

In the first issue of this journal, I invited our readers to submit articles as well as letters, opinion pieces, and brief announcements of interesting innovations. Today I want to reiterate this invitation.

My work as executive editor of this journal has been substantially eased by the signal contributions of Lois Cronholm, guest editor for this issue, of her predecessors, and of those who are already hard at work thinking about topics, lining up authors, and editing contributions for the next five issues. Thanks to the experience and expertise of our guest editors, we have been able to identify highly knowledgeable authors willing to write articles for the journal. We have had no difficulty in generating enough contributions for each issue: indeed, in several cases we have had to hold over one or two items, and we anticipate a catch-up issue soon that will contain the accumulation of unpublished articles. I am most grateful to Lois Cronholm and all her fellow guest editors.

With such capable assistance, the journal could continue to operate with a preponderance of solicited articles. But I believe that in the long run, the vitality of the journal as a forum for ideas and issues, and as source of information about innovations and initiatives, will be enhanced by carrying a greater proportion of contributed pieces. Inquiries, suggested outlines, and even complete manuscripts have begun to land on my desk: Their number should increase substantially. We intend to continue to use guest editors, but would like each issue to contain some unsolicited material.

*Metropolitan Universities* can use a variety of articles. In the first place, the journal intends to be useful to its readers by providing them with ideas, information, and analysis pertinent to the operation of metropolitan universities. Most of the articles in future issues of the journal, as has been the case thus far, will deal with specific functional aspects of metropolitan universities. We solicit critical descriptions of existing or suggested initiatives, be they programmatic, organizational, or procedural. New curricula, new modes of delivery, and new ways of interacting with external constituencies, of responding to student needs, of assessing educational outcomes, of evaluating faculty achievements, of marshaling resources across disciplinary and collegiate boundaries: These and many other topics are of interest to our readers. But please, tell it how it is, warts and all. A description of an actual example should inform the reader about the difficulties that were encountered, what could or should have been done differently, what lessons were learned, what some of the downside risks turned out to be. Articles for *Metropolitan Universities* should be clearly distinguishable from a grant application or a public relations piece.

Forthcoming issues of the journal will have the following themes: Regional Development, Telecommunication, Continuing Education, Professional Education, and Assessment. Subsequent themes are still in the planning stage. Contributions on these topics are particularly welcome, but we are equally interested in articles on other pertinent matters. No one issue can cover its theme completely, and much can still be said about themes of past issues and the current one: Diversity, Community Interaction, Faculty, the School Connection, and Curriculum. And there are many

other aspects of a metropolitan university that interest our readers. On any and all of these topics we also welcome brief one- to two-page descriptions of innovations to be carried in our column "Interactive Strategies."

In addition to articles about operational aspects, we also are continuing to look for contributions that analyze and discuss the key policy issues facing metropolitan universities. Most of our readers would agree that these institutions are committed to access and to outreach, but there exists a healthy variety of opinion as to the potential risks and the need for limits. Is there a point beyond which access endangers academic quality; outreach lessens institutional integrity? Most would agree as well that metropolitan universities are regional institutions, but how is that region defined? Is *metropolitan* a buzzword implying an abandonment of the inner city, or does it reflect a recognition of the interrelation between urban and suburban? And then there are the challenges of diversity and multiculturalism that deeply affect almost every metropolitan university. The national debate has turned acrimonious and divisive: What to some is an appropriate and indeed essential effort to adapt curriculum and campus life is seen by others as the abandonment of intellectual standards and a surrender to what has come to be derided as *political correctness* and *thought control*. *Metropolitan Universities* must continue to engage this crucial topic through reasoned discourse.

A number of articles in this issue and the previous ones have addressed important policy questions: We want more such contributions, reflecting various views. We welcome, as well, reactions to what has appeared in this journal in the form of letters to the editor or of op-ed pieces for our occasional "Forum" column. We also welcome expressions of views about debates carried out elsewhere. Such articles and other pieces should be thoughtful and well reasoned. But we won't flinch if they are also provocative, even somewhat contentious, because all who are involved in the effort of metropolitan universities to define their identities and priorities can profit from a healthy debate on the complex, multifaceted issues faced by metropolitan universities.

Just a few days before this column was written, the weekly news summaries of both *The New York Times* and our local *Boston Globe* featured front-page articles about the current crisis of public confidence in higher education. The need to reexamine what we do and how we do it is becoming painfully obvious. It is particularly important to define, articulate, and implement the mission of metropolitan universities because, in many ways, they are the institutions most responsive to both the proximate as well as the long-range needs of our society. The continuing clarification and elaboration of the metropolitan university concept requires wide exchange of ideas and information and intense debate about pertinent issues. We urge you to join your voice to this dialogue by writing for *Metropolitan Universities*, and thereby strengthen the major contribution that this journal can make to meeting these needs.

If you are interested in doing so, please get in touch with me by phone, fax, or letter to discuss possible topics and to receive detailed "Guidelines for Contributors." My address is: Ernest A. Lynton, 14 Allerton Street, Brookline, MA 02146. My office number is 617-232-5046, fax: 617-566-4383.