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ABSTRACT

This report presents the results of a study conducted by the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada to review the university's policies towards those groups within Canadian society which have low participation rates in post-secondary education. Following the introduction, the section, "Accessibility and the University of Winnipeg," evaluates some recent developments in academic accessibility programming at the university. The section, "University Life and Culture," explains the importance of the relationship between what the school identifies as the culture of the university and accessibility. Student services are the focus of "Options for Improving Student Services." The section "Curriculum, Teaching, and Scholarship: Statement of Objectives" identifies the values and attitudes that shaped the recommendations in the areas of teaching, curriculum, and research. Next, "Proposals on Curriculum," focuses on student retention, particularly in the first year. In "General Curriculum Revisions and Accessibility," the university is urged to initiate a comprehensive development of its curriculum regarding matters of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and disability. "Promotion of the Value of Teaching" presents the recommendation that faculty members be encouraged to explore new pedagogical assumptions and approaches that will improve the classroom experience for students and faculty. Finally, the section "Coordinating and Evaluating Accessibility Initiatives," concludes the report with a statement for the need to ensure the effective coordination and evaluation of accessibility initiatives over the coming years. An appendix and summary of recommendations are included. (GLR)

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DIVERSITY AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

TO IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

THE FINAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON STUDENT

ACCESSIBILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

SUMMARY

The President's Task Force on Student Accessibility was appointed in January 1988 to review The University of Winnipeg's policies towards those groups within our society which have low participation rates in post-secondary education. The committee of faculty, students, staff, and community representatives consulted widely within the University and community at large and undertook extensive research in the preparation of the report. While the report is written primarily for those of us associated with The University of Winnipeg, it does have implications for others concerned about accessibility to Canadian universities. Underlying the recommendations in this report is the belief that universities can choose to become more accessible and can do so while improving the quality of their educational practices. When a university chooses to commit itself to a long term reorientation to improve accessibility, government and community leaders must be prepared to provide the resources to do so.

The INTRODUCTION presents our main ideas and objectives. We state that access and excellence in educational programming are compatible values, because access is fundamentally concerned with students successfully completing their university studies. Therefore, graduation rates of non-traditional university students is the most meaningful measure of accessibility. Integrated academic programming and student services is the most effective method of improving graduation rates, and a long term commitment by the University and the government to reallocate resources and provide additional funding is needed if this goal is to be realized.

The following section of the report, ACCESSIBILITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG, evaluates some recent developments in academic accessibility programming at The University. Attention is drawn to the fundamental importance of the Writing Program to the future of accessibility at The University of Winnipeg. Faculty concerns about the perceived effects of accessibility on existing programs and working conditions are raised here and addressed throughout the report. Ultimately, improved accessibility depends on the faculty's commitment to the concept.

The importance of the relationship between what we have identified as the culture of the University and accessibility is explained in the section entitled UNIVERSITY LIFE AND CULTURE. We believe our institutional culture, which is predominantly male and middle-class in orientation, must become more sensitive to issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and disability. The goal of the University should be the creation of an environment in which racist and sexist behaviours have no place. Our recommendations in this section identify measures the University should implement to help us achieve this objective. A priority recommendation of the report is the development of effective policies on the treatment of sexist and racist behaviour that may occur on campus. A related recommendation in this section calls for the

creation of a Community Council to help the University respond more effectively to the cultural and academic needs of non-traditional students. Here we also address the need for the University to improve the representation of women and non-traditional university populations within its workforce.

Student services at The University of Winnipeg is the focus of **OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING STUDENT SERVICES**. Most students from under-represented groups find university a forbidding place and this feeling is known to affect their academic performance. Therefore, we need to better understand the sources of these feelings and address them early, preferably before students enter university. In this respect, our recommendations urge the University to consider innovative access programming with the secondary schools. Also we recommend changes in our recruitment and admissions policies that would more effectively evaluate the knowledge and experiences of non-traditional students, and expand our system of academic advising. Another group of recommendations proposes a significant reorganization of our student services to improve their usefulness to students. Finally, issues related to student financial aid are raised in this section.

CURRICULUM, TEACHING, AND SCHOLARSHIP: STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES is the section of the report that identifies the values and attitudes that shaped our recommendations in the following sections on teaching, curriculum, and research. The nature of the needs of our students, we submit, must ultimately determine the course we take to fulfil our task as scholars and educators. In the next section, **PROPOSALS ON CURRICULUM**, we initially focus on the retention of students in our programs, especially first year students. We recommend better coordination of our programs with the high schools, universal diagnostic assessment of incoming students, improved language development programming, and new basic courses in mathematics and the sciences.

In **GENERAL CURRICULUM REVISIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY**, we urge the University to initiate a comprehensive development of its curriculum regarding matters of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and disability. Early implementation of this priority recommendation will demonstrate the University's commitment to accessibility. As part of this evaluation of our curriculum, we recommend the strengthening of interdisciplinary programs with special significance for access and the consideration of the creation of a General Studies Program.

PROMOTION OF THE VALUE OF TEACHING is a crucial section of the report. We recommend that faculty members be encouraged to explore new pedagogical assumptions and approaches that will improve the classroom experience for students and faculty. This will require devoting greater resources to the promotion of teaching and placing a greater emphasis on the value of teaching in decisions related to hiring and promotion.

COORDINATING AND EVALUATING ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES concludes the report with a statement of the need to ensure the effective coordination and evaluation of accessibility initiatives over the coming years. Consequently, we have made a priority recommendation urging the appointment of an Access Coordinator.

Appendices identifying members on subcommittees, persons and organizations consulted, and a priority and summary list of recommendations complete the report.

THE FINAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON STUDENT
ACCESSIBILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

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PREFACE

When we accepted our appointments to the President's Task Force on Student Accessibility none of us anticipated the journey that lay ahead. Our one year commitment to the committee extended into two and one half years of intensive research, consultation, and discussion of accessibility issues. It is difficult to relate the excitement we experienced as we delved deeper into the question of increasing accessibility for non-traditional students to our programs. We found that the studies and experts we consulted reinforced our belief that successful accessibility initiatives must be founded on good educational practices that improve the intellectual and cultural experience for all students at the University. Our only regret is the recognition of the reality: a report of this nature can only reflect a small portion of what we have learned about accessibility issues.

We are encouraged by the increasing recognition of the importance of accessibility issues within the University, especially because The University of Winnipeg has long been noted for its service to the community. This awareness of access issues is evident in our changing approach to recruiting, admitting, and advising students, new emphasis on a broad range of language development issues, modification to our curriculum, and recognition of the importance of good teaching practices. The University is also recognizing that strong ties to the province's schools and community organizations are critical to its future as an accessible university that excels in undergraduate teaching.

There are many people who in innumerable ways assisted us in our work. First, we wish to express our gratitude to the many members of this and other universities, government agencies, and our school system who willingly agreed to share their ideas and research with us. Second, we are indebted to the numerous members of community groups and organizations who overwhelmingly supported our attempts to better understand their educational needs and concerns. Third, we wish to thank the Universities Grants Commission for financial support of the second year of our study. Fourth, we appreciate the many forms of assistance we received from the University administration, especially from the Offices of the Dean of Arts and Science and the Vice-President (Administration). We wish to thank former President, Robin Farquhar, who established the Task Force, and finally, Marsha Hanen, current President, who deserves special recognition. Despite the hectic pace of her first year as President, she was always available to meet with the Task Force and happily participated in our off-campus meetings with local educators. Dr. Hanen's interest in our deliberations, and her knowledge and commitment to education makes us feel optimistic about the possibilities for accessibility programming at the University.

Nolan Reilly
Chair, President's Task
Force on Student
Accessibility

TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP:

- 1988-90:** Derwyn Davies, Board of Regents
 Judy Dyck, Awards and Financial Aid Office
 John Holfey, Associate Dean of Arts & Science
 Lynn Jones, Office c' the Vice-President (Administration)
 Alden Turner, English
 Norma Walker, Board of Regents
 Gunter Weiss, Statistics
 Nolan Reilly, History
- 1988-89:** Dave Downie, Alumni Association
 Ahmed Gommid, U.W.S.A.
 David Henry, U.W.S.A.
 Sarah McKinnon, History
 Evelyn Schaefer, Psychology
 Walt Stein, Associate Vice-President (Academic)
- 1989-90:** Kyle Briggs, U.W.S.A.
 Spencer Clements, Alumni Association
 Mario Jimenez, Admissions Office
 Zanna Joyce, U.W.S.A.
 Eugene Kaban, Board of Regents
 Mary Young, Counselling Services

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Purpose and Main Ideas

The purpose of this report is to focus attention on the academic, cultural, and economic influences that limit the participation of non-traditional students at The University of Winnipeg. In this report, the terms "non-traditional" or "under-represented students" include Aboriginal peoples (Treaty, Status, non-Status, Inuit, and Metis), immigrant and ethnic groups, such as those from South-East Asia, the Philippines, the Caribbean Islands, Central and South America, and the Indian sub-continent. The terms also include traditional working-class communities with low postsecondary participation rates. Finally, we have included the disabled in this category, although we recognize that their needs are not always the same as those of other non-traditional students.

The following principles have guided the work of the Task Force. First, access and excellence in educational programming are compatible values. Second, access is fundamentally concerned with students successfully completing their studies at the University. Third, integrated academic programming and student services is the most effective means of improving access. Fourth, good access programming is based on sound educational practices that improve the educational experience for all students. Fifth, accessibility requires a long-term commitment to the reallocation of the University's resources. Sixth, accessibility cannot be legislated; it must be achieved through consultation and discussion. Seventh, access depends on the willingness of the University to cooperate in a meaningful way with the community. Eighth, strategies must be implemented to recruit significant numbers of non-traditional students to the University.

Ultimately, a commitment to improving accessibility and excellence in education means more than a package of academic programs and improved delivery of student services. The access perspective or orientation must infuse all facets of the institution's life and culture. This will not be easily achieved. It will require extensive and continuing consultation among faculty, students, administrators, support staff, and the community about the most effective means of achieving our objective of maintaining the high quality of our educational programs and practices and improving accessibility for non-traditional students. If our recommendations are adopted the University will become more open to non-traditional students. However, there is no simple path to improving accessibility. It requires a willingness to evaluate continually the effectiveness of our programs and relationships with the community, and to be innovative in our educational practices.

1.2 Brief History of the Ideas of the Task Force

The President's Task Force on Student Accessibility was established in January 1988 to review the University's policies towards non-traditional students. Although accessibility to postsecondary education was receiving more attention in Canada, the decision to explore the problem here was significantly influenced by internal circumstances. The University was already enrolling non-traditional students. For example, proportionately higher numbers of first generation university students and part-timer learners, (groups who often fall into the non-traditional category) were enrolled here than at other Canadian universities. But their experience here paralleled that of students with similar backgrounds who were at other universities. They left our programs in disproportionately high numbers, probably never to return to university again. This situation concerned many of us at the University because it was unfair to students and to the University to accept them when we knew that there was a decreased probability they would graduate. The realization that our enrolment of such students was likely to increase in the future gave the problems of these students a new urgency. Thus, the Task Force was appointed with

the objective of recommending ways to improve retention among our existing student population while simultaneously improving accessibility.

