

Franconia College: A Case Study

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Franconia College

I. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to study Franconia College to determine what the purposes of the college are, what current strategies are being employed to meet those goals, and how successful the school has been in meeting its objectives. We will examine how Franconia is attempting to meet the current crisis of higher education today and what Franconia is providing that is uniquely different from other undergraduate colleges and universities in the United States.

A. Environment of Higher Education

The 1971 Newman report on higher education spoke of several major problems in our educational system including the homogenization of higher education, the lockstep social pattern under which high school students are pressured into attending college and graduate school, educational "apartheid" whereby school is reserved as the special privilege of the young, the professionalization of learning including the isolation of the academic world and irrelevance of curriculums, the growth of bureaucracy in higher education, and the inner directedness of graduate education. Leo Rotstein, President of Franconia College, continues this general line of thinking citing additional inadequacies of traditional higher education. He talks of the fraudulence of much of higher education where the product is not what it is touted to be. He said during our interview, "At many institutions traditional education is lousy and it is lousy because it is fraudulent on a very straightforward intellectual level, in faculty orientation, academics, training. In

general, there is an absolute lack of conviction in most curriculums." He further claims that colleges "baby" their students imposing no real responsibilities on them, while housing and feeding them, and thus the students have no real sense of accountability for their actions. The Newman report stresses the need for colleges with individual distinctive purposes as a primary vehicle for dealing with many of the above problems and in particular with the very serious problem of "homogenization" of our educational institutions.

There should not be a single order of excellence in higher education. We need a variety of institutions, each excellent in its own appointed mission ... There are limits to the extent to which existing, general purpose colleges and universities can devote themselves to the missions which must be performed in American education. We therefore believe that foundations and public authorities much assist in the founding of new, special-purpose institutions.

B. Objectives of Franconia

Franconia College represents an explicit attempt to provide an education with well-defined purposes, clearly differentiated from the "homogenized" goals of most colleges and universities. The goals, simply stated, are to provide an education emphasizing the autonomy of the individual, active citizenship, responsibility for one's actions, and the use of education to benefit society.

In discussions with Botstein and Michael Bailin, Assistant to the President in Charge of Special Projects and Resources, these goals were further amplified. Essentially, it seems that Botstein views education today as an activity with no real connection to the world around it. Students are

taught skills and thought patterns: however, there is no structural orientation of the education to encourage the use of those skills to benefit society. There is no direction toward developing a sense of "active citizenship" in the students. President Bok of Harvard, in speaking before the University Administration seminar, stressed that, in the future, he would like to see Harvard University take a more active role concerning the "moral questions of the day" -- through more courses concerning ethical issues, or some other creative means of providing students with the opportunity to confront and deal with these issues. In a very similar sense, Franconia College is an attempt to provide an education which does confront the moral questions, the questions of how you will use your education after your undergraduate experience. As Michael Bailin says,

I really think a university or college has an obligation to expose the individual to issues of conscience. There are values behind everything you learn. I'd like to be part of a place that turns out people with competence but I think it is as much the obligation of an institution of higher education to sensitize individuals to what is going on outside and how one can use that competence.

Thus, the college deals directly with these problems of a privatistic, inner-directed, and increasingly irrelevant educational system.

The entire structure of the organization and the dynamics of its operation are directly oriented to meet the goals of the college. The governance structure consisting of four governing committees provides for equal faculty-student representation on each committee. This offers the students an unusual opportunity to live with their own decisions, to play a large role

in the development of their curriculum, and in general, in the administration of the college. In addition, the curriculum is very heavily oriented toward community service and independent study. These structures are clearly shaped to meet the stated goals of the college.

II. History

Although Franconia only achieved notoriety within the last few years, the college has in fact been around since 1963 when Dow Academy, a conventional secondary school, decided to close and reopen as a junior college.

The college is situated in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, perched on a 200 acre tract of land overlooking Franconia Village. Except for a sprinkling of dorms and other small buildings, the college is completely contained in a gigantic three wing building that used to be a resort hotel. Although the building itself is well past its prime, sweeping views of valleys and mountains from almost any of the windows somehow seem to compensate for any lack of inner luxury.

From 1963-1967 the academic program began developing from one that only offered the Associate Arts degree, to a full liberal arts institution granting a Bachelors degree as well. During these years the college became known for more than its sweeping views.

The town of Franconia is at best described as a very conservative place. The college kids, however, early on earned a reputation for "progressivism" in sexual, social and drug matters. The conflict between the townspeople and the college, which appears to have been inevitable, culminated one spring morning in 1968 when the state police raided the college in a drug bust.

The New Hampshire Union Ledger, long critical of the college and well known for its conservative radicalism ran a series of exposés on the

college with such headlines as "Bare Debauchery At Franconia College ...". The raid had, it seemed, uncovered some marijuana and at least one boy in a girl's room who one witness later testified was "naked except for his trousers".

There were at various times rumors of a town meeting resolution that would declare the college a public nuisance. Although this particular problem never arose, especially after the bust the college was indeed on shaky ground. The enrollment dropped from about 600 to 216, half of the faculty quit, and the college running a deficit anyway was forced into bankruptcy.

From 1968-1970, the college went through three presidents -- the most remembered was a music professor whose bulging profile gave the students the idea for the college's first logo -- a stomach that designed the "Fat City" flag seen flying at the entrance during those times.

A. Leon Botstein -- President

In June 1970, a student, faculty, administration search committee found Leon Botstein and he became Franconia's fourth president, and, it is believed, the youngest college president at the age of 23.

Botstein (or Leon as everyone at Franconia calls him) had gone to Franconia to see his brother-in-law act in a college play. At the time he was working as an assistant to the then President of the Board of Education of New York City, Joseph Mosserrat.

While many thought that Leon must be some kind of freak to accept such a job, and while he himself says that his credentials were innocuous,

by most standards the background of this 23-year-old would have been judged impressive.

Both his parents are physicians on the staff of the Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx -- his father as a radiotherapist and his mother as a pediatrician. His brother is an assistant professor of biology at MIT and is married to a heart surgeon. His sister is a pediatrician married to a heart surgeon. While his brother went to Harvard and his sister to Radcliffe, after graduating from NYC's High School of Music and Art, he went to the University of Chicago where, among other things, he conducted the student orchestra.

After receiving his B.A. in History he went to Harvard for his M.A. and is presently completing his Ph.D. in History. He has received Woodrow Wilson, Danforth Foundation and Sloan Foundation Fellowships. He was a tutor at Winthrop House at Harvard and a Lecturer in History at Boston University.

He is married to the former Jill Lundquist, daughter of an architect, who runs the nursery school at Franconia as well as teaching courses on early childhood education there.

