

Report of the Committee for Study of Proposed Student Union
December 14, 1956

I THE ROLE OF THE COLLEGE UNION

A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, ADOPTED BY THE ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEMBERSHIP AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

APRIL, 1956

1. The union is the community center of the college, for all the members of the college family--students, faculty, administration, alumni and guests. It is not just a building; it is also an organization and a program. Together they represent a well-considered plan for the community life of the college.

2. As the "living room" or the "hearthstone" of the college, the union provides for the services, conveniences, and amenities the members of the college family need in their daily life on the campus and for getting to know and understand one another through informal association outside the classroom.

3. The union is part of the educational program of the college.

As the center of college community life, it serves as a laboratory of citizenship, training students in social responsibility and for leadership in our democracy.

Through its various boards, committees, and staff, it provides a cultural, social, and recreational program, aiming to make free time activity a cooperative factor with study in education.

In all its processes it encourages self-directed activity, giving maximum opportunity for self-realization and for growth in individual social competency and group effectiveness. Its goal is the development of persons as well as intellects.

4. The union serves as a unifying force in the life of the college, cultivating enduring regard for and loyalty to the college.

II OBJECTIVES OF A STUDENT UNION AT THE ST. CLOUD STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

St. Cloud State Teachers College has a campus community that is unique and distinct from all other college campuses. This must be of primary importance in the consideration of objectives for and the facilities in a Student Union on this campus. There is an urgent need for a place that is the center of student life for all the college community. This center would be available to all students providing services that will enhance the social, educational, and recreational life of each student.

Another very important need for a Student Union is a central food and dining service. This dining service would provide meals for all of the students: those living in the dormitories, residents of off-campus rooms, and commuters. The food service area would include a cafeteria, a separate snack bar and grill, and provide a catering service to any room in the Union. This centralized food area is to include a bakery, meat room, adequate storage space, kitchen and dishroom. There will be an employees lounge in this area.

Not only would a Student Union coordinate student activities but it would provide lounge areas, meeting rooms and offices for organizations and student government. This would vacate considerable space in Stewart Hall that might be used for classrooms and offices. Stewart Hall will then be entirely used for classes and administrative offices thereby increasing the usefulness of the building.

The Student Union would be the host to anyone who comes to our campus. It would be center for alumni, faculty, and friends of the college. Through the Student Union Board of Directors policies could be adopted which would state regulations for use of the building by community groups or those outside of the college family.

It would improve student-faculty relations through the participation in activities and the opportunity for informal meeting.

The Student Union would give to all students more free services and additional opportunity for social and recreational programs at less cost to each student.

III PLANS FOR THE BUILDING

In the planning of a Student Union it is imperative that we look to the future and that campus facilities and enrollments be estimated for a number of years to come. The Student Union, "the hearthstone of the college", must reflect the spirit of the college in the structure and its decor.

The Student Union should be centrally located on the campus at St. Cloud State Teachers College on a site provided by the State. It would be a fireproof, air-conditioned structure especially treated to be a sound-proof as possible.

The plans and construction of the building will require the consultation of specialists in the planning of Student Union buildings. Ken White Associates, has been highly recommended to this committee and Porter Butts of the Memorial Union at the University of Wisconsin has had much experience in this field. The food service area must be planned by food engineers or specialists in food storage and preparation.

The committee recommends that consideration be given to the use of movable partitions and folding walls and doors to increase the versatility of the building. Possibilities of using ramps in place of stairways in some areas should be investigated, especially for ease in serving food via hot carts to any part of the building.

Also it is recommended that several fireplaces be constructed in the building. Almost every student approached on this topic by the committee, had a very favorable comment about the possibility of having a fireplace in the main lounge. Most of them felt that a fireplace gives a feeling of warmth to any room, even though the lounge be large. The fireplace would add to the beauty of the lounge and would be symbolic as the hearthstone or center of the college.