We began our work with a review of the existing situation at the University. We agreed that our University's longstanding liberal admissions policy, especially for mature students, should not be equated with accessibility. Allowing students to register into a system that was neither culturally nor academically sensitive to them made university life difficult, if not impossible, for them. The fact that most Canadian universities operated in much the same manner did not justify, in our minds, the neglect of these issues. Therefore, we undertook extensive research and consultation to learn how cultural, social, and economic forces fundamentally shape access to and success at university. The result of these early deliberations was the realization that meaningful accessibility for non-traditional students required a greater sensitivity to their cultural, academic, and financial needs from the time of their first contact with the University through to their graduation. Furthermore, we agreed, early in our discussions, that accessibility must not lead to a diminution of quality of education that students receive at the University. Indeed, the more we studied the relationship between access and good educational practices, the more convinced we became that the access ideas we were considering would benefit all our students and make The University of Winnipeg a more vibrant and innovative institution. Consequently, we adopted the perspective of accessibility as an orientation or vision that infuses all dimensions of a university's life.

We wish to stress that the ideas and recommendations in this report are the result of a thorough investigation of access issues. Our research files are filled with materials on access programming in North America and, to a lesser degree elsewhere in the world. At our regular and numerous meetings, and especially during our public meetings in the winter/spring of 1989, we received extensive oral and written submissions from faculty, students, support staff, and university administrators. Community participation was extensive. We met with aboriginal representatives, including Metis educational leaders, numerous representatives of ethnic and immigrant organizations, local, national, and international experts in access and post secondary education, and individuals who wished to express their thoughts on access issues. In September 1990, committees on student services, community programming, and curriculum and teaching undertook intensive study of the issues we had identified as particularly important for the University to consider. Membership on these committees, like that of the Task Force, represented a broad spectrum of opinion. This was done to ensure that those most likely to be affected by our ideas on access were involved in the process of shaping our recommendations.

It is with some frustration that we recognize that the report reflects only a small part of what we learned about accessibility issues at The University of Winnipeg. We know of no other committee, in the recent past, that has so thoroughly investigated such a broad range of issues affecting the University. However, we wish to emphasize that process in this case is as important as the content of the report. Improving accessibility requires a long-term commitment to change many of our educational ideas and practices. The challenge is to create an atmosphere in which information about all aspects of the University is freely given and thoroughly discussed to ensure a consensus on our priorities and their effective implementation.

2. UNIVERSITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY IN THE 1980s

Improving accessibility to university for non-traditional students is one of the most controversial issues confronting post-secondary institutions in Canada today. Discussions and debates on the subject are often as confusing as they are endless. Few people can agree on who actually falls into the category of non-traditional students. Many believe that admitting these students, whoever they might be, into university will lower academic standards, increase the workload of faculty and other staff, and drain the already strained resources of institutions into new and costly academic programming and student services. These concerns are not unfounded because access initiatives in the 1970s often were income driven: they attracted students and their tuition fees to the universities during times of declining enrolments. Unfortunately, the memories of the revolving door recruitment practices and department store approaches to curriculum development that characterized many of those earlier accessibility initiatives continue to raise fears among those concerned with the quality of university education.

The weaknesses of earlier programs should not deflect our attention from the need to improve access to Canadian universities. Universities in Canada have historically drawn their students from a narrow population base. The most financially advantaged in our society remain significantly over-represented in our publicly financed universities and continue to enjoy the significant economic and social benefits of a university degree. Increasing educational costs for students and changing entrance requirements are exacerbating this situation and, in the coming years, unless universities are willing to reconsider their policies toward access, they may find themselves forced to do so by governments and community pressure. For example, a Statistics Canada Labour Force (1987) report shows the following labour force participation rates by educational attainment: high school--67.3%; some postsecondary--73.8%; postsecondary certificate or diploma--79.6%; university degree--84.4%. Related statistics in this study show the following unemployment rates: high school--10.5%; some postsecondary--8.2%; postsecondary certificate or diploma--6.1%; university degree--4.3%. In an era where rapid internationalization and technological change requires well-educated and adaptive workers, pressures on universities to consider more restrictive entrance requirements and increase the cost of education may be counterproductive.

Government under-funding of the Canadian university system is partly, but not totally, to blame for this trend towards restricted access. Universities are reluctant to launch new programs and expand student services in a climate of financial uncertainty. In fact, many universities fear that continued underfunding is already jeopardizing their core programming. On the other hand, simply increasing the level of funding to universities will not guarantee greater accessibility, especially when retention and graduation of non-traditional students is the measure of a successful program. Many practices of our universities must change if improved accessibility is to occur.

In the 1980s, many university leaders retreated from the accessibility issue. Rather than concentrating on the detrimental effects of government under-funding for accessibility in order to secure public support for post secondary education, universities competed among themselves for limited corporate funds. This response to the funding crisis created new problems for our universities, because corporate funds cannot compensate for inadequate government funding. First, corporations are unwilling or unable to provide the funds universities require for their general operations; and secondly, the monies that have been made available are unevenly distributed among universities, and usually targeted for specific projects and programs. Consequently, within universities we are witnessing the creation of "have and have not faculties," and possibly the emergence of a tiered university system, similar to that of the United States.

Understandably, corporations have clear objectives for the money they give to universities, and universities should be prepared to work with them on specific projects. But universities cannot pretend that such monies address the chronic under-funding of the post secondary system.

Education in Canada: A Statistical Review for 1987-88 shows 23.4% of Canadians have graduated from postsecondary institutions, and of these graduates, 11% have completed university. By comparison, approximately 25% of the U.S. work force are college graduates (Issues and Options, p. 15). According to the One Third of a Nation (1988) report by the Commission on Minority Participation in Education and American Life, postsecondary participation rates of students under the age of 24 in 1985 were approximately 53% within the white population, 44% among blacks, 47% among Hispanics, and 17% among American Indians. In Canada, Education in Canada records that the postsecondary participation rate of the population in the 18-24 age group in 1985-86 was 25.2%; in 1987-88, it was 27.3%. In Manitoba, the postsecondary participation rate of the population in the 18-24 age group in 1985-86 was 18.4%; in 1987-88, it was 18.7%. In Canada, the university participation rate of the 18-24 age group in 1987-88 was 16.5%, and in Manitoba, it was 15.7%. Although more comprehensive and detailed research concerning the social and economic development implications of these participation rates must be undertaken, these figures suggest how relatively low levels of participation and graduation in postsecondary education may disadvantage Manitobans and Canadians when we attempt to meet and respond to the intellectual requirements of the future.

Inadequate funding is a particularly relevant issue for Manitoba universities. Our province has one of the lowest university participation rates in the country. Manitoba universities need to develop community support for their appeals for improved government funding. In this report, we have identified changes in The University of Winnipeg's academic programs and student services that will demonstrate our commitment to access.

3. ACCESSIBILITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

3.1 A Tradition of Community Involvement

The University of Winnipeg has a tradition of community involvement that originated with the first years of United College. Our identification with the community in the past, has always been combined with a commitment to provide our students with a well-rounded undergraduate education. If we are to improve accessibility at the University, our commitment to these traditions will have to be renewed and strengthened.

Our emphasis on undergraduate education, our size, and our central location makes us ideally situated to combine excellence in education and accessibility. Such an emphasis would firmly root us in the community and provide us with a regional and national distinctiveness in postsecondary education. As well, an accessibility orientation has numerous, more immediate advantages for the University. The proposals we present in this report would allow for a more stable enrolment pattern and facilitate long-term academic and financial planning. Consequently, we stress throughout the report that the changes we are suggesting to improve accessibility are proven good educational practices that will enhance the quality of education for all students.

3.2 Recent Developments In Academic Programming

The University has taken tentative, but significant, steps towards accessibility by increasingly adopting a developmental approach to education. A developmental system designed to improve significantly the academic capacities of all students entering the University shifts the focus of the standards debate from entrance requirements to exit or graduation requirements.

The University of Winnipeg's Writing Program is an example of a developmental approach to education. It is a diagnostic program that is enhancing the expressive writing and critical thinking skills of all our students. The experience of the Writing Program already has prompted the University to consider a broad range of English language development issues that exist in our present student population. Progress has been made in the last year in these areas through modifications in the program and new courses offered through Continuing Education. But this new programming for Aboriginal students, for whom English may be a variety of non-standard English, and for some immigrant and non-English ethnic students, for whom English is a second language, will have to be expanded just to meet the existing needs. Improved language programming is also vital to the success of future accessibility initiatives. We are fortunate that within the faculty and staff of the University, considerable expertise is available on English language development, on which the University can draw for future developments in this area.

The University has also implemented a program for high school students with averages between 50 and 60 percent that involves the Writing Program and careful academic advising. The University has made significant strides towards improved accessibility for disabled persons, especially through the appointment of a Coordinator of Services for Students with Special Needs and the development of the Nathan Micay Learning Resource Centre. As Margaret Unruh, of the Office of the Dean of Arts and Science, reported to the Task Force, the University has "exhibited a commitment to physical accessibility" for the disabled. Renovations have made our existing facilities accessible, and new facilities are designed to meet the needs of disabled persons. Furthermore, Unruh commented that the University has "a positive image with respect to services for disabled students... these students receive integrated student advising and have access to a wide variety of services, which are coordinated through the Dean's Office."

These and other initiatives indicate an increasing orientation of The University of Winnipeg toward greater accessibility through integrated and developmental educational processes. We particularly were excited, over the past two years, by the sense that our deliberations were contributing to these developments by offering encouragement to those already concerned about these issues and by assisting others just beginning to integrate access ideas into their daily responsibilities.

3.3 The Faculty and Accessibility

Faculty on the Task Force and its subcommittees and those many faculty members who made their views known to the Task Force through written or oral submissions and through less formal means, such as conversation over coffee, expressed a genuine interest in improving accessibility to The University of Winnipeg. But their enthusiasm was inevitably tempered by concerns about the academic and financial cost of such a shift in direction for the institution.

These concerns were effectively and thoroughly raised in oral and written submissions to the Task Force by Ed Byard when he was President of The University of Winnipeg Faculty Association (U.W.F.A.). He cautioned the Task Force about recommending costly new programs at a time when the University is already hard-pressed to maintain its present programming. The effect on faculty workloads was another concern voiced, as was the fear that faculty salaries, already lower than those

at the other provincial universities, would be adversely affected if scarce resources were directed towards accessibility. Finally, the Task Force was asked to speculate on the effects of accessibility on research opportunities.

The Task Force has systematically tried to address these issues throughout its deliberations. This report recognizes the central role that the faculty must play in this process of change. Whenever possible, we have tried to identify the implications of those changes for faculty and students. Costs associated with our ideas, as well as possible funding sources, are presented whenever possible. However, we wish to stress that accessibility requires a reorientation and reallocation of resources within the institution over time.

For example, departmental retirements offer opportunities to reallocate a portion of the salaries saved to other academic purposes. Over a five to ten year period this shift would help the development of programs which have significant access potential. However, such changes must only be initiated after a thorough discussion in which the faculty has a central role. However, a thorough discussion of this issue and an open budgetary process are essential if faculty is to be convinced of the wisdom and fairness of the reallocation of funds. Finally, access does not imply that faculty will be required to give less attention to their research. When an institution's resources are made available in an intelligent and reasonable manner to those traditionally excluded from them, the intellectual life of and the working conditions within the institution improve. The record in this regard is unnecessarily sullied by institutions that use "accessibility" simply as a method of boosting enrolments during times of financial distress caused by inadequate government funding.

