this to be the basis for the recommendation to try to transfer the professional education portions of the programs to Jefferson and to establish a cooperative program if a decision is made not to retain them at the University of Pennsylvania.

The board then made two recommendations of equal priority: (1) to add resources to SAMP so that it could develop quality graduate and research programs, or (2) to explore the possibility of developing a cooperative program with Thomas Jefferson University. It is important to note that these two recommendations were made only after the reallocation review board had already decided that the present SAMP undergraduate and certificate programs should not be continued as they presently exist.

THE POSSIBILITY OF UPGRADING SAMP

Through the Addition of Graduate Programs And a Strong Research Component

The option of upgrading and transforming SAMP enjoyed some support on the Steering Committee acting as the reallocation review board, and was the preference of the University Council, the Faculty Senate and of an *ad hoc* committee of academic deans. We therefore took seriously the possibility raised by undergraduates and others (including ourselves) of giving SAMP a probationary period of perhaps five years to see if it could develop quality graduate and research programs without additional cost, as it proposed. While this suggestion has much immediate appeal, we are convinced that no fair probationary period could be attempted without an unacceptable increase in the University's financial commitment to the School. Few potential donors, whether private individuals, foundations, or governmental agencies, are likely to come forth with resources in absence of a strong, long-range commitment to the school backed up by resources from central University sources. This commitment we could not in fairness give. Neither could we suggest to donors that we would prefer that funds go to SAMP rather than to other undergraduate health-related programs or other programs in the University. Nor could we accept special funding for SAMP from the Commonwealth if that funding jeopardized any other State funds. Also, no additional tenure commitments could be made during the probationary period without greatly increasing the University's liability if the program were to fail to meet the minimum requirements of needed resources, academic programs, and new levels of scholarship. Yet no fair test of the school's ability to develop quality programs could be made if tenure commitments were prohibited. In short, we conclude that it is impossible to generate large amounts of new resources for programs of low priority. To hold out the promise of an attempt to preserve and upgrade the school would give SAMP a goal it could not possibly reach and would only perpetuate the state of uncertainty in the School.

We took very seriously the strong expression of views by the Undergraduate Assembly, the University Council and the Faculty Senate. There is no doubt that a majority of students and faculty voting at those meetings favored retaining and upgrading SAMP. The views expressed by these bodies expressed admiration for the SAMP students and faculty, for the diversity which they bring to our university, and for the important public service functions SAMP performs. However, nowhere in these public deliberations were there the kinds of candid discussions of the strengths and weaknesses of the present SAMP programs or of the resources needed to upgrade the School that took place within the Steering Committee/reallocation review board. When we were developing the reallocation review process, one thing upon which everyone seemed to agree was that these difficult judgments on academic priorities could not be made by popular vote after public debate. The mass of detail, the sensitivity of much of the material, and the general reluctance of faculty to make candid academic judgments in a public forum led to the conclusion that we should establish the reallocation review process to provide formal advice on behalf of the faculty and student body. Important as these resolutions are, they cannot be given equal weight with the detailed report of the reallocation review board, a broadly-based body of faculty and students who spent many hours in a careful and thorough review.

THE JEFFERSON OPTION

Let us now comment in more detail on our recommendation to pursue a cooperative program with Jefferson University as we discontinue the professional programs in physical therapy, occupational therapy and medical technology as they now exist at the University of Pennsylvania. Before making our decision, we would have preferred to complete at least a general agreement with Jefferson on the transfer and the establishment of cooperative programs. Our intention was to have formed a joint committee of

faculty from Jefferson and Pennsylvania to explore the academic details of cooperative programs. However, out of respect for the wishes of the SAMP faculty, the Jefferson and Pennsylvania administrations decided not to attempt to reach a detailed agreement until the decision on SAMP's future at the University of Pennsylvania was decided. However, our expectation is that the students in the cooperative programs will spend the equivalent of two or three years of study in liberal arts and basic sciences at Pennsylvania, and two years at Jefferson in professional training in physical therapy, occupational therapy or medical technology. We expect students would receive either a joint degree from the two institutions, or a Bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania and a Master's degree or certificate from Jefferson.

