From the president

The final report of the Strategic Planning Commission to the President represents the culmination of a 19-month, highly consultative process. Members of the University community and friends of the University of Guelph came together to examine our mission and future direction in the light of changes in our external environment and implications for the funding of universities. The Commission's charge was to fashion a vision of continuing excellence for the institution.

The Strategic Plan submitted to me contains many recommendations for change, and builds on Guelph's strong sense of heritage. It is grounded in the hard work and reports of many committees involving hundreds of students, staff and faculty members, and has benefited from the advice and insight of alumni, retirees, and community leaders in the public and private sector. A wide range of individuals and groups within the University contributed their views on the March 7, 1995 interim report, thereby helping to shape the final document.

I am grateful to the Commission's Chair, Dr. Bev Kay, its members, resource people and staff for a thoughtful, comprehensive report that will help the University chart its future course in a manner which respects its basic mission and the welfare of its students and employees. I appreciate the support of committees and individuals who contributed to the work of the Commission, demonstrating their eagerness to help Guelph maintain its place among Canada's leading universities.

Following a period of reflection and discussion, it is my intention to identify and assign priority to those recommendations receiving my endorsement, and to send them as early as possible to the appropriate governing bodies for their consideration and approval.

A complete copy of the report is being sent to the Senate for its information, and copies will be distributed on campus. Copies will also be made available to entering and returning students in September. There will be an opportunity for all members of the University community to submit their comments to the appropriate governing bodies, including the Senate committees charged with making recommendations to Senate.

The Strategic Plan, once approved, will serve as a framework for planning and implementation efforts at every level of the University.

Making Change:
The Strategic Plan for the University of Guelph
The Final Report of the Strategic Planning Commission to the President

June 20, 1995

Mondecai Rountzaki

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II. THE STRATEGIC VISION
The University of Guelph recognizes that the most successful universities of the next century will be more efficient, more flexible, and more intensely interactive than the universities of the past. To achieve our goal of ever-increasing excellence in scholarship, this community will act on that vision of energy, imagination, and a sense of common purpose. We embrace as our primary strategic directions an increasingly learner-centred approach to education and the fostering of research-intensiveness. We believe that these two strategic directions are largely aspects of one another, and that to succeed in one we must succeed in the other. Together, they reflect the mission of the University with respect to life-long learning. We embrace three additional strategic directions — collaboration, internationalism, and open learning — that will enhance flexibility and interaction, extend the University's reach, and support our highly ambitious learner-centred, research-intensive agenda.

A truly strategic vision requires that we take a hard look at the environment within which we will be operating. Among the external forces identified as having major importance for the University are the following:

- an economy saddled with budget deficits at both the federal and provincial levels that will severely constrain resources available to support education and research;
- the globalization of economies and ever-increasing flow of ideas and information across national boundaries;
- revolutionary advances in computing and networking technology together with opportunities arising from the convergence of voice, data, image, and video technology that will effect profound change in modes of teaching and learning (as well as research and administrative procedures);
- the growing complexity of relations between people and their environment at scales ranging from local to global, and so the need for interdisciplinary approaches to complex problems;

- the demand for universities to be accountable in terms of money spent and "value added;"
- the changing composition of the population and labour force of Canada — e.g., increasing age and cultural diversity of the population — and a growing demand for lifelong learning as well as accessibility and flexibility in higher education;
- major changes in private and public sector workplace, such as 'flatter' bureaucratic structures, which require of employees not only disciplinary expertise but also high levels of competence in such general skills as problem-solving and writing.

The interaction among these forces will have important consequences for the University of Guelph and for higher education generally. The basic conundrum is clear. Although demands upon universities are increasing, public resources are dwindling; in the catchphrase of the day, we are being asked to do more with less. These forces also point to a future of greater intellectual and global interdependence, rapid change, and the need for greater flexibility and improved articulation in the whole of our educational system. But these two fundamental realities — increasing demand/dwindling resources and a shifting infrastructure — need to suggest at least part of the answer to our conundrum. To survive and prosper in this climate, universities must forge closer and more extensive links with partners of many kinds, including business, government, community organizations, and one another. To accommodate the reductions in staff and faculty numbers that is a consequence of budgetary constraints, to preserve excellence, and to meet societal needs, we must — through collaboration and the wisest possible use of technology, time, and expertise — become more efficient.