3.4 The University Administration and Accessibility

We are pleased with the interest and support the administrators have shown towards the Task Force. Their financial support of our work has permitted a thorough study of accessibility issues. As well, they have shown a keen interest in our deliberations and have always been available for consultation with us and the community. If improved access is to become a reality at the University, their leadership within discussions on the access-related issues outlined in this report is essential.

4. UNIVERSITY LIFE AND CULTURE: THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY

4.1 The Identification of Access Populations

Although Aboriginal persons in Winnipeg, the most rapidly growing segment of the city's population, already constitute approximately sixteen percent of the population, fewer than one percent of our students are of aboriginal descent. Furthermore, the participation in university of working-class men and women from areas of the city like Transcona is lower than that of Aboriginal people. Other evidence supports the arguments of many immigrant and ethnic groups that universities are, for all practical purposes, closed to them.

We should not be surprised, however, if our initial approaches to these groups and communities are met with some scepticism. Aboriginal educators support improved access to university for their people, but have understandable concerns about placing students in white, middle-class institutions that have rarely been sensitive to Aboriginal issues and have not promoted the expression of Aboriginal cultures. Similarly, ethnic and immigrant groups, with few exceptions, have not found our universities open to them. Their languages and cultures have traditionally been treated as problems to be overcome rather than as resources that could benefit the entire institution. The white working-class and rural populations are culturally removed from university and they seldom consider it as an option for themselves. Thus, many people who support universities through their taxes have little access to them.

4.2 University Culture

The University of Winnipeg, like other universities, is a predominantly white, middle-class, and, in terms of the faculty, male institution. Our programs, the demographics of our faculty, staff, and students, and our pedagogical and curricular assumptions and practices reflect this reality. For example, males dominate the senior positions in the faculty and administration, and the University has no full-time, Aboriginal tenured faculty members teaching in its programs. In fact, to the best of our knowledge, there are only two Aboriginal persons employed full-time in our entire complement of academic support services and faculty. Our record of hiring from among most immigrant and ethnic groups is, at best, marginally better than that for aboriginal people.

We raise these issues of gender, class, and culture because they shape the University's perspective on accessibility. For example, statements about the level of academic preparedness of students which are usually couched in objective-sounding measurements of students' intellectual ability and preparedness are, in reality, all too often a measure of their class and culture.

Persons of Aboriginal, and immigrant and ethnic origins are often "successful" in university only to the degree that they acculturate to the institutional norms of personal and academic behaviour. The best they can hope for is to develop coping strategies that will somehow allow them to struggle through university by temporarily separating their cultural selves from the academic world. As Bill Thomas, Superintendent of the Peguis School Board, commented, the University will have made a real breakthrough in recognizing other cultures when Aboriginal people feel free to express themselves culturally on campus. A commitment by the University to address these gender, class, and cultural assumptions and practices that guide our activities is fundamental to improving access to, and the quality of, our educational programming.

Attention to institutional culture can help the University to become more successful in graduating our existing non-traditional students, and more accessible to larger numbers of their communities. Apart from our specific recommendations on student services, curriculum, and teaching, we wish to suggest initiatives that will improve their general university experience. For example, Cross-Cultural Awareness workshops to make all of us more aware of the effect of cultural differences on student participation in university should be an institutional priority. (See Recommendations on Curriculum and Teaching for a more extended discussion of this proposal). If these initiatives are adopted, all members of the University stand to benefit. Our hope is for a university that becomes increasingly appreciative of different cultures.

4.3 Policies on Racism and Sexism

The University must have an effective and systematic method for raising complaints of sexist and racist behaviour. Complaints about sexual harassment and other sexist behaviour are known to most of us. Incidents of racism have occurred, as discussed in Dean McIntyre's Letter to the University community, 1987, and, we believe, continue to occur at the University. The Aboriginal Student Advisor observed that "while universities may be viewed as 'open minded' by the general public as well as places without racism or discrimination, Aboriginal students of The University of Winnipeg have experienced the opposite. They have been to forced to deal with the problem in the classroom, from security personnel and cleaning personnel, as well as from individuals in the general University community. For example, the worst scenario is having to advise Aboriginal students to carry their student I.D. at all times, not because they may need to take out a library book but so they won't get thrown out of the University." Furthermore, Aboriginal students who do well in their courses have found themselves subject to subtle

charges of plagiarism because aboriginal students are not expected to do well. The goal of the University should be to create an environment in which racist and sexist behaviours have no place.

Recommendation #1: Policy on Racism and Sexism

The University must establish and publicize a clear policy on what constitutes racist and sexist behaviour, identify the consequences for faculty, staff or students judged to have engaged in such practices, and provide an accessible and fair forum in which to raise such allegations.

This recommendation should be directed to The Board of Regents which is revising University policy on these matters. We consider the drafting of this policy an urgent priority for the University.

4.4 Community Involvement in University

The University must ensure that its policies and practices are sensitive to community needs. Community educational leaders should be invited to assist the University in identifying key cultural supports that might improve the university experience for groups of non-traditional students. For example, Judge Murray Sinclair, a University of Winnipeg graduate, observed in his presentation to the Task Force that aboriginal students are constantly attempting to reconcile contemporary experiences, like university education, with traditional beliefs and cultures. In his judgement, they must be taught to achieve a balance in their lives. Elders can play an important role in this process, and Judge Sinclair recommended that the University should draw upon their assistance in counselling and advising Aboriginal students.

The idea that the broadly defined cultural practices of the university system are hostile to non-traditional students is supported by extensive research in Canada and the United States. This evidence was reinforced for us in our consultations with the community. Every person with whom we spoke identified universities as hostile cultural and social environments for non-traditional students.

Recommendation #2: Creation of A Community Council

The University should immediately establish a permanent Community Council of Aboriginal, disabled, and ethnic and immigrant educators to ensure that University policies and practices are sensitive to community needs. The Community Council must have significant status within the University to be effective. Therefore, the President or her designate should chair the Community Council. Consideration should be given to the participation of Community Council members on the Board of Regents, Senate, and FCAS committees.

This recommendation should be referred to the Senate to prepare a proposal for examination by members of the University and the community.

4.5 Hiring Policy

The University must improve the representation of women and non-traditional university populations within its workforce, especially in the faculty. Such an initiative is necessary for several reasons: first, it provides students with role models; secondly, these persons would bring new perspectives to the development of programming; and, thirdly, it demonstrates our commitment to accessibility to the community.

We are concerned that the Ph.D., essentially a research degree, has become the primary determinant for the hiring of permanent faculty. Women and members of non-traditional university populations continue to be under-represented in most graduate faculties, and therefore, the insistence on the Ph.D. as a condition of hiring means that the situation here is unlikely to change in the near future. Other qualifications, such as experience in community teaching, should be considered, where appropriate, when recruiting new faculty. In the United States, some colleges, concerned by the absence of minorities in their faculty, have developed projects that sponsor promising students through graduate programs in exchange for a commitment from the student to teach at the sponsoring college for a specified time.

Recommendation #3: Alternative Hiring Practices

An affirmative action program and other hiring practices that would improve representation of persons with non-traditional university backgrounds should be options seriously considered by the University.

This recommendation should be referred to the Board of Regents, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, the U.W.F.A., A.E.S.E.S., and I.U.O.E. for action.

4.6 The Approachable University

Dudley Thompson, a Winnipeg architect interested in integrating institutions into their local surroundings, was invited to appear before the Task Force. He commented that the dominant image in our society of universities as big, unapproachable institutions is reinforced by their physical presentation of themselves. They separate themselves from the local community. Despite its central location in the city, The University of Winnipeg has created this impression. The Athletic Centre is an architectural barrier along Ellice and another wall exists along Balmoral. Therefore, there is limited access to the University from its perimeters. Thompson suggested that the University should integrate itself more effectively into the surrounding neighbourhoods. This would build community identification with the University, he argued, and help to stabilize these neighbourhoods.

He recommended that the University approach Aboriginal, ethnic, immigrant, and other community organizations to meet with local residents and business people to develop plans for Aboriginal and Multicultural College Houses in the area. The associations would own and control the colleges/houses, which would contain a seminar/meeting room, several offices, and perhaps residence space for several students (eg. Aboriginals from northern communities) or visitors. These colleges/houses would serve as cultural centres within the University and be involved in academic programming. Thompson speculated that the City of Winnipeg and government agencies would find this idea attractive and be prepared to assist financially organizations initiating such projects.

We think that these ideas have considerable merit. Accessibility for the disabled to these colleges/cultural houses, though, would be essential. Renovations would have to meet accessibility standards and consideration would have to be given to the problems disabled students on the main campus might incur travelling to these locations.

Recommendation #4: Aboriginal-Multicultural Houses

The University should pursue the idea of developing community owned and operated cultural and educational centres in cooperation with the Community Council when it is established.

5. OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING STUDENT SERVICES

5.1 Accessibility and Student Services

Post-secondary populations are becoming increasingly complex. More women, adults, sole support parents, persons with physical and learning disabilities, and people from disadvantaged classes, ethnic, and racial groups are arriving on our campus. Many are studying on a part-time basis (over one-half at The University of Winnipeg) thus combining school, jobs, and family responsibilities. The University of Winnipeg, like other universities, must become more responsive to these students with diverse backgrounds, personal circumstances and readiness levels. The growing demands placed on institutions by these demographic changes will require higher degrees of flexibility and adaptability on our part, if we are to foster our students' intellectual and personal growth. Indeed, the situation at the University is such that even if we decided to take no further steps towards accessibility, changes must still be implemented to help improve retention and the education that our students receive.

Most high school and mature students find the institution of a university a forbidding place. Students from groups normally under-represented in university often find a university daunting. We need to understand the sources of these feelings and address them as early on in the process of contact with the University as is possible.

We are impressed by the commitment of our academic support staff who are already trying to achieve these goals with limited resources. They are partners with the faculty and students in the educational process and, therefore, should be encouraged through improved career opportunities to remain at the University.

5.2 Responsibilities of Student Service Personnel

As a context for our recommendations in this section of the report, we wish to present what we consider to be the responsibilities of student services personnel: 1) identifying and recruiting students; 2) providing accurate and readily available information about our academic programs and opportunities; 3) registering students in an efficient and caring manner; 4) establishing advising systems that are sensitive to demographic and cultural characteristics of our student body; 5) coordinating academic advising systems at both institutional and departmental levels; 6) offering personal and vocational counselling; 7) developing our health services program; 8) providing information on the costs of a university education and on available financial assistance; 9) providing learning skills programs; 10) ensuring that all programs and policy decisions are informed by research on and about our students; and 11) coordinating special needs educational services.

Currently, student services are provided through a number of offices (for example, Admissions, Records, Counselling, and Academic Advising in the Dean's Office, and the B.Ed. program) that report either to the Dean of Arts and Science or the V.P. (Academic). In addition, Computer Services provides information for these offices, but reports to the V.P.(Administration). This structure often means that decisions taken in one area may not be known by others who will be affected by them. Often persons working in these different areas will duplicate work or be unclear as to who has the responsibility for making a particular decision.

5.3 Restructuring Student Services

After extensive research and extensive consultation with those interested in our student services, we have concluded that a significant restructuring of our student services is required to ensure that these responsibilities are conducted in an effective and efficient manner. Our objective is to propose an integrated student services structure that fosters communication among all those involved in student services.

The following responsibilities should be incorporated into a single administrative unit of student services coordinated by and under the authority of a single individual:

Recommendation #5: Dean of Students

A position entitled the Dean of Student Services should be created.