While he was at Franconia to see the play it so happened that the selection committee asked Leon his thoughts on what credentials a college president should possess. His answer made him the primary candidate for the job. On this Leon points out,

It was no accident that I was the youngest candidate and the best. There was an inverse relationship between the age and the quality of the applicants for this job. The competition was not great -- because for someone who was 45 and had been dreaming all his or her life about becoming a college president -- this was not the place.

Asked why he decided to accept the Presidency, Leon answered,

I can't really say that I foresaw an opportunity at Franconia. Every rational assessment of this place did not work in its favor -- declining enrollment over a two year period, a terrible reputation, a ready caricature among guidance counselors, not a good location, insufficient faculty resources, no financial backers, a severe cash flow problem -- so that when I took the job it wasn't clear that we were going to make it.

On Leon's selection, Nick Howe, who teaches philosophy at Franconia and has been with the college since it opened, had this to say:

The place was a shambles at the time. The outgoing administration had left an almost impenetrable mess. I voted for Leon, but I didn't truly think he'd work out. Because of his age, as far as his relations with the students were concerned he seemed to have a choice of being everybody's buddy and being impotent or of being standoffish and being scorned; with the faculty, it looked like an equally dismal choice -- heavy-handedness or servility -- and disaster in either case. Oh, he had a lot of traps to fall into! But he turned out not only to be able to steer a safe course between all his Scyllas and Charybdises but to be so likeable.¹

Perhaps because he looks older and perhaps because he has an extremely forceful personality, an unusual aura of erudition for someone his age, a strong streak of the performing artist, his age is unobvious and unimportant.

Pressed further Leon admitted that he saw at least some possibilities for Franconia:

The one major opportunity was to get really top notch faculty -- and that has been the saving grace of the college.

¹ "Reporter at Large: The Place on the Hill", The New Yorker, May 27, 1972, E. J. Kahn, Jr., p. 97.

When the school started 10 years ago it was very hard to find teachers, but by 1970 the situation was reversed. Because of the depressed market and dissatisfaction with the condition of higher education, we had the ability to build an absolutely first-rate faculty.

The second opportunity was to do something relatively from scratch without the kinds of idiotic responses you would have gotten if you said "I want to start a new college." But pulling a college together that already existed was not an outrageous concept.

Besides, the "worst" was over: coed dorms were at Oberlin on the front page of Life Magazine, Littleton (New Hampshire) High School had problems with drugs, Littleton High School kids had long hair, the television was full of youth, rebellion, the generation gap; suddenly, Franconia College did not look so peculiar to people any more.

At the time of his selection there were also questions about whether or not he would be an able administrator. The facts speak for themselves. Since Leon took over the college has operated in the black -- without the aid of an endowment, the college had paid off by the end of 1972 one hundred cents to the dollar, the \$300,000 deficit that forced Franconia into bankruptcy, and the college received \$800,000 in federal funds to build dorms and other facilities as well as to make some essential repairs.

As well as being at least a very decent administrator, Leon seems to also be at least a very decent teacher. By carrying a full teaching load that has included in the past few years courses on, Music in Culture and Society: the Nineteenth Century, Chorus, The Sonata in Theory and Practice, From Early Christianity to the Renaissance, Greek Civilization from Homer to Aristotle, The American College and University in Perspective, and Russian, he exemplifies Franconia philosophy of active involvement in all aspects of the college by students, faculty and administration.

B. Accreditation

Although Franconia is accredited by the New Hampshire Coordinating Board of Advanced Education and Accreditation, and is authorized to grant the Associate in Arts and Bachelor of Arts degrees, the college does not yet have its accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., the regional arm of the National Accrediting Association.

Although Leon himself is quick to point out that getting accredited is not the end all and be all of higher education, not having it presents unnecessary obstacles.

Some parents refuse to send children to an unaccredited school. As well some students feel that after their years of work at an unaccredited school, their degree will not be recognized by graduate schools, employers, or society. Fund raising is more difficult for an unaccredited school, some grants are unavailable to schools not accredited, and without accreditation some capable faculty dissatisfied with much of traditional education, but unwilling to put themselves in what might appear to be an unnecessarily risky situation, might pass Franconia over.

At the moment the team of investigators from the Accrediting Association are visiting Franconia. Although a few years ago it would have been impossible for a school (even a traditional one) to be accredited the first time around, Franconia is optimistic. There is a new accrediting philosophy of late that the school is not to be solely judged on any predetermined objective criteria, but rather on whether the college is doing what it says

it is doing. And the Franconia self evaluation study, required of every institution petitioning for accreditation, was in the opinion of some of New England's Accrediting Association members, one of the best they had seen in a long time.

The college will be notified of the committee's decision in June.

III. Current Situation²

A. Governance

The governance structure of the organization as noted briefly above consists of a Board of Trustees and five joint committees -- Development, Business Affairs, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Contracts -- as shown in Exhibit I. There are two students and two faculty on the Board and likewise Board members serve on each of the college's joint committees.

The Board of Trustees has 15 to 30 members who serve for three years. The bylaws of the college listed in the self-study, state that "the trustees shall have control of the college and of all the property of the corporation and of the investment and appropriation of its funds in conformity with the corporate purposes stated in the charter." The Board has the power to appoint all officers of instruction and administration and can remove any person they've appointed. The Board can delegate any duty. It meets three times during the school year. The Board currently has many noteworthy individuals serving on it, including an IBM executive, Botstein's father-in-law, a Republican state senator in New Hampshire, an Assistant Professor of Social Studies at Harvard, a Dartmouth chaplain, a chancellor of New York City's public schools, and the President of Adelphi University.

The joint committees recommend policy to the Board of Trustees and meet bi-weekly. They are the central governing structure of the college and most policy changes are initiated, discussed, and formulated here. The

² Information obtained largely from Franconia: A Self-Study 1973.

importance of active student involvement in these committees is clearly stated in the catalogue.

Because the College is organized in this manner, a prospective Franconia student should not expect to take the relatively passive role that is traditional in many colleges and universities ... the system of governance depends for success on the constant support of its members. Those who come to Franconia, therefore, should share the advantages of this environment and be willing to accept the responsibility of participation.

The administration of the school is conducted by the President who is appointed by the Board of Trustees without a fixed term. The general administrative structure is shown in Exhibit II. The principal subordinate officers shown in the exhibit are appointed by the President with the approval of the Board. There is no departmental system. The issues of promotion, job security and dismissal are not important in the context of Franconia College. Promotion is usually in the form of salary increment rather than changes in position -- since the college is so small (about 400 students and 30 faculty). Fund raising is the joint responsibility of the President and Board. Periodic administrative advisory committees are established, such as the Joint Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Appointments and Salaries, to meet certain needs. These committees maintain faculty-student parity as in the other committees.