Attention to the change these external forces will require of us underlies the whole of the strategic plan. Perhaps most striking is the clear need to educate our students for a future of lifelong learning. Despite the difficulty of the challenge, and our deep concern over the decline of government support for post-secondary education, there is also cause for excitement. The University of Guelph is in many important ways better positioned than most universities in Ontario and Canada to meet the challenges of the future. We will begin the next phase of our journey from a position of impressive strength, with a firm
understanding of our social responsibility and of our power to shape change through the discovery, sharing, and application of knowledge.

This University's strengths in the areas of agriculture and veterinary medicine, for which we have substantial responsibility in Ontario, are a critical part of our broad strength in the life sciences. Our special, continuing relationship with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) has been a major factor in the evolution and important achievements that have occurred within these areas. Our commitments and our stature reside also in a constellation of particular strengths across a wide range of disciplines at the physical sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

While such breadth defines a comprehensive university, and is critical to work between the disciplines, the wide-ranging strengths we have are less common. Georgia sits, for reasons of location and its social orientation toward service, in the magnitude of its research effort, in its impressive international links, in the large number of students between the discovery and application of knowledge, in the support we offer to one another, and in our dedication to the education of the whole person. We are, in short, a decidedly progressive and humane university.

Building on Toward 2000, the University's previous planning document, we now propose a vision of Making Change in the most idealistic and practical of ways. We will achieve efficiency, flexibility, and excellence through a more committed and efficient use of our resources. Our sources of funding will not be increased, in the belief that we can economize even in a time of cutbacks, and the benefits of the new directions, our people must also be fueled for the journey. Major expenditures, and thus increased efficiency and an expansion of our research base, will transform the University into a place of great prestige and equip our people for their future work, particularly with respect to significant changes in the way we carry out and support our academic programs. Some of our research enterprises, and major anticipated benefits including improved performance and eventual cost savings, will relate to the increased and increasingly wise use of technology. Some will be needed for training. And some will be required to create a Learning Enhancement Fund and a Research Enhancement Fund, each of which will be accorded substantial base funding at the earliest possible date. But sticks, canons, and technology are far from being the only tools in this community. This community will be energized by a shared, rather than an imposed vision. It cannot be energized without the excitement and commitment of the many strong-minded, dedicated individuals who make up this University, and by their determination to value, assist, learn from, and inspire one another. The achievement of our strategic vision will depend in the first instant on the wisdom of that vision and the willingness of the community to embrace it.

What, then, are the essential features of the strategic vision? Given a modicum of luck, and intense dedication, what might the University of Guelph look like five or ten years from now?

1. We envision a future of increasing pride in the University of Guelph, and a stronger sense of community. We will retain a mid-sized, significantly residential, excellent university, the kind of which we greet one another by name, and care for one another. Our community will be more diverse, and more appreciative of diversity. We will work with a sense of adventurous and camaraderie in an atmosphere of trust. Members of the senior administration, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and retirees will have closer, more deeply committed relationships and be working together to strengthen the fabric of the University. We will know where our priorities are valued, and that there are opportunities for all of us to develop in new ways.

2. We will continue to work hard. But our daily work will be more carefully considered, to ensure that we work more efficiently, and will be done more efficiently another way, and that we have time for reflection and creativity. Teaching loads will be more variable, and more sensitive to a broad array of teaching tasks; workloads will be more equitable. Unnecessary activity and bureaucracy will be shored away. Technology will have introduced critical efficiencies. Policy will be developed in a timely, efficient, coherent, and collegial manner.

3. Counselling and academic advising will be more effective. Library resources will have improved markedly as the result of an international collaboration, a global information infrastructure, and document delivery. Most, and perhaps all, students will own computers. Extracurricular activities will support our academic programs in a more focused and imaginative way. New programs will be developed in the planning stages, and there will be many more collaborative programs. We will have fewer specialization and fewer courses, but the curriculum will be more flexible and more carefully articulated to account for individual student trajectories. We will spend less time in lecturing, but lecture as a fundamental composing and organizing stage. We will have a more diversified set of learning experiences— including computer-assisted learning, interactive video-linked classes, seminars, lab work, peer-led learning, using in vocational settings, tutorials, and collaborative and independent research. The idea of the course as a box with a fixed number of contact hours carrying a fixed number of credits, will be gone. There will be more interaction between undergraduates and graduate students, and, greater opportunities for the research-learning link. A modal approach to curriculum will have become common, and the principle of learning to know, learn to do, and love learning will be more evident.
and learning activities will have substantially increased, and teaching will be valued more highly within the University.