Recommendation #6: Responsibilities of the Dean of Student Services

The Dean of Student Services should be responsible for the following operations within the University:

1. Access Recruitment
2. Traditional Recruitment
3. Admissions
4. Records
5. Counselling
6. Health Services
7. Awards and Financial Aid
8. Academic Advising
9. Special Needs Advising
10. B.Ed. Advising
11. Chaplains

Recommendation #7: Academic Advising

The functions of Aboriginal Student Advising, Mature Student Advising, and Special Needs Advising should become part of our Academic Advising unit in order to better co-ordinate services for our students.

Recommendation #8: Study Skills

Study Skills should be separated from Counselling. (See Recommendations On Curriculum concerning study skills programming for entering students).

Recommendation #9: Financing the Office of the Dean of Student Services

Funding of the new position of Dean of Students and the operation of this Office should be accomplished by reallocation of resources from the Offices of the Vice-President (Academic) and the Dean of Arts and Science. (Given that nine of the components of the proposed integrated structure are presently under the authority of the Vice-President (Academic), it follows that a significant portion of that Office's resources could be shifted to this new structure. Resources of the Dean of Arts and Science associated with the positions of Associate Dean (Students) and the Academic Advisors would be transferred to the Dean of Students.)

Recommendation #10: Centralized Student Services

Student Services should be centralized in one location on campus, possibly on the third floor of Centennial Hall. This will alleviate the present confusion for students trying to locate these services and simplify the co-ordination of staff. It may also introduce efficiencies which will help to control the costs of these services.

Recommendation #11: Senate Committee on Student Services

A Senate Standing Committee on Student Services should be created to facilitate the coordination and integration of student services with our academic programming. All academic decisions affect student services and these are made by Senate. In addition, if the integrated structure for Student Services is adopted, it is essential that members of the Offices of the Dean of Arts and Science, V.P.(Academic), and V.P.(Administration) serve on the committee.

Recommendations #5-11 should be referred as a package to the Senate, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, the U.W.F.A., the U.W.S.A., and A.E.S.E.S. We consider these to be priority recommendations requiring immediate action.

5.4 Admissions Policy: Towards Diversity and Equity

Accessibility is fundamentally concerned with how students enter the University, and with how, once admitted, we can maximize their success. Currently, most students who enter The University of Winnipeg do so on either Regular Status or Mature Status. Regular Status students must successfully complete a certain cohort of designated "university entrance" subjects with a minimum average of 60%; students whose averages are below 60% on the same courses are admitted on a Conditional Status. Mature Status admission is open to students of at least 21 years of age who do not meet Regular Status requirements but who meet conditions outlined in the University Calendar.

The purpose of these requirements is to gauge in some way the academic preparedness, maturity, and motivation of prospective students. The University of Winnipeg has acknowledged for some time that they are inexact measures at best. Studies by John Friesen, former University of Winnipeg Director of Admissions, and by the University of Saskatchewan Issues and Options: Accessibility report (1989), document clearly that increases in the minimum high school average required for university admission do not result in significant increases in the "success" rates of first-year students and, in fact, serve to refuse admission to many students who could do well in university.

Further study of the relationship between high school grades and achievement in university is needed before a more definitive approach to this problem is determined. Growing evidence in Canada and the United States suggests to us that high school marks are an inadequate measure of a student's potential to do well in university. Therefore, an admissions policy that does not rely solely or even primarily on high school performance should be considered as an option for students seeking admission to the University.

Many models for alternative admissions procedures exist, but few universities in Canada have pursued them. The strength of these alternatives is their holistic approach to a student's intellectual life. Life experience, as well as more traditional academic measures, can be considered as part of the application process. Interviewing applicants and receiving written work from them is a standard practice of many colleges and governmental agencies. The Manitoba Department of Education, Post Secondary Career Development Branch has pioneered this process in Canada, and we could draw on their expertise. Our B.Ed. Program already practices an admissions procedure that includes receiving written statements from and interviewing prospective students.

Pursuing alternative admissions policies is essential to the success of accessibility initiatives. However, this is not solely an access issue. An admissions process for all students that gives us a better understanding of their academic achievement, interests, and experiences would help us in the design of our academic programs and student services. Students would benefit from the better understanding of the University that this procedure would involve.

Such changes to our admissions policies should be seen as a gradual process, primarily because we would be moving into largely uncharted waters for Canadian universities. It is difficult to anticipate the financial costs and staffing requirements of this change. Carefully monitored pilot projects with the high schools and community groups would be a logical first step in this direction.

Recommendation #12: Alternative Admissions Policies

The University should investigate alternative admissions policies and, on the basis of this study, approach the high schools and community organizations to develop cooperative pilot projects for regular and mature students. Writing samples, references from teachers and community leaders, resumes, and student interviews should be used to evaluate students' university preparedness levels.

This recommendation should be referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Admissions and Registration to investigate alternative admissions procedures.

5.5 Recruitment: Managing Enrolments to Improve Access

We must begin to identify high school students and adult learners who recognize the value and importance of the educational and cultural opportunities we are creating for them at The University of Winnipeg. We must intensify our efforts to meet with students through high school visits, the general distribution of information on the University, and the co-ordination of school trips and open houses at the University. The recent deliberations of the President's Committee on Recruitment and the appointment of Monica Wood and Mario Jimenez to coordinate recruitment is recognition by the University of the importance of this activity. This recruitment is primarily directed at those who have already made a decision to attend university; the problem for them is which one.

Traditional recruitment practices must be complemented with new and different strategies if we hope to attract non-traditional students to the University. We believe the most effective approach is one which involves the University working closely with high schools and community organizations.

Admitting non-traditional students by waiving regular admission standards is detrimental to the students and the institution. Students admitted under such circumstances are more likely to leave before the completion of their programs, and the academic reputation of the University declines in the community. In Manitoba, an impressive variety of special studies programs for high school graduates and adult learners of non-traditional backgrounds, which integrate developmental course work with University credit courses, have been developed by the Department of Education Post Secondary Career Development Branch, Brandon University, and the University of Manitoba. In fact, the province has been recognized in Canada as a pioneer in the development of such programs. We fully endorse such programs as the Winnipeg Education Centre and BUNTEP, and encourage all educators to urge the provincial government to continue to support them. Special bridge and remedial programs for adult learners are necessary, but expensive, methods to compensate for educational opportunities that should have been available in high school.

5.6 Early Awareness Programs: Public Schools, Community Organizations, and the University of Winnipeg

Early Awareness programming is an alternative approach to accessibility. These outreach initiatives involve the universities, schools, and parents of non-traditional university children in long-term projects that address the cultural, social, economic, and academic barriers that limit their participation in postsecondary education. An expanding body of research, based upon hundreds of experimental projects mostly in the United States, suggests that Early Awareness programs are an effective way in which non-traditional students can be prepared for university. It is in this dimension of programming, we believe, that The University of Winnipeg can make its most important contribution to accessibility in Manitoba.

Early Awareness programs focus on students entering junior high school, or even earlier in their education. They use the high school years to prepare, academically and otherwise, non-traditional students for university. The design, implementation and evaluation of these projects are undertaken co-operatively by schools, universities, parents, and sometimes community organizations. Although these programs are designed to meet the varying cultural and educational needs of those involved, most include special academic preparation (including linguistic needs), orientation to university life, assistance with financial planning, and career counselling.

We have discussed the concept of Early Awareness programs with many school and community educators. They are enthusiastic about such programming and are anxious to join with us in the development of such innovative programming. John Wiens, Superintendent of the Seven Oaks School Division, has established a working group to explore with the University possibilities for Early Awareness programming in Seven Oaks Division. Elmwood High School, which has a multicultural student population, has expressed a similar interest in such programming.

We believe that carefully designed and monitored programs of this nature are potentially self-supporting because of their interest to educational foundations and government agencies. Furthermore, significant community involvement in the programs may lead to the creation of special scholarships, bursaries, internships, employment opportunities, and other forms of financial support for students.

Recommendation #13: Early Awareness Programs

Early Awareness Programming should be identified as an essential dimension of the University's approach to accessibility.

Recommendation #14: Early Awareness Project Group

The University should establish immediately an Early Awareness Group to develop programs with interested schools and community organizations.

Recommendation #15: Consultation with High Schools

The Early Awareness Project Group should be instructed, when it is established, to develop pilot programs with Seven Oaks School Division and Elmwood High School. The Peguis Reserve School and the Island Lake Band Council with whom the Task Force discussed accessibility should be asked to consider creating similar programs.

It is expected that the Offices of the Deans of Student Services, Arts and Science, and Continuing Education would participate in the Early Awareness Project Group. The Education program has much to contribute to such programming and, therefore, should be involved in the planning group. Finally, interested faculty should be invited to join the Early Awareness Project Group.

Recommendations #13 - 15 should be referred to the Senate and the Offices identified above for comment.

5.7 Adult Learners and Student Services: Special Considerations

While not all adult learners are non-traditional students, they all face similar problems when returning to school. The transition to university life is often more difficult for adult learners than for those entering university directly from high school. First, most have job and family responsibilities that affect the time they have to concentrate on their studies. Second, many are ill-at-ease with the thought of returning to school, often after an extended absence, and finding themselves surrounded by a younger, full-time student population.

The Mature Students' Association identified these problems in their presentation to us and their concerns are supported by Dr. Charlene Thacker's research on women adult learners at The University of Winnipeg. Often these students "fall through the cracks" in the university system because they do not carry what is currently considered to be a full course load and have less time to spend on campus than other students. In fact, many are restricted to spending evenings and weekends on campus, and therefore, they may not have access to the full range of courses and services provided to our day students. As well, financial problems are often more acute for them than for other students. Consequently, the dropout rate among mature students is higher than among other students. On the other hand, the adult learners who survive the transition tend to do as well as or better than other students. This success should be an incentive for the University to retain our adult learners by recognizing their special circumstances.

Recommendation #16: Committee on Adult and Part-Time Learners

The Senate should establish a Standing committee on Adult Learners and Part-time Students to identify and coordinate the academic and support services required to improve the situation for adult and part-time learners.

The Mature Students' Association of the U.W.S.A., and others representing mature and part-time learners should be represented on this Committee. The Committee should consider expanding evening course offerings and possibly developing a weekend curriculum. It should also ensure that resources provided to our full-time day students are available on an equitable basis to mature and part-time learners. A careful evaluation of the financial implications of these proposals would be a further responsibility of the Committee.

This recommendation should be referred for action to the Senate and the U.W.S.A.

5.8 Academic Advising and Counselling

Academic advising is a good educational practice that benefits all students when universalized throughout the University. Academic advising (assessing a student's needs, assisting in the design of a student's program, monitoring her or his progress, etc.) is known to reduce institutional dropout and failure rates. Access students need careful academic advising, and when it is offered as an integrated program involving non-traditional and traditional students, everyone benefits. An integrated Student Services structure within the University will enhance our ability to provide consistent, focused support to all students. Good advising improves retention rates and contributes to an improvement in the academic performance of all students. Therefore, expanded academic advising should be a priority concern of the University.

Academic advising should not be confused with student counselling. Counsellors assist students facing a personal crisis in their lives that may not be related directly to their education, but which nevertheless may have serious implications for their academic performance. Personal counselling is an essential component of our Student Services.

Recommendation #17: Expanded Student Advising

The advising system should be expanded to ensure a minimum of one meeting each academic term between a student and her or his advisor until the student has completed successfully a minimum of six Full Course Equivalents.