B. Academic Program

Franconia College offers a two stage curriculum consisting of a two-year Lower Division and two year Upper Division program -- the full four years constitutes an undergraduate education. Students must apply from the Lower Division to proceed to the Upper Division.

1. Lower Division

The curriculum in the Lower Division provides a wide range of subject matter. Students may concentrate or sample a variety of fields. At the end of the first two years students must demonstrate proficiency in two diverse subject areas. Proficiency is determined by having met credit load requirements in two years and by a review of the student's work by the faculty. The distribution of field of specialization for the Associate of Arts Degree (granted after completing the Lower Division) for 1972 and midyear 1973 graduates are shown in Exhibit III. There are four basic types of courses offered in the Lower Division. These include courses oriented toward:

- 1) Attainment of basic skills including "Fundamentals of Music";
- 2) Basic content analysis courses through opportunities for practical involvement in a substantive area including, "Jails, Prisons and Concentration Camps," and Theatre I;
- 3) Intermediate and advanced courses in specific areas such as "Other Elizabethans"; and
- 4) Innovative subjects in rarefied fields such as "William Carlos Williams".

2. Upper Division

The Upper Division permits a student to design his own individual program with a strong advising system to assist him/her as needed. The first

and last terms are spent on the university campus while the middle two terms may be spent off campus under a university program or in some other activity which meets the student's educational goals. The student must submit a thesis (Sample topics listed in Exhibit IV), provide evidence of continuing achievement under the Upper Division program, complete a comprehensive examination, and sustain a review by the Upper Division Committee and an examining committee in order to obtain the B.A. degree.

3. Curriculum

The Joint Committee on Academic Affairs and the Dean of the College (who is also the President of the College) review course proposals each semester. A Presidential Curriculum Review Committee was also formed this year to supplement this process. Extensive curricular additions have been made over the last few years.

- In the social sciences, anthropology, European history, American history, education, and political theory have been added.
- In the arts, photography, film making environmental and design, crafts, music and ceramics have been included in the curriculum.
- In the humanities, new courses include creative writing, comparative literature, art history, elementary French and Spanish.
- In science there have been minor additions

including math, physics, chemistry, and biology.

Three major curricular innovations have also been developed over the last few years. "Project Institute" provides for field work in the Lower Division. "Sequence Program" marks the beginning of three pilot courses which are interdisciplinary year long Lower Division courses taught by a number of faculty around a central issue. The "Integrative Studies Program" for the Upper Division provides for interdisciplinary student and faculty group inquiries.

Future curricular additions will include more adult degree programs, and community service courses. Further in the summer of 1973 a pilot summer school will be held in the Southwest for the study of the culture of the Navajo Indian. There is very little faculty or curriculum expansion planned in the natural sciences. Indeed as noted in the self-study, students who wish to pursue careers in science are encouraged to transfer.

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of both the gifted student and the student with educational deficiencies. In the Lower Division gifted students can accelerate their program through taking a heavier course load each term. Concern for deficiencies has been exhibited also. Last fall

concern for the demonstrated level of Lower Division students to write English prose was voiced in the Joint Committee on Academic Affairs and brought to the full faculty meeting for its consideration. Resolutions were passed by both bodies identifying the teaching of the writing of clear English prose as a significant objective of the Lower Division Curriculum.

Course proposals for 1973 were and will be reviewed in part, in terms of how they support the achievement of that goal.

(Self-Study, p. 48)

The curriculum also provides three types of opportunities to students to participate in a teaching experience:

- 1) As an assistant to the instructor in the classroom (not very common),
- 2) As a joint teacher with a faculty member (most common, perhaps one or two courses a semester), and
- 3) As the sole teacher in a course (least common).

A student undergoes extensive interviewing and investigation before participation in this activity.

4. Community Service

The community surrounding the college is a hard pressed, underdeveloped part of New Hampshire. The curriculum is designed to encourage social concern and personal responsibility through service to these nearby areas. There are several types of community service programs provided.

Cultural Activities. Activities offered include a Seminar Performance Series (college chorus, art exhibitions, seminars with speakers who are novelists, poets, columnists, political scientists, and educators), theatre productions, and the library which is beginning to collect data and research on "cultural roots and historical traditions" of the North Country.

Community Service Organizations. These programs include courses with a strong community service component such as a study regarding consolidation of local districts, in-service training programs in local mental health agencies, making a film on the town of Franconia, a course on sociology of the North Country including tutoring, baby sitting, and visiting children in low-income homes, and correspondence courses for prisoners at New Hampshire State Prison.

Center for Community Services. The college has proposed a center to serve as the focal point for involvement with the broader North Country community.

Educational Services. These activities include a student-teacher education program, a nursery school, a comprehensive child care program (proposed), adult education courses, a women's forum, a course on retirement planning for the elderly (planned for the late spring), a North Country Scholarship Program to provide scholarships for students in the area to come to Franconia, a university without walls program so that people in the area can obtain a degree from the school in specific areas, and a prisoner education project.

Outreach Program. Under this program, students in the Upper Division participate in independent work or study away from the school. The program is devised by the student and his advisor to meet the student's individual needs. This program is not a requirement, however, of the Upper Division. (Examples of Outreach study topics are listed in Exhibit IV.)

5. Grading

In every course or tutorial in the Upper Division, both the faculty member and the student prepare a prose evaluation of the student's work. Since 1971, the student also evaluates the course. Further, in the Upper Division, there are faculty and student progress reports for each semester, written evaluations of the thesis proposal, and a transcript supplement written by the student's Upper Division Advisor for the student's total program.

Lower Division evaluations are undertaken at the sole discretion of the student. Otherwise the requirements of the A.A. degree are met by obtaining the required course credits.

C. Faculty

Basic data on the faculty is provided in Exhibits V and VI.

As noted earlier, there are no departments, no rank, no tenure, and no hierarchy within the faculty. It is believed this "free form" approach enhances cooperation among the faculty.

Initial appointments and reappointments are controlled by the Joint Committee on Academic Affairs and on Contracts. The Contracts Committee evaluates the faculty members primarily on their "teaching effectiveness". The number of their publications, and their scholarly reputation are considered less important. "Teaching effectiveness" is determined through interviews with faculty members and opinions obtained from both students and faculty. Further, the Dean of the College provides "periodic and informal" exchange on the faculty's performance.