There is, of course, the possibility that the negotiations with Jefferson could fail, since the faculties of the two institutions have not as yet been significantly involved. In that case, we would attempt to negotiate a similar agreement with another appropriate institution.

We have agreed to inform the reallocation review board each month of the progress of our negotiations with Jefferson. We will commit our strongest support to the establishment of the proposed joint programs, and are optimistic that we shall succeed. We hope that the SAMP faculty will join us in the constructive development and implementation of these proposals.

COMMITMENT TO PRESENT FACULTY, STUDENTS

We wish to reconfirm that if our recommendation for the Jefferson option is accepted by the Trustees, we will fully honor our commitments to present SAMP students and faculty. We will offer continued appointments to the tenured faculty, and will honor term appointments. We will see that all present SAMP students, and those to be admitted in the fall of 1977, have ample opportunity to complete University of Pennsylvania degrees in physical therapy, occupational therapy or medical technology. We will make every effort to find other employment for the non-teaching staff of the School.

Appendix

PROVOST TO REVIEW BOARD 11/30/76—#1

After a lengthy review process, including a thorough review of the excellent report of the reallocation review board, Martin and I are nearing the point of decision on the future of the School of Allied Medical Professions. We would like to share our present thinking with you and discuss it at your meeting today.

We share your conclusions that "SAMP cannot continue at its present level and still maintain a position of leadership in the field and a standing commensurate with being part of the University of Pennsylvania" and that "at the present stage of health care needs in the Commonwealth and in the nation, rejecting SAMP entirely would negate its principal service function and therefore be irresponsible as well as politically unpopular." We agree that your two recommendations (1) upgrade SAMP or (2) the Jefferson option, follow logically from your conclusions, and they have been the basis for most of our deliberations and explorations over the past few months.

We have given serious consideration to the prospects of upgrading SAMP, and share your conclusions that it would require a substantial investment to do so. (We are still reviewing with Acting Dean Michels the School's November 8 proposal to add master's programs without increased funding from the University, but we are very doubtful that quality programs can be established without additional resources.) We also agree that, as stated in your report, a decision to upgrade SAMP will require "a clearly stated commitment to continue the development of the school as opportunity permits and the expectations of the field rise." We believe that attempts to raise funds without such a commitment would be doomed to failure; yet if we make the commitment and still do not succeed in raising the funds, this would obligate the University either to provide the funds to upgrade SAMP by internal reallocation from other schools or to permit SAMP to continue as before. Neither of these alternatives is acceptable, and the stakes and risks of failure are too high.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendations to the Health Affairs Committee of the Trustees, then, will be the following:

1. That the professional education components of the present SAMP program be discontinued at this University and vigorous attempts be made to develop a cooperative effort with Jefferson University so that the educational options of physical therapy, occupational therapy, and medical technology are preserved for our undergraduates. Thus, the goals outlined in the resolution of the Undergraduate Assembly could be served;

2. That undergraduate and joint undergraduate/graduate options in health professional education be continued within established plans—e.g., family nurse clinician, audition and speech science, health care economics and management, and other programs;

3. That the class entering SAMP in the fall of 1977 be the last class to enter SAMP as a separate, four-year undergraduate school. After this year, our intention would be to admit undergraduate students to one of the other four undergraduate schools for the baccalaureate degree, and—if we succeed—to the cooperative program with a professional degree from Jefferson;

4. That all students entering SAMP through the fall of 1977 be assured of available programs to complete their planned undergraduate work;

5. That continuing appointments at present faculty rank be offered to all faculty currently holding tenure and that all current contractual obligations to faculty be honored;

6. That the President and Provost regularly inform the reallocation review board and other University deliberative bodies on the progress of negotiations with Jefferson University to establish a joint program and on all other matters relating to the decision to discontinue the separate four-year undergraduate School of Allied Medical Professions.

According to what we've learned from Craig Sweeten in our Development Office, prospects for fund-raising for SAMP are going to be very difficult to come by. Most donors and foundations are interested in other parts of our health programs and it would be foolish for us to go to the effort of persuading them to shift their fiscal support from our higher priority to our lower priority programs against their own original intentions. Similarly with the prospect of State appropriations, we must be realistic about how much time and effort went into our success in gaining additional support for a first quality, high priority program like Veterinary Medicine. Our experience in Harrisburg tells us that increased support for the establishment of research programs and master's programs in SAMP is not probable and would likely be at the expense of support for other, higher-priority health programs if it did come about. There is even the danger that if we could get more support for SAMP that it would have to come out of our present general University appropriation, and therefore would be, in effect, a reallocation of State money away from other instructional programs.