4. The Learning Objectives of the University — as articulated in Toward 2000 — will have been achieved across the campus; those objectives will be embedded in both curriculum and the extracurricular educational setting, and we will have been successful in achieving them. As a consequence of our increasingly learner-centred approach to education, our students will be better prepared for life-long learning and the work force, and will have been facilitated more widely and more imaginatively across campus. Our students will be more self-reliant, and more capable of working collaboratively. Taking a smaller number of courses overall, they will have more time to reflect and to engage with ideas. Their thinking will be more critical and more creative. They will possess more highly developed skills. Our graduates and their employers will tell us that the University of Guelph has prepared them well for the most pressing needs. Students who have Guelph to pursue graduate studies elsewhere will do so with increased confidence. They will find pleasure in knowing that we have done our utmost to empower our graduates for responsible citizenship and personal fulfilment.

5. Collaboration within the University, with our neighbours, and across Canada and the world, will have increased greatly, introducing efficiencies and a new sense of enterprise. There will be more international students at Guelph, and many more of our Canadian students will have had an opportunity to study abroad. Our curriculum and our research activities will be more diverse than ever before. Learning will have brought substantial new revenue into a number of departments, and provided an important service to a significantly expanded social and consumer base. Students will move more freely between the University and the workplace and other sites. In all of these ways, we will feel more vitaly connected to the world outside the physical boundaries of the University.

6. Our partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) will continue to be vitally important to both the University and the Ministry, and to the benefit of the Ontario agriculture industry. A new focus on international development, health and human services, public policy and environmental protection. Fields of study associated with our historical commitment to agriculture and veterinary medicine will continue to form a prominent part of the Guelph mosaic.

7. The University’s reputation for research will have grown appreciably. Quality and impact will be the essential criteria as we evaluate research and determine the levels of institutional support. Funding will continue to be a problem, but new sources of research funding will have been identified, after much search. More of our work will be collaborative or interdisciplinary, and new areas of research strength will have emerged across the University; some of these new research directions will surprise us, and some will have been carefully fostered. Most of our existing areas of strength will have become stronger still. A few faculty members may have left research for other forms of scholarship, including innovative pedagogy; others will have been enlisted by colleagues in collaborative research programs. The research careers of recently appointed faculty will be well launched. Graduate programs will have evolved, and a number of new programs for more and better graduate students will be enrolled at the University, and imaginative new ways of funding them will be in place. The critical role that graduate students play in our learned-centred, research-intensive agenda will be properly understood.

8. The effects of capital campaigns, other fund-raising efforts, and an increasing level of support from the Heritage Fund will have been very significant. There will be more flexibility in the budget — i.e., a lower proportion of fixed costs, related particularly to permanent positions. This flexibility will make it possible to respond to changing levels of funding, and to continue the reconfiguration of the University. Interdisciplinary bodies such as the College of Agriculture will be more visible, and interdisciplinary activity will be flourishing. A major rationalization of programs will have occurred, and many ideas for reconfiguration will have already been acted upon; the college structure may or may not have changed. There will be many retirements, and opportunities for hiring will attract great interest within the community and beyond it.

The normal source of grants to Ontario universities is the Ministry of Education and Training (MEST). Guelph is in the unique position of also having a strong presence in the OMAFRA network and support research in six targeted areas and specific educational programs. The income from the contract represents 19% of the total 1994/95 operating budget. The proportion of the operating budget derived from provincial grants (MET and OMAFRA) and from tuition were 75 and 22%, respectively. The remainder (9%) was derived from service fees, investment income, and miscellaneous departmental revenues.

The high proportion of the operating budget that originates from provincial sources makes the University particularly sensitive to changes in political direction and the financial situation of governments.

Two other features of the operating budget are noteworthy. First, personnel costs comprise 64.6% of the 1994/95 operating budget: total personnel costs made up 80% of the 1994/95 operating budget, and personnel in regular full-time positions accounted for 70% of personnel costs. Second, 22% of the non-personnel expenditures in the budget are identified with structurally committed operational costs; there are very few flexible funds in these accounts. Given this degree of inflexibility, the University is particularly vulnerable to changes in future funding.

