

Edward Couch (1984-1985)

Dr. A. Edward Couch became the 12th president of Yankton College on September 1, 1984. Dr. Couch was an obvious choice for the Board of Trustees because of his Doctorate of Ministry from Vanderbilt University and his experience as a chief development officer of the Yale Divinity School and vice-president of Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa. Full of optimism, President Couch believed the school's financial troubles could be solved through the help of school alumni, the Yankton community, and the United Church of Christ.

Unfortunately, the school's debt was greater than what anyone knew. The school's business manager Frank Thieman informed President Couch of newly discovered overdue bills and creditors asking for their money. A fateful deliberation began and the Board of Trustees voted to close the school at the end of the fall semester – to allow students the time to find another school. President Couch delivered the news to the press on December 17, 1984, as difficult as it was during the Christmas season. He later sued the trustees for misleading him on the school's financial situation. Regardless of the lawsuit, he remained Yankton College president until his official resignation on April 26, 1985.