All of these plans and facilities suggested for the Student Union are subject to the recommendations of the Planning Consultant of the Student Union.

IV FACILITIES OF THE STUDENT UNION

The Student Union is a center for all students on the campus and as such provides facilities that give a number of free services at no charge to students as well as services that are of little expense. Most of the facilities are for a fulfillment of a definite need on the campus. The facilities for the Student Union recommended by the committee will be listed not in order of importance, but with reference to the specific need on the campus.

OFFICES FOR DIRECTOR OF THE STUDENT UNION, FOR MAJOR CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS AND ALUMNI OFFICE.

The Director of the Union must have offices within the union building to direct its operation efficiently, and these offices will help in the coordination of union activity. The major campus organizations, publications, fraternities, societies, governing bodies and religious groups need a central executive office with storage space for each organization. The number of individual offices available to organizations is dependent upon the size and space available in the building.

A general work area to be shared by the major organizations is needed for mimeographing, getting out publicity, and preparing for meetings.

The Alumni Office must have equipment and space for the business of the office and for the adequate storage of records.

CONFERENCE ROOM

Because there are approximately 60 active organizations on this campus, which meet on an average of twice a month, there is a real need for meeting or conference rooms. The only conference rooms now available are in Kiehle Library and these are to be used primarily for class conferences. If conference rooms were made available to rent by groups outside the college community, this facility could be income producing.

INFORMATION DESK

This central information desk might well be the public relations center of the whole campus. It would not only give information on union facilities and activities which would stimulate interests of students and faculty, but it would also serve the whole campus by being a host to all persons who enter the union. At the present time there is need for a central office for visitors making inquiry at the college. A person approaching the college now does not know the office to enter to make inquiry.

POST OFFICE SUBSTATION

Because the Student Union would be open a greater number of hours, and the communication center of the campus would be the union, the Post Office Substation should be located near the information desk. Since this is under the jurisdiction of the United States Postal Service, there would be some remuneration from the Government for this facility.

COAT-CHECKING

Although the space providing for the checking of coats may need to be expandable, it is necessary for some space to be reserved for a coat room.

LOUNGES, STUDENT AND FACULTY

One of the greatest needs of this campus is for a place for students to meet and talk informally. These lounges, as well as the entire union building, should reflect the college traditions and spirit in its colorful appointments. The present facilities in Stewart Hall are not adequate and will not be able to provide the space necessary for an expanding enrollment. The Kiehl Library should not be used primarily as a meeting place, although informal lounges are provided for reading. A lounge specifically provided for students to meet and talk will increase the feeling of fellowship and friendliness in the campus.

An area designated as a faculty lounge is needed to meet the demands of an increasing number of faculty and administration.

Near or adjacent to the student and the faculty lounges, there must be adequate rest rooms.

MULTI-PURPOSE BALLROOM

Another great need on this campus is a place to have all college dances. The committee recommends that a large room be provided in the Student Union for dances, lectures, and banquets. The entire room could be used for an occasion, or if folding walls could be used to divide the room, a smaller dance floor could be reserved.

The present lounges in Stewart Hall are too small to accommodate the numbers of students who attend all-college dances, and the Eastman gymnasium is costly. The decorations alone for each dance are at least \$50.00. The floor of the gymnasium could be kept in better condition if it was not used for dancing.

If this multi-purpose room would be made available on a rental basis to groups in the community, it could be an income producing facility of the union.

The committee recommends that adequate storage space for tables, chairs, etc. be made available adjacent to this room so that the room arrangement for each activity could be made as easily as possible.

EXHIBITS

Exhibits of painting, photography, sketching, handicrafts, etc. can be displayed in cases or wall spaces designated for such use in the student and faculty lounges, hallways, or other specified areas of the building.

CONFERENCE ROOMS

Activity or meeting rooms that can be reserved by student organizations are very much needed in the Student Union. The plans for the building should include a number of Conference Rooms although the rooms may vary in size and equipment. The committee recommends that the conference rooms be furnished and equipped adequately for meetings of any of the student organizations.