This system will allow the advisor to monitor student progress and develop a relationship with the student so that if non-academic problems arise, they can be quickly identified and resolved. The advisors especially will ensure that Access students receive the extensive academic and other supports, such as study skills, they require during the first year or two of study.

Recommendation #18: Academic Advisers

This more extensive advising should be done by a core of specialists in academic advising and a group of committed faculty who would be compensated by a stipend or a reduction in their teaching or research commitments.

Recommendation #19: Extension of Major Advising

Major advising should be extended to all programs and departments and integrated with the new advising system to ensure an adequate level of advising for students through to the completion of their programs.

Recommendations #18 and #19 should be referred for action to the Senate and the Offices of the Deans of Arts and Science and Continuing Education.

Recommendation #20: Effective Orientation Programs

More extensive orientations, differentiated according to the specific needs of students, should be developed. Orientations for all entering students, including access groups, should be as much as a week long and should include not only information on rules and procedures but also the values, culture and content of university life. An introduction to the non-academic aspects of university life, intramural sports and campus clubs, for example, should be part of the orientations. Similar orientations should be put in place for academic sessions other than the September-April Session.

This recommendation should be forwarded to the Senate, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, and the U.W.S.A.

5.9 Student Financial Assistance and Accessibility

The financial barrier is one of the most significant barriers to the attainment of a university education. Information on the costs of a university education and on available assistance should be part of all recruitment information and presentations.

The Manitoba Student Aid Program (Canada Student Loans, Manitoba Government Bursaries) will remain the principal source of financial assistance for the majority of students, but resources from other funding sources (e.g. Federal Funding for Aboriginal Students) should also be investigated. Students and their families must be fully informed about their eligibility for Student Aid, and their responsibilities in terms of such factors as minimum course load, academic progress, expected summer earnings and family contribution. The University should, however, introduce several supplementary sources of assistance.

Recommendation #21: Work Study and Related Initiatives

The University should consider the development of a work study program on campus. This would make campus jobs available first of all to students with financial need, primarily in cases where resources expected by Student Aid do not, in fact, exist.

In several provinces, work study programs are completely or partially funded by provincial governments and are part of the "mix" of available Student Aid. Together with the other major provincial postsecondary institutions, The University of Winnipeg should lobby the provincial government to add work study to its student assistance package and to incorporate it in a way which would reduce student debt.

Recommendation #22: Special Access Bursaries and Scholarships

The University should consider establishing a fund which will fully support several access students. Such a fund would acknowledge the extra time it often takes access students to complete a degree and would spare students the necessity of taking out student loans.

This fund could be operated cooperatively with community groups who might sponsor specific students and provide them with guaranteed summer employment or a "work term." The University should also consider expanding its more traditional cooperative education programs.

Recommendations #21 and 22 should be forwarded for study to the Vice-President (Academic) who is responsible for the Awards and Financial Aid Office, and to the U.W.S.A.

Recommendation #23: Expanded Child Care Services

Child Care services should be expanded and should include weekend and evening care to allow parents to enrol in evening courses and study on the weekend. Consideration should be given to providing free care as a part of our Access bursary and scholarship programs.

This recommendation should be forwarded to the Vice-President (Academic) who is responsible for the Infant and Preschool Centres, and to the U.W.S.A. which operates the Day Care Centre, for the development of a proposal.

5.10 Coordination of Institutional and Educational Research

The Task Force discovered early in its deliberations that institutional statistics vital to our work are either unavailable or difficult to access. Many universities routinely provide their staff and the community with annual compilations on the state of the university. Demographic profiles of the student populations, material on enrolments (full-time, part-time, by faculty and departments, variations by sessions, etc.), financial information, and faculty/staff profiles are examples of some of the statistical information that would help the administration, faculty, and staff plan its programming. For example, as Dawn Rittberg, Biology, a member of the Subcommittee on Curriculum and Teaching, observed "in order to evaluate the effectiveness of many of the innovative ideas and pedagogies proposed by this committee and by other concerned individuals and constituencies, it is critical and mandatory that the faculty and the institution have a valid and complete data base from which to work. This data base is currently not available..." (Rittberg, "Student Attrition and Retention Rates").

Recommendation #24: Institutional Statistics

The University should begin immediately to compile and publish an Institutional Statistics Book for distribution among interested faculty, staff, and members of the community.

This need not be an expensive proposition. Much of the information is already being collected and merely requires a staff person, probably on a part-time basis, to co-ordinate its compilation and publication. The preparation of this material should be part of a greater effort to co-ordinate and expand our interest in postsecondary education. Many members of our administration, faculty, and staff are engaged in studies of various aspects of university education. These studies range in interest from explorations of who attends the university to the quality of the education (teaching, curriculum, services provided, etc.) they receive once here. The University should encourage this research on undergraduate university education, which is valuable to the University and others interested in postsecondary education in Canada. The issues we are exploring at The University of Winnipeg on accessibility, retention, teaching, curriculum, governance, finances, and student services are part of a national, indeed, international debate about the future of postsecondary education.

Recommendation #25: Committee on Educational Research

The University should establish a Standing Committee on Educational Research, composed of representatives from the faculty, staff, students, and administration. The committee would co-ordinate and assist in any way possible, including securing funding, research and discussion on educational issues through public seminars, presentations, publications, and other appropriate means.

This recommendation should be directed to the Chair of the Senate Academic Development Committee.

6. CURRICULUM, TEACHING, AND SCHOLARSHIP: STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The Task Force examined issues of curriculum development and teaching from the perspective that academic quality and accessibility are compatible values we must bring to our understanding of excellence in postsecondary education. Our recommendations regarding the improvement of our academic programs, we believe, are a starting point for meeting the educational needs of our present and future, traditional and non-traditional students.

In developing our proposals, we have been guided by the invaluable advice provided by Claudia Wright, Political Science, a member of the Subcommittee on Curriculum and Teaching, in one of her submissions to the Task Force: "It is imperative that the attempts to increase the participation of persons who have been disadvantaged not result in the establishment of additional barriers to full participation and integration into the University community. All students have the same 'student problems'. Some are at a minimum level and others are at a level of distinction. The nature of the needs of students ... should be the major determinant of the course that we take in order to fulfil our task as scholars and educators."

7. PROPOSALS ON CURRICULUM

7.1 Enhancing our Program for Entering Students

As we observed in the section on Student Services, the first year at university is probably the most critical one for most students. The first step toward meaningful accessibility is improving the present retention rate of our student population. Retention rates improve as students proceed into their second and subsequent years at university. Consequently, we believe that the University should take a number of curriculum related measures to ensure that all entering students (full-time, part-time, mature) have a reasonable opportunity to complete a program of study for which they will be awarded a degree. These measures also will increase the options open to them, especially in mathematics and the sciences. This is especially important for non-traditional students who tend to be under-represented in these disciplines.

Our first concern is that many students' inadequate preparation for first-year university study is a major barrier to their success. In order to rectify this serious problem for our students, we wish to make the following recommendations.

Recommendation #26: Co-ordination with the Secondary Schools

The University should explore the benefits for students at all levels in the educational system of coordinating our first year departments' and programs' academic requirements, curriculum design and teaching models with the Manitoba Secondary Education and Postsecondary Community College systems.

The University's faculty, administrators and staff involved in program and curriculum development must have improved opportunities to coordinate their work with individuals and groups within these systems who have professional expertise in specific areas, most notably English as a Second Language (ECL) education, aboriginal education, bilingual education, multicultural education, literacy education, adult education and training processes, alternative teaching methods, and applications software design.

This recommendation should be referred to the Early Awareness Group.

Recommendation #27: University Preparatory Course

The University should design a half-credit University Preparatory Course for students entering university for the first time. The course should afford students a comprehensive survey of all aspects of the University's academic requirements, orientation to its departments, programs and services, and instruction in basic skills, including time management, study skills, reading, writing, listening, speaking, note taking, multiple choice testing, essay testing, stress management, career planning, and cross-cultural awareness. The course should be available, through the Continuing Education Division, to those referred to it by their Academic Advisors, and to any other interested student.

This recommendation should be referred to Academic Development's Subcommittee on Four Year Degree and Core Curriculum.

Recommendation #28: Student Assessment Procedures

The University should begin universal diagnostic assessment of incoming students and design our programs and standards in the light of those assessments. In doing so, we should agree upon what basic standards of competency are acceptable for students' continuation and graduation. Our goal should be that, regardless of the length of time it takes any individual to graduate, all degrees granted have the same worth.

There are many methods for determining whether students have achieved the agreed upon basic competency. Our preference is assessment through developmental programs similar to the Writing Program and Portfolio Assessment done through the Advising system. We have serious reservations about the standardized testing procedures of some assessment programs because they are of little value to students and dangerous to faculty autonomy and academic freedom.

This recommendation should be referred to the Education Research Committee when it is established.

7.2 Language Development Programs for Entering Students

We are encouraged by the progress that has been made in English Language Development in the last year. Many members of the University are now recognizing the importance of this issue to the success of our students. For example, the English Language Development Subcommittee, appointed by the Senate Academic Development Committee last year, already has begun to address a broad range of language issues. However, in order to meet the needs of our current students and to enhance accessibility for non-traditional populations, we wish to make the following recommendation:

Recommendation #29: English Language Development Programming

Continuing Education, the Collegiate, and the Writing Program, should develop a sequence of non-credit and credit courses for students for whom English is a second language.

The main priorities in this process should be the following: comprehensive research and external consultation on program and curriculum development; the appointment to Continuing Education of a fulltime faculty member in ESL to develop and teach, on a permanent basis, credit and non-credit ESL and EAP courses; a well-designed version of the Developmental Rhetoric course to be offered to students for whom English is a second language; the expansion of ESL, EAP and Developmental Rhetoric courses' language instruction to include historical and cultural content; the appointment of a TESL/ESL faculty member to teach EAP and TESL Internships in the Writing Program; the allocation of appropriate advising, counselling, and teaching resources for students for whom English is a second language. Developing and maintaining these important programs will require financial resources beyond those presently available to the University.

Recommendation #30: Heritage Language Recognition

Our programs and assumptions regarding students for whom English is a second language should acknowledge their proficiency in one or more languages other than English, and offer credit for learning English just as credit is given for learning German, French, and Spanish. As part of this recognition, the University should establish a Heritage Language Recognition Program that documents on students' official transcripts their level of proficiency in languages other than English.

Recommendation #31: The Writing Program

The content of the Writing Program courses should be enhanced by linking sections and/or sequences to the curriculum and instruction of other courses in our first-year program (e.g. English, History, Philosophy).

We also urge that the Writing Program courses (Developmental Rhetoric, Rhetoric I and Rhetoric II) continue to be modified where necessary to ensure that our students' language development integrates writing skills and processes with significant reading, listening, and speaking components appropriate to university study.

Recommendations #29, #30 & #31 should be referred to Academic Development's Subcommittee on English Language Development.

7.3 Basic Courses in Maths and Sciences

The University should encourage an appreciation of Mathematics and the Sciences among students, and improve the program options for all students. Therefore, we wish to recommend the development of the following courses:

Recommendation #32: Basic Mathematics and Science Courses

i) Basic Mathematics Course

The University should promote the role of a Basic Mathematics course as a major developmental component within the first-year curriculum that would meet the needs of students with deficient numeracy skills, who may wish to pursue a B.Sc. or math program.

ii) General Science and Technology Course

The University should provide resources for the design and implementation of a first-year General Science and Technology Studies (half) course that would serve, in part, as a developmental component for the first-year Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses.