There are some knowns and a great many unknowns about future funding. In formulating our financial context, we have to keep in mind that the University is in a growth period and is in a position to make adjustments to the provincial funding formula and from the provincial disposition of cuts resulting from the federal government’s creation of the Canada Social Transfer (a much reduced block grant). While the nature of these changes is unknown at present, it seems clear that we are facing substantial cuts in the extent to which such cuts will be offset by increased tuition fees is unknown.

We have known for some time that at the end of the Social Contract (April 1996) we would have to deal with a projected structural deficit of $8.9M, which is being handled within the period of the Social Contract by unpaid leave and the University’s pension holiday. The University’s Special Early Retirement Program (SERP) has helped make it possible for the University to meet this reduction. The cost of SERP itself is being borne by the pension fund, the operating budget, and funds released from vacated positions. Many of those positions must disappear in order to address the structural deficit. But it will also be essential to continue to fulfill the functions of some personnel that have been cut back. Provision were made for about 30 percent of the funds released by SERP to be used for this purpose when the program was approved.

Vacancies will arise as a consequence of SERP until April 1996; additional funds can be used to fund the current caseload, required replacements, and attrition and as a consequence of our 1992 budgetary reduction plan (the so-called Five-Year Plan). Many of these vacancies will arise in staff positions. The total number of faculty positions that will become vacant in 1994/95 and 1995/96 is between 40 and 50. In conjunction with the Vice-President, Academic’s Council, has identified a number of faculty positions that must be refilled; others have been deleted, and many have been frozen. In addition, the effect, after the filling of 50 positions (37 probationary and 13 contractually limited), is a reduction of 92 positions within the next two years. A further reduction in the faculty complement of nearly 15 percent. As a partial offset, the budget for non-permanent teaching personnel has been increased by nearly 20 percent. If there are no further changes in income, we can meet the structural deficit and free up additional funds. These additional funds have been estimated at $7.9M, a portion of which would first appear in the 1998/99 budget. It must be clearly understood, however, that this figure does not take into account either the effect of reduced income or increased expenditure arising from inflationary costs, adjustments to salaries, or the filling of any of the 70 frozen positions.

The flexibility in the operating budget that will be created by SERP presents significant advantages to the University. These advantages are fundamental to this planning process. The opportunities include investment to allow us to pursue new directions, to rationalize our structure, and to "re-engineer" our services, thereby reducing our long-term operational costs, and to increase non-MET sources of income (e.g., through the development of Open Learning courses). Other opportunities relate to personnel costs (e.g., filing frozen or reallocated positions and adjusting salaries). The flexibility created by SERP may also provide important help in the future, in helping us to survive the impact of any further reductions in provincial grants. The challenges that must be met are considerable, and they arise primarily in the reduction in the number of faculty and staff that is necessary to create this flexibility.

As a direct consequence of the decline in the faculty complement, it will be necessary to reduce the number of our course offerings, and to accomplish some of our teaching more economically (making up for some of the lost teaching power with an increased use of sessionals and of learning technologies). A decline in staff numbers will also have to be accompanied by increasing efficiency, and by identifying wherever possible non-MET sources of funding for research personnel. From the perspective of comparative advantage, Guelph’s downsizing is not as dire as it may seem, in that our faculty-student ratios and stafffaculty ratios are more favourable than those of other universities with the same financial challenges. Efforts to reduce overlap in our course offerings will make this reduction less problematic.

A significant portion of the margin of flexibility that SERP has provided should, in the view of the Strategic Planning Commission, be used to help
us function in less labour-intensive ways. The wisdom of this approach may be more apparent in the wake of the community, who would argue that the margin beyond the post-Social Contract structural deficit should be devoted to replacing the people who created it, rather than a path of, instead of figuring out how we might cope without them. In short, they suspect that we have downsized too far.

The University faces several important considerations:

- We may need a major part or all of this flexibility to survive future cuts, and permanent appointments cannot easily be undone; if resources are tied up in one use, they cannot be transferred to another. Prior to SERP, we had positioned ourselves for very little flexibility.

- We need a 'breathing space' in which to determine the best possible deployment of permanent positions throughout the University.

- We will always need such breathing space, if we wish to change. Again, permanent positions cannot easily be undone; if resources are tied up in one use, they cannot be transferred to another. Prior to SERP, we had positioned ourselves for very little flexibility.