TV ROOM

This room should be near, but separate from the main lounge, so that television viewing and informal conversations would not be disturbing to one another. If the room were divided from main lounge by a folding door, the space for TV audience could be increased at special programs.

HI FI ROOM

Another room which should be planned as a separate facility is one for listening to Hi Fi. This could easily be the most popular room in the union, and would be designed as a lounge with facilities for presenting special classes in music appreciation.

JUKE BOX

Every Union needs a Juke Box just as every home needs a radio. The Juke Box would offer an informal social enjoyment for the students while having a coke or sandwich at the snack bar and grill. It would offer an increased facility for the students on this campus and it would be self-supporting.

STUDENT STORE

The self-service store would be designed for supplying student needs in drugs, notions, magazines, and school supplies. In addition to a book store, it would include all types of school supplies, and could be enlarged to include many articles to supply needs of students. It would not only be a profit making facility, but would be of service to students by selling articles at lowest possible cost.

BARBER SHOP

The barber shop in the union is recommended for the benefit it could give the student and faculty. Not only would it be located on the campus but it would offer services at the lowest possible cost. It would be considered as a self-liquidating facility of the union.

RECREATION ROOM

A room or space close to the recreational area where there are equipment and facilities for playing games such as bridge, ping pong, chess, checkers, etc. Activities such as these provide an opportunity for relaxation from the classroom, and help to develop social and recreational skills which students may continue in life after college. The facilities for such activity on the campus at the present time are extremely limited.

WORKSHOPS

Students cannot bring a home workshop to the campus but many students would like the opportunity for pursuing their hobbies and special interests. It could be part of the function of a student union to provide a place for students to cultivate an interest in hobbies. The workshops could be used by the faculty as well as by students.

It has been suggested that equipment be provided for sketching, painting, block printing, weaving, ceramic, metal and clay work, carpentry, leather work, and a dark room. Display cases adjacent to the shop would give an opportunity for showing work done in the shop.

BOWLING

Bowling is a very popular sport of the young and old, and can be enjoyed by groups, couples, or individually. The committee recommends that eight bowling alleys be included in the Student Union. These could be used not only as a recreational sport but also by recreational classes. The student organizations on the campus could use the alleys in an inter-organization competition. Although the construction of the bowling alleys might be costly, it is expected that they might be an income producing facility. Bowling alleys would provide recreation also for the faculty and administration.

BILLARDS

The committee recommends that four billard tables be installed in the recreational area of the Student Union. This facility may be enjoyed by both men and women students and by faculty. It would provide an opportunity for fun and recreation and would be an income producing facility.

FOOD SERVICE

The food service portion of the proposed Student Union was discussed at some length by the Committee and in conferences with our Dietician. Her advice helped greatly during the food service discussions. The first thing she advised was to engage the services of a food service expert or consultant to plan the food service section in the union. We discussed in our meetings the inadequacy of our present food service system. We found the following reasons for a centralized kitchen and new equipment.

1. There are too many separate food services on campus at the present time. (Brainard Hall, Shoemaker Hall, Lawrence Hall, and Stewart Hall.) This is a direct cause of the higher prices in the Cafeteria and the need for even higher prices in the future if our present system is still active.

2. The present equipment is highly inadequate for the type and amount of cooking that is done in our kitchens. With our present enrollment our kitchens should be equipped with:

- a. A bakery room to take care of all the baking of rolls, pies, cakes, etc.
- b. A meat locker to hold large amounts of meat in carcass form. This would cut down meat costs.
- c. Ample storage space for canned food so large amounts may be purchased at once thus also reducing expenses.

3. The present employment would be reduced with a centralized food service. It would take fewer cooks to produce an even larger amount of food with a centralized food service adorned with modern equipment.

There are three of the most important shortcomings in our present food service. There are other problems such as bookkeeping and custodial service that also would be simplified with a centralized food service, but now I would like to present the advantages of a centralized kitchen.