This recommendation should be directed to Academic Development's Subcommittee on Four Year Degree and Core Curriculum.

8. GENERAL CURRICULUM REVISIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY

The University should examine the assumptions and implications of its course and degree requirements regarding matters of gender, ethnicity, race, class, disability and sexual preference. The University must ensure that, while respecting academic freedom, sexism, racism and discrimination are not coincident with the delivery of education to our students. Furthermore, we must offer active and responsible educational leadership within the community by promoting the knowledge and development of alternative intellectual and cultural paradigms for our students.

Faculty and students should be encouraged to examine the range of subject matter introduced in the classroom in relationship to the plurality of cultural, social, economic, political, and technological

perspectives of our community. Such development with respect to the backgrounds and interests of women and Aboriginal students, for example, is particularly important for students taking courses in the Departments of Sociology, Anthropology, English, Education, and History. We believe that the changes which will result from such a universal review of what is taught in the University ultimately will prove more effective in this regard than simply the establishment of new programs in ethnic or Native studies, which we also would support.

The urgency of this collective examination was reinforced for us by many of the submissions we received. One Aboriginal person observed that "the notion of assimilation and the Christianization of Aboriginal people continues to play a large part in the lack of the success of Aboriginal students. In schools and universities, Aboriginal persons are embarrassed to sit in classrooms where the historical accounts of their history are slanted, biased, and confirming of everyone's belief that Aboriginal people have very little to offer or contribute to society."

Many faculty expressed their interest in pursuing this type of review, if it is designed to help them in planning and teaching their courses. Brent Stearns, Philosophy, commented in his submission that "the faculty needs some direction in how to increase effectiveness in dealing with representatives of non-Western cultures....but feel we do not even know whether introducing new courses (like Oriental Philosophy) would help were that a practical possibility. A relevant literature must be found and experts consulted. If ground-breaking work by others has not been done, we must do it ourselves. Experimental courses, sections, and modes of instruction could be tested."

Recommendation #33: University Curriculum Review Process

The University should establish a committee to assist departments and programs to review their curriculum. Departments should receive resources for this comprehensive review and revision of their programs and courses, with particular attention being given to the representation and orientation of course materials and assignments in matters of ethnicity, race, class, gender, and disability.

This recommendation should be referred to the Senate, Deans, the U.W.S.A., and all departments and programs.

Recommendation #34:

As part of this curriculum review process, we recommend that for the next several years faculty, students, and staff devote a significant proportion of the resources of our annual lecture series (Bonnycastle, Religion and Life Week, etc.), Visiting Lecturers Funds, etc., to the exploration of these curriculum and teaching related topics. Additional funding resources should be sought through community and government organizations.

For example, if it was agreed that for one year gender would be the focus of such concentrated investigation, then lectures, seminars, and workshops would identify the new scholarship on gender (recognizing that race, ethnicity, class, and gender are interrelated), and would explore how this material could be integrated into the curriculum across the Arts and Sciences. The community should be encouraged to participate in this process as much as possible. Curriculum cannot realistically be developed in isolation from those who are most likely to use it.

This type of program can be largely accomplished within our existing budget. However, additional support could be sought from the U.W.S.A., U.W.F.A., Alumni Association, and external agencies. A thoughtful and thorough examination of our curriculum and programs is one of the most potentially important and stimulating exercises in which we can engage as an educational institution. It offers exciting possibilities for the faculty, students, and community to consider collectively who, what, and how we teach.

The President should coordinate this initiative.

8.1 Interdisciplinary Programming: Special Significance for Access

The curriculum, faculty and mandate of the following interdisciplinary programs have the potential to be designated "access-oriented" for purposes of coordinating and piloting courses and programs in institutional accessibility development: Canadian Studies, Women's Studies, Developmental Studies, Education, Justice and Law Enforcement Studies, and Administrative Studies. While a postsecondary education in each of these fields of study is important in itself, these programs have been identified because of several notable features they have in common: they emphasize relations between theoretical and applied studies, specific career opportunities for students are demonstrable; a group of students can enrol in several common (and perhaps tailored and/or extended) core courses, while also pursuing individual work in traditional department majors; they provide opportunities for faculty members as well as students to develop genuine needs-based and problem-solving educational and research activities beyond the institution itself; and, they address social, economic and political development issues important within communities where educational accessibility has been negligible.

Recommendation #35: Access Orientation for Interdisciplinary Programs

The University should make a long-term commitment to enhance Interdisciplinary Programs' personnel, curriculum, and program resources. This is especially important where their teaching, curriculum, and structure afford the University a significant opportunity to reorient educational priorities to enhance institutional accessibility for non-traditional students.

This recommendation should be referred to the Dean of Arts and Science, and the Senate for action.

Recommendation #36: General Studies Program

The University should reallocate and consolidate departmental personnel and curricular resources to establish a General Studies first-year and possibly second-year core curriculum, and an interdisciplinary four-year major program.

This recommendation should be referred to Academic Development's Subcommittee on the Four Year Degree and Core Curriculum.

The General Studies core and major would encompass the academic study deemed relevant for our graduates to participate meaningfully in the local, national, and global community. Elements of the program would be subject to review on an ongoing basis with a clear understanding that its contents could be subject to revision.

We believe that all students would benefit from this type of programming, because it combines good educational principles with accessibility. Many universities are already adopting this type of programming as a method of promoting a better knowledge among graduating students of the contemporary world.

This General Studies program could afford our students a progressive educational degree program in which, as Marsha Hanen has observed, the "reorganization of knowledge" based on a "genuine rethinking of educational goals and curriculum" and a "cooperative and less confrontational approach" to learning would reflect and promote our "need to find community in diversity -- a need central to making sense of our experience in this country at this historical moment". The first-year "core" for all students could be designed from five of the following courses: Developmental Rhetoric and Rhetoric I, Basic Mathematics (and/or General Science and Technology), Introduction to History, Introduction to Women's Studies, and Introduction to Canadian Studies (emphasizing Aboriginal and immigrant experience in the West). An alternative approach would be one that spread these courses throughout a four year degree program.

The General Studies major could be developed from the following four cores: an Interdisciplinary Major (including disciplinary and interdisciplinary "core" courses); Western Thought cross-disciplinary courses (eg. fine arts, history, literature, philosophy, science and technology); Non-Western Area courses (eg. Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, Latin America); and, Contemporary Issues and Problems courses (eg. Conflict Resolution Studies, International Development Studies). The nature of the program would allow for relatively straightforward transitions both to and from the traditional major and double major programs in Arts and Science departments.

Recommendation #37: Funding for Expanded and New Programs

The recommendations on interdisciplinary programs are priority recommendations. The University should reallocate, over time, current and future resources into these programs. Careful consultation with departments on the need for this reallocation will be essential if it is to become an accepted institutional policy.

The President should coordinate this reallocation.

9. TEACHING: STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The University of Winnipeg has long prided itself on its reputation as a teaching, as well as a research institution. We have a greater proportion of our tenured faculty teaching in our first year program than most other universities in Canada, and our class sizes in all years are smaller than those of most universities. Our faculty are encouraged to consult with students as frequently as possible. We urge that all of these practices continue, because student-faculty contact promotes accessibility at the University, as well as quality in education.

Chronic underfunding of the University by successive provincial governments during the last decade has increased pressure on us to enroll more students without the requisite additional funds. Consequently, our student to faculty ratios have increased, a situation that worries everyone. There is no easy solution to this problem, and it is difficult to imagine that the situation will improve until the government recognizes that this University is the most poorly funded university in the province, and that maintaining our relatively small class size is a very inexpensive way of enhancing retention of students.

Our recommendations on teaching emphasize the need to recognize teaching to be as significant as research in the rewarding and promoting of faculty members. We are convinced that movement in this direction by the University will further improve the quality of teaching because faculty will be more

willing to investigate alternative teaching methods and curriculum. It is absolutely essential that the Administration clearly and forcefully demonstrate its commitment to improved teaching at the University.

In general, teaching and learning conditions should be improved by reducing class sizes, especially because student retention rates would be increased by doing so. The more direct interaction among faculty and students in and out of class allows faculty more opportunities to educate students rather than simply to lecture classes. It allows faculty to better assess their students' intellectual abilities and needs, and therefore, to develop and adopt broadened pedagogical models, methods, and materials.

Our approaches to teaching must recognize the extent to which our community is a microcosm of the increasing global need for communication in many cultures and languages. We should view these differences as resources for broadened educational possibilities for students and faculty, rather than as deficiencies. In this respect, we must develop more awareness among ourselves on the ways in which teaching methods and assumptions may be biased against students for reasons of ethnicity, race, class, gender, or disability.

Many educators, business, government, and community people have recognized the need to consider carefully these issues. They have benefitted from participating in formal and informal workshops, seminars, and conferences on cross-cultural issues. We would benefit from similar initiatives, especially those dealing with teaching methods, learning styles, and cultural awareness.

9.1 Promotion of the Value of Teaching

Opportunities for individual faculty members to explore new pedagogical assumptions and approaches will require that the University improve professional development opportunities and incentives for faculty members in the area of their teaching activities: leave and sabbatical projects devoted to specializations and innovations in teaching; load reductions or other means of compensation for the development of specialized or innovative teaching methods; department and faculty teaching workshops; participation in local, regional and national conferences on teaching; lectures and lecture series on teaching issues and methods; and, teaching awards in departments and programs. However, the University must also ameliorate conflicts and tensions between research and teaching activities by balancing teaching and research components within individual departments and the institution as a whole, allowing faculty members to concentrate, without penalty, on research, teaching, or both, depending upon an individual's particular interests, strengths, and career-stage priorities.

Consistent with this principle would be the recognition and enhancement of faculty members' opportunities to integrate their teaching and research activities. Indeed, there is reason to assume that access will encourage faculty in their research because they will be encountering highly motivated students in their classes who will be eager to learn about and participate in the research of their teachers. By integrating rather than separating research and teaching activities, faculty members would be able to explore new, innovative and potentially ground-breaking research areas of specialization. This concept is vital to institutional accessibility initiatives in that faculty members could be encouraged to develop and participate in combined research and teaching projects and collaborative research groups responsive to community issues and problems as an area of "excellence" for the University.

Russell Edgerton, President of the American Association of Higher Education, wrote recently "most faculty have little respect for pedagogy itself." This does not mean that faculty do not respect teaching, Edgerton noted, but rather that they have little respect for the "science and art of teaching as an intellectual field. Few of the faculty who are good teachers would ever consider taking home an article

to read about teaching, or consider teaching an intellectually engaging topic to discuss with a colleague."

This undervaluing of pedagogy should concern everyone associated with universities. However, students suffer the most in this system, and they have reason to be concerned about the quality of the teaching they receive at university. We believe that one problem with previous attempts to improve teaching has been their general approach to the subject. Pedagogy was usually presented in terms of generic "techniques for teaching," which, in retrospect, offered faculty only limited assistance in adapting these ideas to their specific disciplines.

We recommend that the University adopt a different approach to pedagogy. Our perspective is one that emphasizes that each academic department on campus should become a center of pedagogical discussion and review. Faculty within each department should be seen as the primary source of expertise in this process, although consultations with outside specialists may occasionally be beneficial. As Russell Edgerton comments: "we should ask each department, in effect, to view teaching as it approaches research - as a scholarly act, subject to continuous, on going peer review." Consequently, the assessment of a faculty member's performance would evaluate their independent research and their capacity to communicate it and their larger understanding of their field to students.