- Some less labour-intensive practices cost less (after initial costs) than the labour; they replace and are more effective.

If funding future levels permit, and if we think our money is best spent in that way, we can (as already indicated) fill or reallocate vacated positions when the flexibility arising after the repayment of a part of the new debt appears in the budget. But significant flexibility must remain, as a buffer against cuts and for purposes of future investment and reconfiguration. Great caution must be exercised. The longer we can reasonably delay retiring, the more access we will have to the venture funds — one-time or short-term expenditures — needed for successful development in an uncertain financial future.

One possible scenario is that provin- cial, or even federal, tax credits will be largely offset by increased tuition. Because of the so-called corollary system, we currently serve a significant number of students for whom we receive no net support; at present tuition levels, which are roughly comparable to the cost of instruction by professionals, it makes little financial sense to admit these students. For that reason, and to reduce pressures in the system that threaten the quality of education and research, we have been reducing our undergraduate enrollment in recent years. If we hold to our present strategy, the fiscal confidence that may make this possible. The University is potentially rich in students without compromising our mission in education and research. Substantial increases in tuition, however, will test the foundations: it could make it financially attractive to take in an increased number of students. The decision to do so would have to rest on a conviction that we could accommodate those additional students without compromising our mission in education and research. Substantial increases in tuition that do not suffice to offset dramatic cuts would result in a particularly unhappy outcome, but a more compelling motivation for cash-starved universities to increase enrollment. Given that we need more efficient and (effective) educational programs, we may increase enrollment, and that need would be still more acute if we were to admit more students to selected programs, we should move as quickly as possible to expand our repertoire of such practices.

Because our financial future is so uncertain, it is impossible to predict how far or how quickly we will be able to proceed in realizing our Strategic Vi- sion. Many of the recommendations in the Strategic Plan are for significant expenditure. Some of this expenditure will be ongoing, and some will be of limited duration. Much is aimed at re- ducing costs overall, increasing expenditures on non-MET sources of institutional support, and much is aimed at improving the quality of education and research. The strategic plan is, however, an important degree of overlap between these two categories of items: initiatives that we anticipate will save and/or earn money for the institution will also improve quality. Open Learning courses are a case in point, and they illustrate the other critical factor in this mix — the amount of time it will take a limited number of dedicated people to effect changes. One fact remains that we must find as much time and money as we possibly can, as quickly as we can, in order to have more time and money — and more quality — in the future.

In order to reduce reliance on provincial funding, the Heritage Fund was created. Growth of the Heritage Fund occurs through the development of property that is owned by the Univer- sity and through gifts from benefactors. The capital in the Heri- tage Fund is held in perpetuity. Income investment is managed in accordance with the Investment Declaration of Trust by the Board of Governors. Some of the income from these investments is to be used to support the fund against inflation (an amount based on the consumer price index). The investment income re- mains after the expenditure to fund projects or for or Capital Fund, and the University — subject, however, to approval by the Trustees and the Board of Governors. Over the past three years a total of $2.5M of the $2.3M available has been distributed; all of those funds have been allocated to the Capital Fund to repay special internal debts incurred for construction building and renovations on campus.

In our present and projected fiscal circu- mstances, the question of investing additional income from the Fund in initiatives described later in this report must be raised. After another decade, the Heritage Fund will have increased substantially, especially if the available income earned during that period is not returned to the Fund; in the meantime, such income may prove a small, but substantial, increase in the critical resources. In the long term, income from the Fund will signifi- cantly enrich the University. It must be clearly understood, however, that income available from the Heritage Fund must be used to support a major portion of the University's operating costs. Capital (25 times greater than that held in the Heritage Fund at present) would be necessary to yield income equivalent to roughly one-quarter of our total operating budget.

The University also maintains a Capital Fund, money for which arrives from three discrete sources:

- major projects funded by the Prov- ince;
- a Capital Campaign;
- the annual Maintenance & Renova- tions grant received from the Province.

Deferred maintenance items in excess of $400M have already been identified and these will have to be addressed as speedily as possible through occasional major project grants and the annual Maintenance & Renovation grants. In addition, some reconfigura- tion and renewal of physical resources will be required to implement the strategic plan. Costly items only could be supported if funds were available from major projects grants or Capital campaigns. Some less costly items could be fed into the internal process of adjudicating requests for support for major projects grants or Capital campaigns. There are a number of annual Maintenance & Renova- tions grants, which fluctuates between $1M and $1.5M.