Besides the butler service, modern equipment, etc. discussed in the last paragraph a kitchen in our union would hold other facilities of convenience. Some of these include:

1. Hot-food carts that would be used to serve any part of the union. Note: This service would be made even more convenient with the installation of ramps instead of stairs. This service would enable banquets to be held in any part of the building.

2. A snack-bar and grill would be located apart from the Cafeteria to serve in-between snacks, cokes, ice cream, coffee, etc. It would be apart from the kitchen to eliminate the bothersome noise of the kitchen. It has been found on other campus unions that the snack bar is the most popular spot on campus and the center of school spirit.

3. The food service could serve as a catering service to the college family (Students, Faculty, etc.) and the college community. This service would be a direct source of income and would help greatly to increase college-community relations.

These were the items brought out in our discussions and conferences with the Dietician. It must be realized that there would be many other advantages that could not be classified a service, but as conveniences. The fact that all students, on campus and off, would be handled in the unions food service is a convenience greatly needed and strived for.

The Dietician stressed the fact that food equipment is changing all the time. The items for improvement already discussed are things that would be needed if the union were to be built next year or in two years. But if the union were not to be built for say five to ten years these items would most likely be outdated.

Present research in food and food service equipment indicate an ever changing picture. For this reason one cannot present a definite equipment and cost per item brochure. It does tend to show us at this time that with newer developments in this field--labor costs can be minimized.

It should be evident that we do need a centralized food service and that it should be included within the student union. The end-product would be a smoother running food service with better food, more reasonable prices and better service. Along with this it would mean constant traffic throughout the union.

Unless our union plans central food service to take effect soon our present cooking facilities must be improved. With present 1956-57 increased enrollment--we are already pressed--inadequate food preparation areas and equipment--this must be remedied in the very near future.

V FINANCING THE STUDENT UNION

The committee found that there are many methods of financing a Student Union depending upon the situation on the local campus. In most cases where there is a Student Union, the schools have some sort of student fee, in addition to the contributions and subscriptions to the union fund.

The committee recommends that a Student Union be constructed at St. Cloud State Teachers College at an estimated cost of \$1,000,000. This estimated cost is based on figures from the Kirby Student Center, University of Minnesota, Duluth Branch, and the estimated cost of the proposed Student Union building at Mankato State Teachers College, where, in both cases, the estimated costs were in excess of \$1,000,000.

Further, it is recommended that the Student Union be built and financed by self-liquidating bonds to be amortized over a period of years from the operating revenues, the contributions, and student fees.

The campaign for contributions, gifts and subscriptions from alumni, faculty, business men and friends of the college could be conducted as soon as the plans for a Student Union are approved. The opportunity for pledging contributions could be extended over a period of years--or concentrated in a concerted drive.

Since the Student Union will benefit all students on the campus, the committee recommends that a student fee of \$5.00 per quarter be levied for the specific purpose of such a building on this campus.

The Subcommittee of the State Teachers College Board in its report of January 1955 on Revenue Bond Financing of Dormitories, and other Revenue Producing Facilities at Minnesota State Teachers Colleges, stated:

"It would be economically feasible to finance union buildings and other revenue producing facilities with self-liquidating bonds. Such facilities would derive their principal revenue for debt service from a portion of the student activities fee."

The report made by specialists from Michigan State University (October 1955) to the Minnesota State Teachers College Board on a study of Enrollment Forecasts and Survey of Dormitory Requirements of Minnesota State Teachers Colleges, 1955 to 1965 recommended that central feeding of students be combined with a student center, or Union. Further it was recommended that the student fee be charged in order to build up a fund for the Student Union.

The personnel needed for maintenance of the building and the estimated cost of utilities will be dependent upon the structural plans.

It is recommended by the committee that the Student Union be governed by a Student Union Board made up of students and faculty and under the Director of the Student Union.

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