The faculty meet every two weeks to discuss curriculum, teaching strategies, and various problems that arise. The Chairman of the Faculty is elected by the faculty to lead the faculty meetings. Teaching formats vary from the socratic discussion to mixed lecture discussion to straight lecture (rare). The faculty maintain direct, effective contact with each student. They hold regular office hours. Classes range from 5 to 30 students. Travel and clerical support for faculty research are becoming available on an expanded basis. Certain faculty members are appointed by the President to serve on ad hoc committees. The faculty are not required to participate in these and other extra-curricular activities and they are compensated for extra service. However, most faculty members do participate in these types of activities.

D. Nature of Student Body and Admissions Policy

1. The Student Body

Franconia, it must be kept in mind, is extremely small. There are only 420 students in the entire college spread among programs in the following manner:

Table 1

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>
Full Time	419	427
Lower Division	290	266
In Residence	283	260
Outreach	7	6
Upper Division	129	161
In Residence	74	91
Outreach	55	70
Female	188	196
Male	231	231
Part Time	20	21
Lower Division	16	20
Upper Division	4	1

Many of the students are from New York, New Jersey, or New England and many are well to do. The tuition at Franconia is \$4,500 for room and board and tuition, and even though some students worked in high school or for a few years after high school, the majority must rely on combinations of loans and parental assistance to foot the bill. Further, since Franconia's own loan and scholarship fund is so small (like so many other schools) the brunt of costs fall on the parents.

At the moment few who want to go to Franconia who have the money are turned away. As the following table indicates virtually anyone who applies is accepted.

Table 2

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Inquiries</u>	<u>Completed Applications</u>	<u>Accepted</u>	<u>Number Enrolled</u>
72-73	5,537	474	465	239
71-72	4,303	525	520	255
70-71	2,761	451	448	238

While admissions officers strongly believe that few apply to Franconia who are unclear about the character and objectives of the school -- and thus some amount of self selection goes on before a student applies to Franconia -- the fact is that for all its past notoriety, the school is relatively young and is still relatively unknown.

The following tables give an indication of students' standing according to two conventional measures of student's potential -- SAT scores

and rank in secondary school. (Only 50-75% of students submit SAT's since they are not required for admission.)

Table 3

SAT-CEB Scores

	<u>1972-1973</u>	<u>1971-1972</u>	<u>1970-1971</u>
750-800	1.5%	1.5%	3%
700-749	1.5	5	5
650-699	10	12	10
600-649	13.5	9.5	10
550-599	15	19	14
500-549	14	16	15
450-499	22	13	19
400-449	6	12	15
350-399	4.5	7.5	6
300-349	1.5	4	1
250-299	0	0	2

Table 4

Rank in Secondary School

	<u>1972-1973</u>	<u>1971-1972</u>	<u>1970-1971</u>
1st Quintile	15%	19%	14%
2nd Quintile	23%	16%	14%
3rd Quintile	20%	24%	16%
4th Quintile	21%	15%	19%
5th Quintile	21%	21%	17%

While the school would like to increase the available admissions pool the school is committed to continuing the diversity (spread in rank in class) of the student body. And believing that SAT scores and rank in class are meaningless assessments of many students' potential, the admissions office relies more on subjective measures of the candidate's potential.

2. Admissions

In order to gain admissions to the Lower Division the student must complete an essay which is supposed to indicate the student's ability and commitment to engage in serious study at Franconia. As well, the student must submit five references or evaluation forms -- one to be completed by the student himself, one by a parent, and three others by adults who know the student.

These are used to give a picture of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses in order for the Admissions office to judge whether there is a match between what the student wants or needs and what Franconia has to offer. Unless there are unusual circumstances involved, a potential candidate is required to visit the campus for meetings with admissions officers, students and faculty.

The catalogue best summarizes what Franconia's admissions philosophy is:

Admissions at Franconia College is not a rigid, formalized process. The college is interested in each applicant as an individual who might bring specific skills and interests, or a particular enthusiasm and spirit of

curiosity to this academic community. Thus the College neither relies on nor requires the Scholastic Aptitude Tests. If, for example, an applicant whose interests lie in the field of literature can satisfactorily demonstrate the depth and quality of that interest, either through the high school record or through some other means, the College will not necessarily hold a deficiency in mathematics or in science against the applicant.

For the Upper Division, the student must go through a separate admission process. For admission six things are required:

- 1) Transcripts from Lower Divisions and/or other college(s) giving evidence of sixty college credits;
- 2) For transfer students, the regular Franconia College admissions form and the Upper Division Information Sheet;
- 3) A letter of recommendation from a Franconia College faculty member who is competent in the student's field of study and who has agreed to guide and evaluate the program;
- 4) Letters of recommendation from two other teachers (in the case of transfer students, these may be from people outside the College);
- 5) If exceptions to the usual requirements are requested -- such as admission with less than sixty credits for previous independent work, first-term Outreach, etc., -- student and advisor should give their reasons why they feel such an exception is valid: and

- 6) A letter of intent which should outline the student's educational goals and the means by which he plans to work toward them.

Franconia is very dependent on transfer students since there is a high turnover, especially within the Lower Division, and those students on Outreach must be replaced in order to keep the total tuition income stable.

Table 5 indicates the number of transfer students.

Table 5

Transfers

	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>		
1972	73	31	=	104
1971	69	27	=	96
1970	117	49	=	166

Just for perspective it is important to keep in mind that at many campuses throughout the U.S. dropping out for a semester or two, or transferring is an option exercised by 30% of the student body.

The number of students continuing through the Upper Division program has been increasing, but the withdrawal rate for the Lower Division is still high. Most frequently cited reason for withdrawal from the Lower Division is that "the College does not make sense for me at this time." After withdrawing many students work, engage in hobbies, travel or stay at home. A number return to Franconia after a semester's absence.

For those students completing the Lower Division and transferring, the primary reasons are that the school has limited facilities in their field and they want to transfer, or that they want a larger school. At least some are unable to handle the lack of a formal structure at Franconia.

It is difficult to get a perspective on how well Franconia is succeeding. The school is relatively new and in a sense it can only be judged since Leon took over, and it is difficult in the three years since his take-over to make a fair assessment.

Some statistics do indicate that the school has not stirred everyone who has come through its doors to stay and receive the A.A. and then the B.A. But there is a discernable trend -- an increase in those enrolled in the Upper Division, and an increase in the number going from Lower to Upper Division.

Of those that do graduate -- a good percentage (75%) go on to graduate school, theater, teaching, business, social agency or other definable fields of interest. Looking at percentages is somewhat misleading though, since the real number of graduates is small; in 1972 22 received a B.A. and in 1971, 18 received a B.A.

E. Finances

In 1971, a financial consultant working for Franconia wrote "the College should be enthusiastically congratulated for being one of the nation's few institutions of higher education to achieve an operating surplus in 1970-1971."³

³ Franconia: A Self-Study 1973

This is even more remarkable given the fact that the college had been in bankruptcy a few years earlier and by the end of 1972 had repaid all bills it had incurred at that time.