C. THE EVOLUTION AND DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

The present distinctiveness of the University of Guelph resides in programs that are unique or unusual in this province — such as those in agriculture, veterinary medicine, hotel and food administration, international development, environmental science, agricultural studies, and landscape architecture — and in our particular strengths across a wide range of academic disciplines. It is found also in an orientation that is simultaneously practical, international, and humane.

The University has evolved dramati- cally since its inception in 1964. The Act to incorporate the University of Guelph, as amended in 1965, states that "the University shall have as its purposes the advancement of learning and dissemination of knowledge including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the advancement of learning and the dissemination of knowledge respecting agriculture; and (b) the intellectual, social, moral, and physical development of its members and the bet- terment of society." The three founding colleges — the Ontario Agricultural Col- lege, the Ontario Veterinary College, and the Macdonald Institute — had a well- established tradition of excellence in research, teaching, and service to soci- ety. As a result of rapid growth in the late 1960s and the need for balance, the University restructured itself around the seven colleges that exist today.

As noted in Toward 2000 (our 1985 planning document), the decision to re-configure the University "was a daring one. The University could achieve its aims "only if it acceded equal academic and adminis- trative status to the seven broad areas of study under the title of "agricultural science," family and consumer studies, physical science, social science, and vet- erinary medicine." By 1984, in its submissions to the Board of Governors, the University of Guelph described itself as follows:

The University of Guelph has had, and will continue to pursue, as a primary objective, the advancement to academic excellence. We are committed to, and dependent upon, the maintenance of distinguished and distinctive programs in the basic disciplines of the arts and sciences. These are the programs upon which our other academic de- veauxes are built .

The results of this history and these decisions have been impressive. The University of Guelph now offers a wide range of disciplines and maintains world class research across all areas of study; in addition, it maintains a strong tradition of service to society and a commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service functions.

The founding colleges have changed, and grown in quality, as fields of study have been redefined in response to societal need and as a consequence of interactions among the seven colleges. With a record of increasing excellence also in the core areas of arts, social science, and science, the University of Guelph now ranks among Canada's fin- est universities. The caliber of the University is reflected by the stature, achievements, and commitment of its alumni. The quality of our student body is among the highest in Ontario and Canada; our graduate programs are ranked in the top 10 in Canada, and our students are highly regarded on Graduate Studies; and our researchers continue to distinguish themselves in na- tional and international competitions. The University's commitment to promote creativity and research excellence wherever its potential may arise has been critical to our success. Guelph's academic reputation is based on a broad range of achievement, as evidenced by the level of external funding for research, by more than a dozen externally funded research chairs, and by numerous honours, including Governor General's Awards for Litera- ture, major exhibitions for its Fine Arts faculty at the Royal Ontario Museum, and Orders of Canada, and recent Polanyi prizes in Physics and Chemistry. Guelph's faculty have also shown them- selves to be among the country's most effective teachers, as demonstrated by our large number of 3M Teaching Fel- lows and other teaching awards.

The University's commitment to the education and well-being of the whole person is reflected in the development of the Learning Objectives, approved by Senate in 1987. These objectives have served, and will continue to serve, as a focus for the development of all undergraduate programs on campus. Faculty and staff commitment to the development of stu- dents and the quality of student life is
II. THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A. THE MISSION STATEMENT

RECOMMENDATION #1: The University of Guelph should adopt the following as its Mission Statement:

The University of Guelph is a research-intensive, learner-centred university. It offers a wide range of high quality undergraduate and graduate programs in the arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Building on these core disciplines, it also has a strong commitment to excellence in its interdisciplinary programs, in a selected range of professional and applied programs, and in agriculture and veterinary medicine as areas of special responsibility.

The University of Guelph is dedicated to the discovery, sharing, and application of knowledge, in service to society. In seeking to uncover and respect the diversity and profound interconnectedness of life, the University is both practical and idealistic. Its core value is the pursuit of truth. Its aim is to make a real difference in Canadian society and in the world, to enlarge the scope and enhance the quality of human understanding and to bring imagination, skill, and a sense of responsibility to bear on the task of caring for our natural environment. Both in its research and in its teaching programs, Guelph is committed to a global perspective.

