

**PEOPLE, LAND, AND SPIRIT:
A BRIDGE TO THE GREAT PLAINS***

...The Great Plains studies program had no exclusive author or well-defined genesis. Perennial faculty disquietude with phases of the general education requirements, academic quality, the gulf between academic disciplines, and the failure to develop an institutional identity with distinctive courses of study encouraged a few faculty members to study the academic curriculum. They concluded that the only practical recourse to the multiple and intractable problems at EKSC (Emporia Kansas State College now Emporia State University) was to design a comprehensive studies program compatible with the nature of the College.... A vague impression crystallized into the firm belief within the faculty group that a Great Plains course of study should be adopted at EKSC.

...A Great Plains studies program is distinctive; it would graphically delineate EKSC from the multitude of colleges and universities in the region.

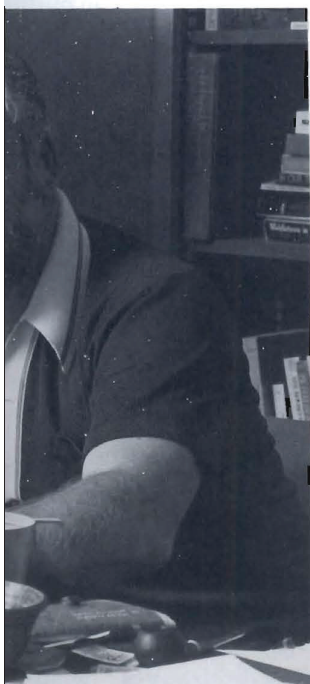
...Great Plains history has often symbolized the broad American past while American history has often been the Great Plains amplified... To study the region is also to study the American ethos.

...The Middle East is prodigiously inflated on world maps which adjust the size of political units to their oil deposits. A world food map would multiply the Great Plains to many times its actual size. The Great Plains is a global food power... Food may be more decisive than oil in American diplomacy and international relations... The decisions [about use of food in diplomacy] will be a forceful commentary on the American conscience and value system.

People, Land, and Spirit: A Bridge to the Great Plains was the title chosen to characterize the program's contours, academic content, and multi-disciplinary composition. Its purpose is to unite fragments of the curriculum into a coherent structure and emphasize the relationships which exist between academic fields.

* This narrative was taken from Pat O'Brien's original planning grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Mexico home as we back
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