Although Messrs. Botstein and Claypool (the school's business manager) are to be congratulated, the school is by no means entirely safe. Franconia faces the same drawbacks as all other institutions in the education industry. There is a high degree of variable income -- tuition -- at the same time as there are high fixed costs -- salaries, operating and maintenance. This makes for a vulnerable situation.

Franconia's faculty contract system is a somewhat less dangerous one financially than the traditional tenure system. However, Franconia's student body is more volatile. There are more transfers and fewer students than can be counted on to go straight through Franconia for four years (although there is some evidence that this trend is changing). As well Franconia's plant is in terrible condition. The wood frame campus is very inefficient and so far there has been little attempt (i.e., little money) to perform preventive maintenance.

Heavily mortgaged, the school is at its present debt limit and although this year's drive (the College's first) for funds so far has been over twice as successful as planned (\$160,000 collected so far -- \$80,000 budgeted), the high student turnover, reduced length of stay and the paucity of alumni reduce the school's chances of ever building up a good size endowment.

As one can see from the budget projections from Franconia's self-study, whether or not Franconia grows slightly, there is very little fat or margin of safety (See Exhibit VII). If enrollment dipped the college could be set back.

The school does not yet have a reputation and its stability to a great extent rests heavily on its ability to attract to the North Country students who are able to pay or finance a significant portion of their education.

The bankruptcy forced Franconia to face financial realities, and a small school has some advantages over a large university in controlling costs. But many external factors affect the school's stability. Continued increases in inflation, decline in number of high school graduates (the baby boom is over), decline in the number of high school graduates wanting to continue their education -- or at least decline in interest in liberal arts, and further cuts in federal and state support to educational institutions all challenge the ability of colleges to remain solvent.

Now that Franconia is at least turned around, attention is being turned toward priorities for the future.

The college hopes to stabilize at about 500 students (full time) and then only grow enough to keep up with inflation. Increasing the school's financial aid is the first priority agreed upon so far. In addition a special loan fund to encourage local students to attend Franconia will be set up.

Additions to the faculty are also seen as an important priority. Science, math and languages are very weak and some additions are needed there (even though the college does not intend to ever offer extensive, science facilities of language labs).

Increases in faculty salaries from \$10,557 to \$12,000 and then to \$15,000 and increases in the library budget are all high priority items.

The lack of a rational resource allocation system is currently being felt. Although the school is small enough to keep this from becoming critical, some systematic way of assessing future priorities will be needed.

The present governance system could provide a convenient forum for setting up a rational, democratic way of allocating resources in the future.

An additional deficiency is that little planning is currently being done. This is understandable given that the college until recently was existing day to day. At the moment, the college is turning its attention to this matter and is developing clear-cut objectives for the future and revising the administrative structure to conform to these new objectives. For instance, the college will add a fund raiser soon and has recently added Michael Bailin to deal more directly with the long-range development of the college.

F. Life in the North Country

Life in the North Country of New Hampshire is not meant for everyone. Although the area is breathtaking year round, life is isolated. The times are right for a college such as Franconia with emphasis on the outdoors and physical activity, and the college is in a perfect setting. But if you don't hike or ski, come Saturday afternoon you might be terribly bored. Franconia Village and the neighboring towns provide little in the way of ready entertainment.

In a sense, though, the isolation seems to be very much in keeping with Franconia's overall philosophy of developing the autonomy of the individual. And the college itself has a very active program of seminars, conferences, special lectures, visiting artists and student activities. Besides this the school's heavy emphasis on arts, music, dance, photography and crafts, with adequate practice and workshop facilities gives students a good deal of choice about how to structure free time.

One striking aspect of life at Franconia was the presence of faculty children and spouses around the college during the day. Young children are very evident -- wandering into parents' offices, accompanying a parent around the school on business, sitting in on meetings. This is in marked contrast to the custom at many schools of separating faculties' outside life -- his or her family -- from his or her means of livelihood -- teaching.

A number of husband and wife teams have been attracted to Franconia probably for the obvious reason that it is difficult or impossible for both

spouses to get appointments in neighboring institutions let alone in the same school.

Although the school emphasizes active social involvement, the opportunities in the North Country are far fewer than those found in areas surrounding the larger urban campuses. The school is developing a number of community services for the area, however, and there is evidence that the community -- declared a disadvantages area by the government -- has not only come to realize that economically the school means a stable infusion of cash, but that the day care center, nursery school, adult education and special skills classes can have an impact on the area as well.

Student complaints about Franconia were surprisingly similar to complaints heard on other campuses throughout the U.S. -- large and small, public and private. One first year fellow in the Lower Division complained that even though there are now about as many female as male students, he is having a hard time finding a female companion he likes. "All the chicks I dig are already taken," he complained.

The food was another all-pervasive complaint. Even though the college has had more than its share of different caterers trying their hand at pleasing student palates during the last few years, complaints persisted. At one point there was a real French chef who served crepe souzettes for breakfast but apparently the students wouldn't hear of it.

The question of drugs on campus is still a sensitive issue. Even though the school does not press a moral stand on the subject, students are continually being reminded that under the law drugs are illegal and the college cannot intervene between an individual and the law.

At a recent meeting students were urged to beware and "get their own house in order" since a few weeks ago several schools in Grafton County had drug raids. When a student asked Leon Botstein if another bust seemed imminent, Leon musingly replied that he really did not know but Franconia and Dartmouth were the only schools in the county that had not been raided lately.

In any case students these days are somewhat less enthralled with becoming part of the all-pervasive drug culture of yesteryear. Choosing liquor over pot one student stated that even if he were interested in drugs they are somewhat harder to come by at Franconia.

While the food service is now at breakeven and the snack bar pays its own way, the college would prefer to get out of the food business altogether. There aren't many alternatives, since unlike Harvard Square there is not even a greasy spoon close to campus.

The college also does not want to be in the housing business. Many students prefer to live off campus, and the townspeople are beginning to realize that it may be profitable to build or convert houses that would be suitable for students and/or summer/winter tourists. No new dormitories will be built.

IV. Strengths and Weaknesses

In order to evaluate Franconia's present position and make some assessments on the ability of the college to succeed in the future, the strengths and weaknesses of the institution should be weighed.

The first major strength of Franconia that should be identified is Leon Botstein, President of Franconia. He has given his clear vision of the role of higher education to the college, pulled the place together internally and demanded imagination, commitment and integrity from students, faculty, and administrators. But while he is the college's most evident strength, there is a danger especially for the future, that Franconia may become Leon. Recognizing this problem, Leon stated:

I don't want to put a personal imprint on this place and anyway nobody could keep up long with the pace and intensity of a job like this.