We also believe that at a time when the University is overexpanded and faces major budget and personnel reductions, it would be irresponsible for us to seek to expand programs and increase support of any programs except those of the highest academic priority. Therefore, we believe we cannot provide internal funds for SAMP, nor can we make a firm commitment to SAMP on the basis of a realistic belief that we could raise external funds. I would be happy to discuss our thinking on this recommendation in more detail if you wish.

Now let us consider your second recommendation, the Jefferson option. Before reaching a decision on this recommendation, we would have preferred to have had general agreement with Jefferson on the aims and structure of the program, though it would probably have been unrealistic to expect every detail to be completed prior to our decision. Preliminary discussions between Dr. Langfitt and representatives of Jefferson have established that Jefferson will be quite interested in accepting the programs

and establishing joint programs if the University decides not to continue the School. However, the SAMP faculty, in its response to your second recommendation, stated that "full exploration of this option should be considered only if the academic decision is first made that the University should not have a SAMP in any manifest form." (*Almanac* September 21, 1976). In an open letter to Dr. Langfitt the SAMP faculty made clear that it would not participate in any consideration of transfer of programs or establishment of joint programs with Jefferson until a decision was made on the future of SAMP at this University (*Almanac* October 26, 1976). Therefore, on October 28, Dr. Langfitt and Jefferson agreed to suspend further discussions until after the first decision is made; to avoid having Jefferson become a major factor in an internal University decision. Jefferson has made clear, however, that they will be very interested in resuming the discussions if the University decides to phase out SAMP here.

Therefore, since October 28, we have assumed that if we were to pursue the Jefferson option, we would have to proceed in two tightly coupled, sequential steps: first, make the internal academic decision, then immediately resume and complete the negotiations with Jefferson for transfer and for the establishment of joint programs. Our assessment is that the chances of failure to establish such programs is very remote, though the details are still to be arranged. We believe, furthermore, that this approach is consistent with the request of the SAMP faculty that the internal decision be made first. Otherwise, SAMP would, in essence, have a veto over any such proposals simply by refusing to participate in consideration of them. We now must know whether you agree that this coupled, two-step approach is consistent with your second recommendation, and if not, how the Board believes the Jefferson option could be pursued, if that is our decision.

I will be happy to join you at your meeting, if you wish, for further discussions or advice at your convenience between noon and two p.m.

—Eliot Stellar

PROVOST TO REVIEW BOARD 11/30/76—#2

As a supplement to my other letter of this date, I would like to comment on the recent Council and Senate resolutions on SAMP. I believe these resolutions were sincere expressions of strong concern for our colleagues in the School, and for the SAMP students and for the diversity they bring to the student body. These are important statements, and we must take them very seriously.

However, last year when we were developing the reallocation review process, one thing upon which everyone seemed to agree was that these difficult judgments on academic priorities could not be made by popular vote after public debate. The mass of detail, the sensitivity of much of the material and the general reluctance of faculty to make candid academic judgments in a public forum led to the conclusion that we should establish the reallocation review process to provide formal advice on behalf of the faculty and student body. I do not believe these two expressions of popular sentiment, important as they are, diminish your charge or supersede your advice.

As I note in my other letter, you concluded in your report that SAMP cannot continue as it is, but that its public service functions were too important to be lost. You therefore recommended that SAMP either be upgraded or transferred. Of your two recommendations, the Senate expressed a preference for upgrading. The Council, on the other hand, appears to have lost sight of your conclusion that SAMP cannot continue as it is, and seems to say we should upgrade SAMP if we can, but if not, then keep it as it is.

I believe the Council's advice diverts us from the difficult decision on the carefully thought-out alternatives you have laid before us; the realistic alternatives before us are either to identify the resources with which to upgrade SAMP, or to pursue the Jefferson option.