Recommendation #38: Value of Teaching

The University should promote teaching and teaching-related activities by developing satisfactory means for assessment and recognition of teaching excellence, and by emphasizing effective teaching as criteria for evaluation in annual reports and tenure and promotion review processes.

This recommendation should be directed to the Senate, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, and the U.W.F.A.

We support the "Second Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Teaching" recommendation "that the category 'scholarship' be included as part of 'research' in terms of faculty tenure, promotion, and merit" where "scholarship" would "entail a wide variety of academic activities related to the classroom, such as the following: preparation for new and/or experimental courses; the presentation of research (too general to publish) to senior classes or faculty seminars; delivering in a formal manner (writing a brief or giving a talk) on special teaching techniques that may be of interest and value to other faculty; systematically engaging in an extensive reading program to broaden one's knowledge of a field or related area of teaching or research."

9.2 Innovative Teaching

Related to the previous recommendation, the University should promote, develop and support innovative teaching methods and approaches for classroom instruction and interaction responsive to heterogeneous educational and cultural assumptions and values, including team teaching, collaborative learning and multimedia initiatives. In addition to providing information and knowledge, faculty should be encouraged to work with students in making use of knowledge -- thinking, making connections, understanding, creating, producing -- within a framework for an interactive educational process in which all members of the class contribute. In a Task Force presentation Derwyn Davies argued that teaching then is "an outcome of the teacher's own sense of the body of knowledge he or she has, combined with a sensitivity to respond to learners as individuals and as a group on the basis of beliefs about people, learning and knowledge".

Recommendation #39: Collaborative Learning

Collaboration should be built into the curriculum, including the following elements: group work, peer feedback, faculty-student conferences, tutoring centres and study groups.

This recommendation should be referred to the Deans and Senate.

Catherine Taylor (English) in her submission to the Task Force argued that group work provides all students with an "occasion and encouragement for testing out their own voices speaking in an academic community," and that it may be especially rewarding for "those whose social class or English language background or educational history makes the language of the university even less accessible" because they "can begin to speak as part of an academic community". For example, such classroom methods can encourage students for whom English is a second language to take a participatory role in discussions and activities so that all students learn how to accept and value language and cultural differences.

Recommendation #40:

The University should make optimum use of the educational capabilities of computer, telecommunications, and multimedia systems. They are particularly effective in pre-University preparatory and distance education programs.

We should take advantage of Computer-Assisted Learning resources by making them available for students in all departments and programs in Arts and Science: software that diagnoses, instructs, provides exercises, evaluates, and produces progress reports; workshop-style exercises in which students learn by doing, without formal instruction; invention software for organization, generating ideas for essays; database managers for research, logic exercises, reading and reasoning exercises. Developmental software resources in language, mathematics, science and technology education could become a university area of specialization.

This recommendation should be referred to the Deans.

10. COORDINATING AND EVALUATING ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES

Although we have emphasized that accessibility has to become an orientation for the University, our argument has placed responsibility on all of us to become involved in this process. However, our individual and collective accessibility initiatives will benefit from effective coordination.

Recommendation #41: Access Coordinator

The University should create immediately the position of Access Coordinator. The individual in this position would assist in the coordination of the University's access initiatives, including the identification of the research and financial resources needed by academic departments, support staff, and administrators interested in modifying their current practices in order to improve accessibility. An annual assessment of access programming at the University would

be prepared by the Coordinator and he or she could be designated by the President to chair the Community Council and the Early Awareness Project Group.

This priority recommendation should be directed to the Board of Regents for consideration of funding, and to the Senate and Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans for evaluation.

This position should be designated as an academic faculty position, because the Coordinator must be experienced in the development of academic programming. Therefore, the Coordinator should be seconded from an academic department, on a half-time basis, for a limited term of either three or five years. The Coordinator should be assigned an operating budget appropriate to the requirements of the position. The breadth of the interests of the Coordinator dictate that the person report directly to the President.

11. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Nolan Reilly is organizing the extensive files created during the life of the Task Force. This archive will include minutes of all Task Force and Subcommittee meetings, summaries of oral presentations, articles, books, reports, bibliographies, and newspaper clippings collected by members of the Task Force. These materials will be made available to researchers upon request.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix One: Membership of the Subcommittees

Subcommittee on Student Services

John Holley, Associate Dean of Arts and Science, (co-chair)
 Judy Dyck, Awards and Financial Aid Office, (co-chair)
 Carlene Besner, Office of the Dean of Arts & Science
 Kyle Briggs, U.W.S.A.
 John Conroy, Biology
 Larry Didow, Associate Dean of Arts & Science
 Carolyn Hample, English
 Mario Jimenez, Admissions Office
 Nancy Latocki, Admissions Office
 Annabelle Mays, Bachelor of Education Program
 Barrie Noonan, Counselling Services
 Geri Sweet, Geography
 Monica Wood, Community Access Program
 Mary Young, Counselling Services

Subcommittee on Curriculum and Teaching

Alden Turner, English, (chair)
 Valerie Basely, English - Writing Program
 Elizabeth Comack, Sociology
 Derwyn Davies, Board of Regents
 Sheena Gardner, Education
 Zanna Joyce, U.W.S.A.
 Dawn Rittberg, Biology
 Catherine Taylor, English - Writing Program
 David Topper, History
 Gunter Weiss, Statistics
 Claudia Wright, Political Science

Subcommittee on Pre-University Access Programming

Mario Jimenez, Admissions Office, (co-chair)
 Mary Young, Counselling Services, (co-chair)
 Cynthia Bear, Island Lake Tribal Council
 Spencer Clements, Alumni Association
 Darlene Frederickson, Continuing Education
 Hugh Grant, Economics
 Lucia Jofre, Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba
 Beryle Jones, Education
 Debbie Schnitzer, English - Writing Program
 Norma Walker, Board of Regents

12.2 Appendix Two: Consultation List

During the course of its work, the Task Force consulted extensively with both the internal University community and a variety of external individuals and organizations. These consultations ranged from one meeting or one written submission to a series of meetings. The following is a list of the individuals and/or organizations involved in this process:

Internal

Joan Anderson, University Relations
 Don Bailey, History
 Tim Ball, Geography
 John Bulman, University Chancellor
 Jim Butler, Nathan Micky Learning Resources Centre
 Ed Byard, Biology (for the U.W.F.A.)
 Elizabeth Comack, Women's Studies
 Larry Didow, Dean's Office
 Keith Fulton, Women's Studies
 Sheena Gardner, Education
 Angela Hanischuk, U.W.S.A. Daycare
 David Henry, U.W.S.A.
 Roland Huff, English - Writing Program
 Don Jewison, English
 John Law, Vice-President (Administration)
 Gail Loadman, Theatre
 Annabelle Mays, Education
 Michael McIntyre, Dean of Arts and Science
 Gordon McKinnon, Chair of the Board of Regents
 Barrie Noonan, Counselling Services
 Carl Ridd, Religious Studies
 Debbie Schnitzer, English - Writing Program
 Brent Stearns, Philosophy
 Walt Stein, Associate Vice-President (Academic)
 Charlene Thacker, Sociology
 Marg Unruh, Dean's Office
 Connie Wawruck-Hemmett, Mature Students' Association
 Monica Wood, Community Access
 Claudia Wright, Political Science
 Alumni Council
 Board of Regents
 Chancellor's Forum
 Continuing Education Department (various representatives)
 Presidential Selection and Nominating Committee (1989)

President's Task Force on Student Recruitment (1988)
Senate Ad hoc Continuing Education Review Committee

In addition, several open forums were held over the past two and a half years, to which all members of the University were invited.

External

Pauline Clark, Winnipeg School Division No. 1
Fatima Costa-Soares and Cecilia Kosol, Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Service
Sid Gilbert, University of Guelph
M. Guiboche (a private citizen who is attempting to establish a Chair in Metis Studies at the University)
Barry Hammond and others, Winnipeg Education Centre
Audreen Hourie, Manitoba Metis Federation
Tom O'Connor, Metropolitan State University, Minneapolis - St. Paul, Minnesota
Richard Richardson and others, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona
Don Robertson and Cynthia Bear, Island Lake Tribal Council
Carol Sigurdson, Student Aid Branch
Murray Sinclair, Associate Chief Judge and co-chair of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry
Bill Thomas, Peguis School Board
Dudley Thompson, The Prairie Partnership
Maria Turner, Manitoba Post Secondary Career Development Branch
Don Unruh, Manitoba Post Secondary Career Development Branch
John Wiens and others, Seven Oaks School Division
Adult ESL for Refugees and Immigrants
Cambodian Association
Canada Employment Centre - Refugee Settlement Section
Central American Association
Child and Family Services - Central Winnipeg
Community Liaison Officers and other specialized consultants, Winnipeg School Division No. 1
Curriculum Consultant, Core Area Initiative
Elmwood High School (teachers, counsellors, and administrators)
Hispanic-American Association
Immigrant Access Services
Immigrant Information Network
Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba
Interagency Group on Immigrant Concerns
Interfaith Immigration Council of Manitoba
International Centre
Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women
Manitoba Labour Education Centre
Multicultural Consultant, Manitoba Department of Education
Representatives from several Manitoba labour organizations
Southeast Asian Refugee Community Organization

In addition, several open forums were held over the past two and a half years, to which an extensive range of individuals and organizations from our surrounding community were invited.

13. PRIORITY AND SUMMARY LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Priority Recommendations

The Task Force considers the Recommendations listed below to be priority recommendations. Their implementation will facilitate the adoption of the other Recommendations presented in the report.

Recommendation #1: Policy on Racism and Sexism

Recommendation #2: Creation of a Community Council

Recommendation #5: Dean of Students

Recommendation #14: Early Awareness Project Group

Recommendation #24: Institutional Statistics

Recommendation #29: English Language Development Programming

Recommendation #33: University Curriculum Review Process

Recommendation #38: Value of Teaching

Recommendation #41: Access Coordinator

13.2 Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Policy on Racism and Sexism

The University must establish and publicize a clear policy on what constitutes racist and sexist behaviour, identify the consequences for faculty, staff or students judged to have engaged in such practices, and provide an accessible and fair forum in which to raise such allegations.

This recommendation should be directed to The Board of Regents which is revising University policy on these matters. We consider the drafting of this policy an urgent priority for the University.

Recommendation #2: Creation of A Community Council

The University should immediately establish a permanent Community Council of Aboriginal, disabled, and ethnic and immigrant educators to ensure that University policies and practices are sensitive to community needs. The Community Council must have significant status within the University to be effective. Therefore, the President or her designate should chair the Community Council. Consideration should be given to the participation of Community Council members on the Board of Regents, Senate, and FCAS committees.

This recommendation should be referred to the Senate to prepare a proposal for examination by members of the University and the community.

Recommendation #3: Alternative Hiring Practices

An affirmative action program and other hiring practices that would improve representation of persons with non-traditional university backgrounds should be options seriously considered by the University.

This recommendation should be referred to the Board of Regents, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, the U.W.F.A., A.E.S.E.S., and I.U.O.E. for action.

Recommendation #4: Aboriginal-Multicultural Houses

The University should pursue the idea of developing community owned and operated cultural and educational centres in cooperation with the Community Council when it is established.

Recommendation #5: Dean of Students

A position entitled the Dean of Student Services should be created.