Obviously, I have a substantial commitment to the college, but to the question, "Will I be at Franconia the rest of my life?", the answer is equally obviously "No". It wouldn't be good for Franconia and it wouldn't be good for me.⁴

There is evidence that the idea of Franconia itself is building strength and will be able to sustain itself if Leon leaves.

Another key strength of the institution is the faculty -- credentials in their own particular fields are more than adequate and as a whole the faculty bring an activism in outlook unusual to many more established institutions.

The philosophy of the college comes across as integrated and well conceived. The individual is an independent autonomous agent, but the

⁴ "A Reporter at Large: The Place on the Hill", The New Yorker, May 27, 1972. E.J. Kahn, Jr., p. 100.

philosophy of responsibility and accountability are stressed. The governance system, the emphasis on Community involvement, the Outreach program and emphasis, in grades and admissions, on individual self analysis -- all contribute to meeting Franconia's philosophy -- a real strength.

Financially the school has reached the point of stability, but this stability is fragile. Many of the financial dangers on the horizon are not peculiar to Franconia, but plague all institutions in the education industry. However, Franconia's plant, the small size and volatility of the student body, the school's location, and the high tuition may in the long run place the college at a somewhat greater disadvantage in attracting students than other private liberal arts colleges. Because the school is so new, its reputation is not yet strong enough to allow any amount of selectivity in admissions. There are potential pools of students that can be tapped, however to date the marketing effort has not been extensive. Although accreditation would not add tangibly to the quality of education presently being offered, its lack is an unnecessary burden on Franconia. More federal funds, potential students, faculty members, and endowment money would be available to Franconia with accreditation.

V. Conclusion

The final and key question to consider is, namely, is Franconia meeting its goals. Is it becoming a place which will indeed develop essentially autonomous educated students, with a sense of active citizenship and responsibility for their actions and a predilection or a value to use their education to benefit society rather than contribute to its destruction? Is the college providing a distinctive competence?

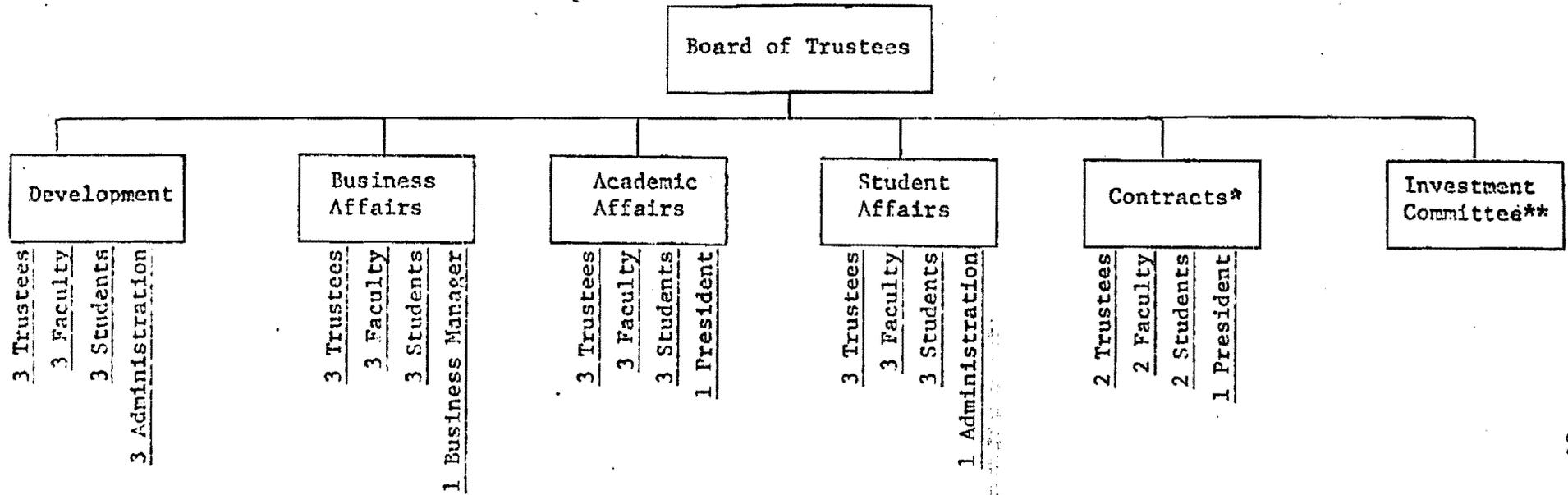
This question is particularly difficult to answer since this philosophy and administration are so new. Further, there are very few alumni who experienced this new philosophy -- most graduated under the old regime. Further, the goals of the school just enumerated clearly do not lend themselves to quantification or measurement. Franconia is developing information on its alumnae and the self-study is a remarkably well constructed body of information about the school. However, no precise measurements to deal with this question are available.

In examining the totality of the information, one possible confusion in meeting the goals does emerge. The students have chosen an experimental college, geographically isolated in the hills of New Hampshire. This decision alone is evidence of their ability to eschew convention, particularly "traditional education" which is very highly valued in today's society. During a student meeting conducted by Botstein to provide information on an upcoming visit by an accreditation committee, many students appeared to question the very necessity or the wisdom of being accredited. Many students came to Franconia because they were dissatisfied with traditional schools from which they transferred. (Indeed a very large percentage of the student body are transfers from other schools.) There appears to be some conflict

between this deliberate choice to be apart from the mainstream of life and traditional patterns of activity, and the strong community-relations orientation of the school and the broader objective of the school toward active citizenship. To the extent this gulf exists, Franconia may have trouble reaching its goals. This conflict certainly does not appear insoluble, however, and, perhaps, as hoped, the Franconia experience will help Franconia graduates apply creative solutions to community problems. Further, the opportunity for "active citizenship" while at school, does exist to a much greater extent at Franconia than at traditional colleges. It will be instructive to see how Franconia alumna deal with this question. To the extent the college can expand its community-oriented programs beyond the North Country as the Outreach program does, this paradox should be diminished.

In sum, Franconia is in a delicate phase now and has not yet fully assured the attainment of its goals or even of its own viability. However, all the trends appear positive. The major weaknesses discussed above are being improved. The college has indeed already developed a distinctive competence in community-related study, and self-governance at the student level. Substantive expertise in particular subjects such as art or music does not yet exist, although this type of special expertise development is under discussion and may well be a reality of the future. Accreditation is hoped for by June. On balance, Franconia appears to be a courageous effort to meet the ills of higher education today. Franconia has developed clear-cut goals and a well devised strategy for meeting them. The future appears hopeful.

