On 19 March 1985, with the concurrence of the President, the Faculty Senate of the University of Virginia adopted a new Statement of Institutional Purpose to replace the statement that had been in effect since 17 May 1974. This statement subsequently was recommended by the President to the Board of Visitors, who on 31 May 1985 adopted the Statement of Institutional Purpose reading as follows:

The central purpose of the University of Virginia is to enrich the mind by stimulating and sustaining a spirit of free inquiry directed to understanding the nature of the universe and the role of mankind in it. Activities designed to quicken, discipline, and enlarge the intellectual and creative capacities, as well as the aesthetic and ethical awareness, of the members of the University and to record, preserve, and disseminate the results of intellectual discovery and creative endeavor serve this purpose. In fulfilling it, the University places the highest priority on achieving eminence as a center of higher learning.