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- I. Two major types of universities in the US: private universities and public ones.
  - A. Private universities are independent corporations, run, in some sense, as private businesses.
  - B. Public universities are, in the vast majority of cases, run by the individual states that comprise the United States. The public universities are run by the individual states, who set the standards and decide what programs will be offered.
- II. The University of Connecticut, a major public university is about 25 miles from the nearest city, in a rural setting.
  - A. History
    1. It was founded in 1881, beginning its life as the Storrs Agriculture School (with twelve students), and offering a two year certificate, rather than a full-fledged college degree.
    2. In 1891, recognizing the school's developing curriculum in the liberal arts, the Connecticut General Assembly (the governing body of the state of Connecticut) changed the name of the school to the Storrs Agricultural College and approved the admission of women. The school became the Connecticut Agricultural College in 1899, and Connecticut State College in 1934.
    3. In 1939, the school became a full university, The University of Connecticut; it granted its first doctoral degrees in 1949. The University currently offers eight undergraduate degrees in 98 majors, and twelve graduate degrees in eighty fields of study.
  - B. Current situation
    1. The University of Connecticut has six campuses, the main campus at Storrs (where I teach) and five smaller branch campuses scattered through the state. The Storrs campus occupies 4,400 acres and has 193 major buildings. The University of Connecticut has almost 15,000 undergraduate students and 7,300 graduate and professional students. The faculty numbers about 1,500. The University budget for fiscal year 1997-98 was over \$800 million.
    2. The University of Connecticut provides cultural events for the entire region through its Jorgensen Auditorium, Homer Babbidge Library, and School of Fine Arts. These events include theater, opera, music, and art. Additionally, the William Benton Museum of Art and the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History are located in the center of the Storrs campus and are open to the public.

- III. Harvard University, a leading private university, is the oldest institution of higher learning in the United States.
  - A. History

1. It was first established in 1636 by vote of the Great and General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (then a colony of Britain), and was named Harvard College in 1638 for its first benefactor, a young minister named John Harvard, who, upon his death in 1638, left his library and half his estate to the new college. The school purchased its first real estate in 1637 in a tiny village then called Newtowne (which had been founded in 1630). In 1638, Newtowne was renamed Cambridge, in recognition of Cambridge University in England.

2. In its early years, Harvard College offered a classic academic course based on the English university model. There were nine students, with a single "master". In 1650, the Great and General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony approved Harvard President Henry Dunster's charter of incorporation. The Charter of 1650 established the President and Fellows of Harvard College (also known as the Harvard Corporation), a seven-member board that is the oldest corporation in the Western Hemisphere. The mission of the College, according to the 1650 charter, was "The advancement of all good literature, artes, and Sciences."

3. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the curriculum was broadened, particularly in the sciences. Charles W. Eliot, who served as president from 1869 to 1909, transformed Harvard into a modern university. During his tenure, the Law and Medical schools were revitalized, and the graduate schools of Business, Dental Medicine, and Arts and Sciences were established. Enrollment grew from 1,000 to 3,000 students, the faculty grew from 49 to 278, and the endowment increased from \$2.3 million to \$22.5 million.

- B. Current situation

1. Harvard University now has more than 18,000 degree candidates, including undergraduates and students in ten graduate and professional schools. More than 14,000 people work at Harvard, including more than 2,000 faculty. The city of Cambridge has grown along with Harvard. The population of the city is now almost 96,000.

2. Harvard's annual operating budget of \$1.5 billion is a driving force for the local economy. Harvard is the largest employer in the city of Cambridge, and is one of the largest employers in the city of Boston (where some Harvard facilities are located), and in the state of Massachusetts as a whole.

3. The annual expenditure by Harvard in Cambridge and Boston on taxes, voluntary payments in lieu of taxes, municipal fees and services, purchases of goods and services, and payroll for University employees who are residents of Cambridge and Boston exceeds one half billion dollars.

4. Cambridge is the birthplace of Massachusetts's high-technology industry. The presence of both Harvard and MIT has encouraged a wide variety of technical, research, and professional firms to locate in the city, among them Polaroid Corp., the Arthur D. Little Co., Lotus Inc., and Draper Laboratories Inc.

4. Harvard also has a tremendous impact on New England life and culture. Cultural activities are a major part of life at Harvard, and include dance, theater, poetry readings, lectures, film screenings, art and science exhibits, and musical performances.

5. Various continuing education opportunities have been made available by Harvard to New England residents since 1910. The Division of Continuing Education in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences coordinates three major programs: Harvard University Extension School, the Harvard Summer School, and the Institute for Learning in Retirement. Harvard University Extension School sponsors nearly 600 courses and enrolls nearly 14,000 men and women annually.

IV. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, another leading private university is, like Harvard, located mainly in Cambridge, Massachusetts

A. History

1. MIT admitted its first students in 1865, four years after the approval of its founding charter. MIT was intended as a new kind of independent educational institution relevant to an increasingly industrialized America. William Barton Rogers, the first president of MIT, stressed the pragmatic and practicable. He believed that professional competence was best fostered by focusing attention on real-world problems. Towards this end, he pioneered the development of the teaching laboratory. Education and research continue to be MIT's primary purpose.

B. Current situation

1. MIT is organized into five schools that contain twenty one academic departments. MIT has a faculty of about 900, who instruct 4400 undergraduate students and 5500 graduate students. Physically, MIT occupies 154 acres.

2. Like Harvard, MIT has a profound impact on the community. Economically, its operating budget of nearly \$1.9 billion is a significant factor. MIT pays taxes on its commercial property and offers payments in lieu of taxes for strictly educational property, which is legally tax-exempt. In 1997, these payments totaled over \$6 million.

3. MIT contributes significantly to the state and local economy. There are over 1,000 MIT-related companies headquartered in Massachusetts which employ 125,000 people and represent ten percent of the state's economic base. In Cambridge alone, 150 MIT-related companies have generated at least 14,000 jobs and over \$700 million in sales. MIT's "Cambridge First Purchasing Program", along with its taxes paid,

payments in lieu of taxes, and municipal fees brought the 1997 economic contribution to the City of Cambridge to nearly \$47 million.

4. Faculty, staff and students at MIT are involved in a broad range of volunteer activities in Cambridge where the Institute supports over 80 educational programs and over 100 community initiatives annually.

V. General remarks on the American university system

A. All universities offer a core of standardly accepted course offerings. Beyond this, they specialize and develop their own individual strengths, sometimes ones especially appropriate to their communities (agriculture, biotechnology, or high-tech, for instance).

B. American universities typically do not force undergraduate students to specialize immediately, and they allow students to switch fields.

C. Graduate education is a special strength of American universities. Typically, a graduate program begins with intensive courses emphasizing and reinforcing the fundamental knowledge in the field. Then as soon as possible, and often as part of these foundational courses, the students become involved in original research under the supervision of a major advisor.

D. Many American graduate programs provide work opportunities that are at least somewhat related to the course of study. These jobs are in the form of research or teaching assistantships. This is preferable to having the students seek outside employment on their own. (An important side-effect of this is that professors are able to assign frequent examinations and homework problems, even in very large classes, since much of the grading can be handled by the teaching assistants.)

E. American universities are notably adept at keeping up with rapidly progressing fields. One reason for this is the strong emphasis on research. Another reason is that junior faculty, whose research is often at the cutting edge, are generally given full opportunities to teach and advise graduate students.