Exhibit I



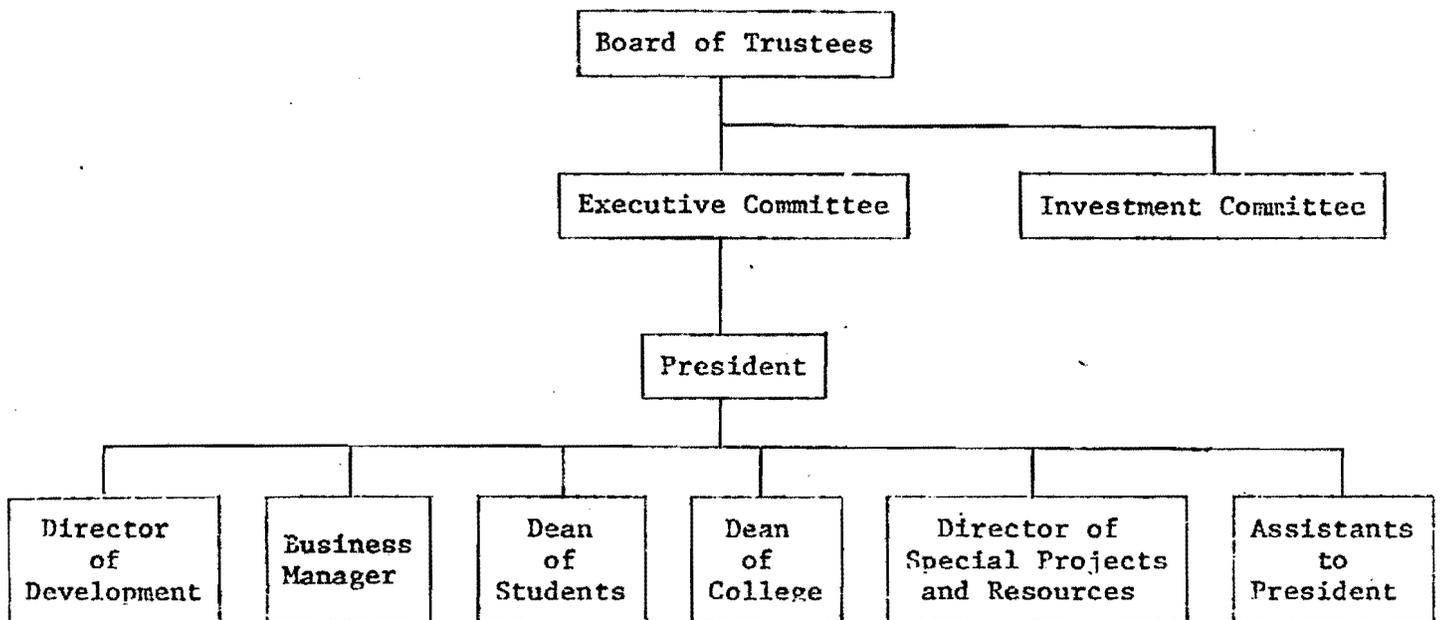
Note: Faculty membership elected by faculty
 Student membership elected by students

* Unlike other committees, members are elected by indirect election.

** Includes Treasurer and two other members of Board of Trustees.

Source: Franconia: A Self-Study 1973

Exhibit II



Source: Franconia: A Self Study 1973

Exhibit III

AA Degrees: Field of Specialization¹
(including midyear 1973 and 1972 graduates)

1. Language/Literature/Writing	25
2. Philosophy/Religion	9
3. Natural Science/Math	5
4. Social Science/Political Science	14
5. Psychology/Education	14
6. History	1
7. Performing Arts	11
8. Visual Arts	23
9. Economics/Business	<u>2</u>
	104

¹ Although each student specializes in two fields, this listing includes only the primary field of specialization for each student.

Source: Franconia: A Self-Study 1973

Exhibit IV

AREA OF STUDY	B.A. PRODUCTION (thesis)	OUTREACH (off-campus studies)
Social Relations	"History and Dynamics of B.I.A. in Indian Affairs: 'The Case of the Navajo'"	VISTA Volunteer Navajo Indian Reser- vation, Thoreau, New Mexico
Social Relations	"Psychological Analysis of Two Lives"	Halbrook Hospital, Westport, Connecticut, Psychiatric Aid
Creative Writing	<u>Eddie Mario</u> , a novel	<u>New York Post</u> copy boy, wire room ass't.. independent study
Social Relations	"A Dissertation on a Student and a Field Study"	Northeastern Kingdom Mental Health Services, research on mental retardation
Literature	"I Flash My Antlers on the Air", an essay	Harvard University, literature courses, working in a small art gallery and book store
Social Relations	"The Psycho-Therapeutic Experience"	Solomon Mental Health Clinic, Lowell, Mass., full time case worker
Fine Arts	A Demonstration in Ex- pressionistic Art Forms	On-campus
Social Relations	"The Cooperative: An Effective Tool for Rural Development"	Kibbutz Sasa, Israel, participatory observa- tion, independent study
Education	"The Hand in Education"	Antioch College, course work
Music Therapy	"The Importance of Goals in Music Therapy"	Overbrook Hospital, New Jersey, clinical training as a music therapist
Creative Writing	Selection of Poems	Oxford University, course work

Exhibit IV
(continued)

Social Relations	"Islamic Fars: A Feasibility Study"	The Winchester Excavation, Winchester, England The Siraf Expedition Islamic Fars, Persian Gulf Coast, excavating artifacts Oxford University, research The Kastritista Expedition, excavating artifacts
Philosophy	"An Essay on the Development of Religious Consciousness"	Queens College, course work
Creative Writing	Poetry, Prints, Essay	State University College, New Paltz, New York, course work
Journalism	"New Hampshire's Daily Press"	<u>South Boston Tribune</u> , copy writer, advertising
Philosophy	"Gain, A Reunion"	On-campus
Education	"Mass Media and Education"	England, study of BBC, independent study
Social Relations	"The Littleton Study"	Operation Mainstream, Littleton, New Hampshire
Literature	"Elements of Troubador Poetry and Dolce Stil Nuovo in Dante's <u>La Vita Nuovo</u> "	University of Florence, Italy, course work
Social Relations	"An Interdisciplinary Approach: A Study of Institutionalized Education"	State University of New York, organization and founding of Teachers Inc. Harvard Law School, work on Council on Legal Education Opportunity Program

Exhibit IV
(continued)