Recommendation #6: Responsibilities of the Dean of Student Services

The Dean of Student Services should be responsible for the following operations within the University:

1. Access Recruitment
2. Traditional Recruitment
3. Admissions
4. Records
5. Counselling
6. Health Services
7. Awards and Financial Aid
8. Academic Advising
9. Special Needs Advising
10. B.Ed. Advising
11. Chaplains

Recommendation #7: Academic Advising

The functions of Aboriginal Student Advising, Mature Student Advising, and Special Needs Advising should become part of our Academic Advising unit in order to better co-ordinate services for our students.

Recommendation #8: Study Skills

Study Skills should be separated from Counselling. (See Recommendations On Curriculum concerning study skills programming for entering students).

Recommendation #9: Financing the Office of the Dean of Student Services

Funding for the new position of Dean of Students and the operation of this office should be accomplished by reallocation of resources from the Offices of the Vice-President(Academic) and the Dean of Arts and Science. (Given that nine of the components of the proposed integrated structure are presently under the authority of the Vice-President (Academic), it follows that a significant portion of that Office's resources could be shifted to this new structure. Resources of the Dean of Arts and Science associated with the positions of Associate Dean (Students) and the Academic Advisors would be transferred to the Dean of Students.)

Recommendation #10: Centralized Student Services

Student Services should be centralized in one location on campus, possibly on the third floor of Centennial Hall. This will alleviate the present confusion for students trying to locate these services and simply the co-ordination of staff.

Recommendation #11: Senate Committee on Student Services

A Senate Standing Committee on Student Services should be created to facilitate the coordination and integration of student services with our academic programming. All academic decisions affect student services and these are made by Senate. In addition, if the integrated structure for Student Services is adopted, it is essential that members of the Offices of the Dean of Arts and Science, V.P.(Academic), and V.P.(Administration) serve on the committee.

Recommendations #5-11 should be referred as a package to the Senate, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, the U.W.F.A., the U.W.S.A., and A.E.S.E.S. We consider these to be priority recommendations requiring immediate action.

Recommendation #12: Alternative Admissions Policies

The University should investigate alternative admissions policies and, on the basis of this study, approach the high schools and community organizations to develop cooperative pilot projects for regular and mature students. Writing samples, references from teachers and community leaders, resumes, and student interviews should be used to evaluate students' university preparedness levels.

This recommendation should be referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Admissions and Registration to investigate alternative admissions procedures.

Recommendation #13: Early Awareness Programs

Early Awareness Programming should be identified as an essential dimension of the University's approach to accessibility.

Recommendation #14: Early Awareness Project Group

The University should establish immediately an Early Awareness Group to develop programs with interested schools and community organizations.

Recommendation #15: Consultation with High Schools

The Early Awareness Project Group should be instructed, when it is established, to develop pilot programs with Seven Oaks School Division and Elmwood High School. The Peguis Reserve School and the Island Lake Band Council with whom the Task Force discussed accessibility should be asked to consider creating similar programs.

Recommendations #13 - 15 should be referred to the Senate and the Offices identified above for comment.

Recommendation #16: Committee on Adult and Part-Time Learners

The Senate should establish a Standing committee on Adult Learners and Part-time Students to identify and coordinate the academic and support services required to improve the situation for adult and part-time learners.

This recommendation should be referred for action to the Senate and the U.W.S.A.

Recommendation #17: Expanded Student Advising

The advising system should be expanded to ensure a minimum of one meeting each academic term between a student and her or his advisor until the student has completed successfully a minimum of six Full Course Equivalents.

Recommendation #18: Academic Advisors

This more extensive advising should be done by a core of specialists in academic advising and a group of committed faculty who would be compensated by a stipend or a reduction in their teaching or research commitments.

Recommendation #19: Extension of Major Advising

Major advising should be extended to all programs and departments and integrated with the new advising system to ensure an adequate level of advising for students through to the completion of their programs.

Recommendations #18 and #19 should be referred for action to the Senate and the Offices of the Deans of Arts and Science and Continuing Education.

Recommendation #20: Effective Orientation Programs

More extensive orientations, differentiated according to the specific needs of students, should be developed. Orientations for all entering students, including access groups, should be as much as a week long and should include not only information on rules and procedures but also the values, culture and content of university life. An introduction to the non-academic aspects of university life, intramural sports and campus clubs, for example, should be part of the orientations. Similar orientations should be put in place for academic sessions other than the September-April Session.

This recommendation should be forwarded to the Senate, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, and the U.W.S.A.

Recommendation #21: Work Study and Related Initiatives

The University should consider the development of a work study program on campus. This would make campus jobs available first of all to students with financial need, primarily in cases where resources expected by Student Aid do not, in fact, exist.

Recommendation #22: Special Access Bursaries and Scholarships

The University should consider establishing a fund which will fully support several access students. Such a fund would acknowledge the extra time it often takes access students to complete a degree and would spare students the necessity of taking out student loans.

Recommendations #21 and 22 should be forwarded for study to the Vice-President (Academic) who is responsible for the Awards and Financial Aid Office, and to the U.W.S.A.

Recommendation #23: Expanded Child Care Services

Child Care services should be expanded and should include weekend and evening care to allow parents to enrol in evening courses and study on the weekend. Consideration should be given to providing free care as a part of our Access bursary and scholarship programs.

This recommendation should be forwarded to the Vice-President (Academic) who is responsible for the Infant and Preschool Centres, and to the U.W.S.A. which operates the Day Care Centre, for the development of a proposal.

Recommendation #24: Institutional Statistics

The University should begin immediately to compile and publish an Institutional Statistics Book for distribution among interested faculty, staff, and members of the community.

Recommendation #25: Committee on Educational Research

The University should establish a Standing Committee on Educational Research, composed of representatives from the faculty, staff, students, and administration. The committee would co-ordinate and assist in any way possible, including securing funding, research and discussion on educational issues through public seminars, presentations, publications, and other appropriate means.

This recommendation should be directed to the Chair of the Senate Academic Development Committee.

Recommendation #26: Co-ordination with the Secondary Schools

The University should explore the benefits for students at all levels in the educational system of coordinating our first year departments' and programs' academic requirements, curriculum design and teaching models with the Manitoba Secondary Education and Postsecondary Community College systems.

This recommendation should be referred to the Early Awareness Group.

Recommendation #27: University Preparatory Course

The University should design a half-credit University Preparatory Course for students entering university for the first time. The course should afford students a comprehensive survey of all aspects of the University's academic requirements, orientation to its departments, programs and services, and instruction in basic skills, including time management, study skills, reading, writing, listening, speaking, note taking, multiple choice testing, essay testing, stress management, career planning, and cross-cultural awareness. The course should be available, through the Continuing Education Division, to those referred to it by their Academic Advisors, and to any other interested student.

This recommendation should be referred to Academic Development's Subcommittee on Four Year Degree and Core Curriculum.

Recommendation #28: Student Assessment Procedures

The University should begin universal diagnostic assessment of incoming students and design our programs and standards in the light of those assessments. In doing so, we should agree upon what basic standards of competency are acceptable for students' continuation and graduation. Our goal should be that, regardless of the length of time it takes any individual to graduate, all degrees granted have the same worth.

This recommendation should be referred to the Education Research Committee when it is established.

Recommendation #29: English Language Development Programming

Continuing Education, the Collegiate, and the Writing Program, should develop a sequence of non-credit and credit courses for students for whom English is a second language.

Recommendation #30: Heritage Language Recognition

Our programs and assumptions regarding students for whom English is a second language should acknowledge their proficiency in one or more languages other than English, and offer credit for learning English just as credit is given for learning German, French, and Spanish. As part of this recognition, the University should establish a Heritage Language Recognition Program that documents on students' official transcripts their level of proficiency in languages other than English.

Recommendation #31: The Writing Program

The content of the Writing Program courses should be enhanced by linking sections and/or sequences to the curriculum and instruction of other courses in our first-year program (e.g. English, History, Philosophy).

Recommendations #29, #30, & #31 should be referred to Academic Development's Subcommittee on English Language Development.

Recommendation #32: Basic Mathematics and Science Courses

i) Basic Mathematics Course

The University should promote the role of a Basic Mathematics course as a major developmental component within the first-year curriculum that would meet the needs of students with deficient numeracy skills, who may wish to pursue a B.Sc. or math program.

ii) General Science and Technology Course

The University should provide resources for the design and implementation of a first-year General Science and Technology Studies (half) course that would serve, in part, as a developmental component for the first-year Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses.

This recommendation should be directed to Academic Development's Subcommittee on Four Year Degree and Core Curriculum.

Recommendation #33: University Curriculum Review Process

The University should establish a committee to assist departments and programs to review their curriculum. Departments should receive resources for this comprehensive review and revision of their programs and courses, with particular attention being given to the representation and orientation of course materials and assignments in matters of ethnicity, race, class, gender, and disability.

This recommendation should be referred to the Senate, Deans, the U.W.S.A., and all departments and programs.

Recommendation #34:

As part of this curriculum review process, we recommend that for the next several years faculty, students, and staff devote a significant proportion of the resources of our annual lecture series (Bonnycastle, Religion and Life Week, etc.), Visiting Lecturers Funds, etc., to the exploration of these curriculum and teaching related topics. Additional funding resources should be sought through community and government organizations.

The President should coordinate this initiative.

Recommendation #35: Access Orientation for Interdisciplinary Programs

The University should make a long-term commitment to enhance Interdisciplinary Programs' personnel, curriculum, and program resources. This is especially important where their teaching, curriculum, and structure afford the University a significant opportunity to reorient educational priorities to enhance institutional accessibility for non-traditional students.

This recommendation should be referred to the Dean of Arts and Science, and the Senate for action.

Recommendation #36: General Studies Program

The University should reallocate and consolidate departmental personnel and curricular resources to establish a General Studies first- and possibly second-year core curriculum, and an interdisciplinary four-year major program.

This recommendation should be referred to Academic Development's Subcommittee on the Four Year Degree and Core Curriculum.

Recommendation #37: Funding for Expanded and New Programs

The recommendations on interdisciplinary programs are priority recommendations. The University should reallocate, over time, current and future resources into these programs. Careful consultation with departments on the need for this reallocation will be essential if it is to become an accepted institutional policy.

The President should coordinate this reallocation.

Recommendation #38: Value of Teaching

The University should promote teaching and teaching-related activities by developing satisfactory means for assessment and recognition of teaching excellence, and by emphasizing effective teaching as criteria for evaluation in annual reports and tenure and promotion review processes.

This recommendation should be directed to the Senate, Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans, and the U.W.F.A.

Recommendation #39: Collaborative Learning

Collaboration should be built into the curriculum, including the following elements: group work, peer feedback, faculty-student conferences, tutoring centres and study groups.

This recommendation should be referred to the Deans and Senate.

Recommendation #40:

The University should make optimum use of the educational capabilities of computer, telecommunications, and multimedia systems. They are particularly effective in pre-University preparatory and distance education programs.

This recommendation should be referred to the Deans.

Recommendation #41: Access Coordinator

The University should create immediately the position of Access Coordinator. The individual in this position would assist in the coordination of the University's access initiatives, including the identification of the research and financial resources needed by academic departments, support staff, and administrators interested in modifying their current practices in order to improve accessibility. An annual assessment of access programming at the University would be prepared by the Coordinator and he or she could be designated by the President to chair the Community Council and the Early Awareness Project Group.

This priority recommendation should be directed to the Board of Regents for consideration of funding, and to the Senate and Offices of the Vice-Presidents and Deans for evaluation.

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