Finally, since the question arose at yesterday's Senate meeting, I wish to make clear again that if the decision is to transfer, we will honor all present commitments to SAMP faculty and students. This means that we will offer continued appointments to all tenured faculty, honor the term appointments of all nontenured faculty, and that we will see that all students admitted to SAMP have ample opportunity to complete University of Pennsylvania degrees in Allied Medical Professions. The question before us is whether to assume additional commitments through upgrading—additional investment of resources, tenure commitments, new faculty appointments, and new student admissions—or to phase out the school at Pennsylvania and transfer the programs as present commitments are fulfilled.

I shall look forward to your advice.

—Eliot Stellar

REVIEW BOARD TO PROVOST 12/1/76

The 1975-76 Council Steering Committee serving as a reallocation review board for SAMP met November 30, 1976 to consider your two letters of November 30. The entire committee was present and agreed to a position which I have attempted to present in this letter. In effect you are asking us where we stand on our two recommendations—(1) "upgrade SAMP" or (2) "the Jefferson option"—in view of the events since publication of our report and in view of your appraisal of the reallocation priorities of the University.

The recommendation to upgrade SAMP is one that still enjoys support within the committee as well as outside it—for example in the Senate and in the special committee of academic deans. However, effecting the recommendation requires a substantial commitment of resources. In your letter of November 30 you make it clear that the University gives very low priority to finding those funds from within our own resources and sees little prospect for raising them externally. The recent SAMP budget proposals, though they would permit the establishment of graduate programs, fall short by a wide margin of the support level that is implied by our report and is intended by the term "upgrade." The inadequate character of the SAMP budget response, and the decision of the administration not to provide the funds required, apparently rule out this option. Before it is abandoned completely, however, we wish to emphasize again, as we did in our report, that there is considerable public sentiment for maintaining SAMP fully at Pennsylvania. Events of the past months have only served to reinforce that observation, and any decision to diminish the affiliation of SAMP with the University must be made with that sentiment in mind.

There seems to be considerable misunderstanding with regard to our other option—"the Jefferson option." It is certainly not a total phase-out. The proposal for a joint program was intended to serve many of the goals subsequently outlined in the Undergraduate Assembly's resolution passed by the University Council. Our purpose was to continue allied health education options for our undergraduates, to continue to offer the advantage of our liberal arts and preprofessional education to the allied health students, and to provide to the professions of allied health undergraduates of the quality and training that we like to think are associated with Penn. The proposal would transfer to Jefferson the responsibility for the professional education component (of course no direct transfer of faculty is contemplated, though voluntary affiliation would be up to the faculty member and Jefferson), but it would not sever our affiliation with allied health education. In fact we state in our report that "Some sort of 'SAMP' should remain at the University to administer and coordinate the program, establish degree requirements, recommend degrees, etc."

In view of the status of the "upgrade" option and the preceding analysis of the Jefferson option, we urge you to proceed toward the joint program with Jefferson. We are not in a position to advise you on which steps and in what order you should take them to bring that option to fruition, but we are convinced that it is the best choice presently available. We believe a clear statement from the administration and the Trustees explaining their rejection of the "upgrade" option and committing the University to the Jefferson option would be salutary.

Since successful establishment of a joint program with Jefferson requires the full agreement of Jefferson, and since there is no way that we could or should require that agreement beforehand, there remains some uncertainty as to the outcome. Your assurances, however, and the mutual benefits to both parties promised by the affiliation, convince us that a firm commitment on the part of the University to achieving the connection, and a willingness to take the steps required to achieve it, would have a very high chance for success. (In general we believe that there are considerable educational, academic and resource advantages to joint programs of this type with Jefferson or with other health centers that are not limited to SAMP or even to the health areas.) We believe that dedicated and vigorous commitment to the Jefferson option will make it succeed. In order to ensure that the rest of the University community is similarly persuaded, we request that you report to our committee, once each month, on the progress of the negotiations with Jefferson. We understand that such negotiations can often be delicate and we would consider your reports as privileged, but we believe such reporting would help to demonstrate the University's commitment to the Jefferson option. At the conclusion of the negotiation, and we expect that would come very soon, we urge that a public report be made to the University community.

—Ralph D. Amado, Chairman
Reallocation Review Board