Fine Arts	Presentation of Selected Works	Independent painting and pottery in California New York Studio School, course work Independent study with noted printmaker
Philosophy	"The Ontology of the Blues"	On-campus
Literature	"The Development of Courtly Love in the Middle Ages"	University of Massachusetts course work
Theatre	Theatre Performances	Production of "La Mama" at Brandeis Performance in "Tom Paine" in New York City Performance in "Five Finger Exercise" in New York City Performance in "Futz" in New York City Work in Canadian Place Theatre movie for CBS
Social Relations	"Education and its Effects on Perceptual Development in Ghanian Children"	University of Ghana, interdisciplinary seminar, independent study Institute of African Studies, research with school children
Fine Arts	Exhibition and Presentation in Visual Arts	Silk-screening with Alvin Loving Silvermine College, Assistant teacher in lithography
Literature	"A Critical Study of Chaucer's <u>Troilus and Criseyde</u> "	University of Toronto, course work

Exhibit IV
(continued)

Fine Arts	"Inventions in Color Perception and Film Presentation"	Independent Study in the History of Art Student Teaching, Exhibition: "Inter-state 93" Student Teaching, Exhibition: "Pillar of Salt"
Psychology	"Psychoanalysis, Daseins-analysis and the Movement Towards 'Anti-Psychiatry'"	Ireland Program course work. independent study London, England, seminars with R.D. Laing and others, lived in experimental therapeutic community
Philosophy	"Mythology and the Dragon of the North: An Essay in Metaphysical Herpetology"	Independent study
Economics	"Lower Middle Class Frustration and the Politics of the Extreme Right in the United States"	On-campus
Theatre	Theatre Productions	Two original plays performed by the North Country Players Student Teaching, (Stanislovski), directing
Social Relations	"Problems Particular to the New Hampshire Rural Poor"	Operation Mainstream, community aid
Special Education	"The Identification and Education of the Brain Injured Child"	Ashbourne School, Philadelphia, Penna: supervised teaching of brain damaged children
Creative Writing	<u>Dearest ... of a Dream</u> <u>Gone By, with Love</u> (novel)	New School for Social Research, Writers Workshop

Exhibit IV
(continued)

Psychology	"Community Psychology: Social Intervention for Mental Health"	Research on citizen participation in the decision making process
Journalism	"Decision and Dissention"	Worcester Telegram, Worcester, Mass., editorial assistant, religious editor
Educational Psychology	"A Comparison: The Progressive Education Movement and the Free School Movement"	Israel, living and working on two kibbutzim London, England study

Source: Published by Franconia College
Franconia, New Hampshire

Exhibit V

Breakdown of Faculty by Subject

Full Time

Social Science	11
Humanities (exclusive of history)	7
Visual and Performing Arts	9
Science and Math	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	30

Part Time

Social Science	6
Humanities	8
Arts	5
Science and Math	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	21

Source: Franconia: A Self Study 1973

Exhibit VI

Faculty

Age: 26-~~27~~

Highest Degree:

Doctorate	23%
Master	50%
Bachelor	27%

Salary (1972-1973): \$7,193 - \$14,500
median \$10,700 *

New Faculty: 9 in 1972 - 1973

Source: Franconia: A Self Study 1973

* 10% across the board raise for all full time faculty for 1973 - 1974, approved by Board in March 1973.

Exhibit VII

Level Enrollment 350 (Full Time)

	1970-1971 Actual	1971-1972 Budget	1971-1972 Actual	1972-1973	1973-1974	1974-1975	1975-1976
Full Time on Campus	171 Spring	200	214	240	240	240	240
Full Time off Campus	85 Spring	100	97	110	110	110	110
Outreach	37 Spring	50	50	50	60	60	60
<hr/>							
INCOME							
A Tuition	520,508	945,000		1,102,500	1,102,500	1,102,500	1,102,500
B Outreach		25,000		25,000	30,000	36,000	36,000
C Student Services		45,000		52,500	52,000	52,000	52,000
D Room	97,842	99,000		128,800	128,800	128,800	128,800
E Food Services	114,100	137,000		168,000	168,000	168,000	168,000
F Gifts	11,129	15,000		15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
G Applications		12,000		14,000	16,000	18,000	20,000
H Miscellaneous	23,107	10,000		11,000	12,000	13,000	14,000
TOTAL	1,066,686	1,288,000		1,514,300	1,522,300	1,531,300	1,534,300
<hr/>							
EXPENDITURES							
H General Administration	97,388	118,000		126,000	130,000	137,000	145,000
I Admissions	58,434	56,000		67,000	67,000	67,000	67,000
Student Services	51,208	55,000		72,000	72,000	72,000	72,000
J Staff Benefits	44,328	48,000		60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
General	41,149	46,000		57,000	57,000	57,000	57,000
K Instruction	249,349	340,000		395,000	395,000	395,000	395,000
L Library	30,697	50,000		52,000	52,000	54,000	56,000
M Food Services	137,377	124,000		152,000	152,000	152,000	152,000
N Student Aid	41,076	64,000		75,000	80,000	85,000	90,000
O Nursery		2,000		2,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
P Operation and Plant	218,888	229,000		270,000	270,000	270,000	270,000

Exhibit VII
(continued)

	1970-1971 Actual	1971-1972 Budget	1971-1972 Actual	1972-1973	1973-1974	1974-1975	1975-1976
EXPENSES TOTAL	969,892	1,137,000		1,328,000	1,338,000	1,352,000	1,367,000
Income Total	1,066,686	1,288,000		1,514,300	1,522,300	1,531,300	1,534,300
Expenditures	969,892	1,137,000		1,328,000	1,338,000	1,352,000	1,367,000
Surplus Available for Debt Services	96,794	157,000		186,000	184,000	179,000	167,000
Present Debt Service	45,968	71,000		58,000	56,000	54,000	50,000
HUD Debt Service		10,000		26,000	27,000	26,000	27,000
Surplus Available for New Debt	50,825	71,000		102,000	101,000	94,000	90,000
New Payments on New Debt Service		17,000		27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000
Accumulated Surplus After New Debt Coverage	50,825	105,000 4.18		180,000 3.78	254,000 3.74	326,000 3.67	386,000 3.33
GROWTH							
Total Income				1,514,300	1,691,000	1,724,000	1,751,000
Total Expenses				1,328,000	1,345,000	1,446,000	1,478,000

Source: Franconia: A Self Study 1973

Note: The information contained in Exhibit VII is confidential -- not to be reprinted without permission of the college.

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William Teulebery III, Assistant to the President
Michael Bailin, Director of Special Projects and Resources
Charles Claypool, Business Manager
Neil McLaughlin, Dean of Students
Alethea Froberg, Registrar
Theodore Koffman, Co-Director, Admissions
Paul Law, Assistant, Admissions
Gregory Wilson, Head Librarian
Nicholas Howe, Philosophy, Faculty
Gene Mason, Political Science
Various Students

Spring 1973