The University is animated by a spirit of free and open inquiry, collaboration, and mutual respect. It attracts students, faculty, and staff of the highest quality and is committed to creating for all members of its community an environment that is hospitable, safe, supportive, equitable, pleasurable, and intellectually challenging.

The University of Guelph is determined to put the learner at the centre of all it does, recognizing that a great university is a community of scholars, that research and teaching are intimately linked, and that learning is a long-term commitment. The University eagerly promotes collaboration among undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as with our neighbours, other educational institutions, government, business, and the international community.

Guelph is committed to the highest standards of innovative pedagogy, to the education and well-being of the whole person, to meeting the needs of all learners in a purposefully diverse community, to the pursuit of its learning objectives and measurable outcomes, to the fostering of creativity, to an ethos of active learning, and to the integration of skills and critical inquiry in a carefully designed curriculum. A central concern is the need to educate students for life and work in a rapidly changing world.

The University of Guelph invites public scrutiny of the fulfilment of its mission, especially by the people of Ontario, to whom it is accountable.

ACTION: Senate and Board of Governors

B. OUR PEOPLE

1. STUDENTS

RECOMMENDATION #2: The University should evaluate how undergraduate and graduate enrolment targets annually to provide the optimum balance between them, consistent with available resources and the realities of the current funding formula.

ACTION: Provost and the Board of Graduate Studies

In the absence of significant change to the funding formula, undergraduate enrolment targets should decrease to approximately 10,000 FTEs, as currently planned. In Fall 1994 undergraduate enrolment stood at approximately 10,700 FTEs, and graduate enrolment at 1,620 FTEs. Holding to the 10,000 target for undergraduates would help us to accommodate the decline in faculty numbers; any increase would be subject to limits imposed by the physical plant and respectively, the growth of graduate enrollment toward our previous target of 2,000 FTEs, or a one to five ratio of graduate to undergraduate students, seems to the Commission appropriate for a research-intensive university.

Continued increase in the number of graduate students will, however, represent a major challenge in the face of both declining faculty numbers and projected decreases in research funding. Although this can be anticipated that changes in the graduate curriculum will result in a more even distribution of graduate students among individual faculty, it is clear that additional faculty effort in teaching and administration of graduate students will be necessary to support continued growth in graduate enrolments. Avenues the Graduate Board of Graduate Studies should pursue include:

- fostering collaboration and reducing impact on faculty time include more co-supervision; grater cooperation with industry and government agencies; the melding of graduate programs from several units; increased load, national, and international collaboration; the enrolment of more part-time graduate students; and an increase in non-thesis Master’s programs. A reduction in the proportion of graduate students is labour-intensive, our graduate students also perform critical labour in research and undergraduate instruction. Any revision of a learner-centred, research intensive university is dependent upon their participation in the learning community.

To provide alternative funding models for graduate students, we must employ them more extensively as sessional lecturers and as tutors for distance courses in order to pursue the relevant collaborative options described above; apply still more widely and well for research grants, extend the support of graduate students into grant applications; and reallocate internal resources to provide additional graduate teaching, research, and service assistantships.

RECOMMENDATION #3: To ensure that the quality of entering undergraduates and that graduate students remains high, to enhance accessibility, and to increase the representation of people of colour and Aboriginal people in our student population, the University should (a) assign a high priority in a major fund-raising campaign to the strengthening and diversification of our scholarship, graduate assistantship, and bursary programs, and (b) maintain and strengthen liaison, public relations, and recruitment activities.

ACTION: Associate Vice-President Academic and President

Especially in view of rising tuition costs, it will be necessary to offer more and better financial support to both the undergraduate and graduate students. If we are to attract the best students. The rising cost of post-secondary education is likely to limit access for those with proportion of students. In response to this challenge, the University of Guelph must explore ways to assist these students most in need — including scholarships and bursaries and on-campus employment (perhaps linked to experiential learning). Serious consideration should be given to scholarships aimed at students in economic need, whose academic achievement is high but not quite at the level required by the most competitive scholarships. Profile forms can be used to identify promising students whose grades fall slightly below the cut-off, but who can contribute to our socio-economic background, and to identify promising students from the Guelph area who cannot afford to pursue their studies elsewhere.

Increasing the cultural diversity of the student population is important with respect to developing cross-cultural understanding and a wide perspective in all our students. An educational strategy addressing not only liaison and admissions, but also curriculum issues and matters of atmosphere and support on campus, must (as currently planned) be developed and implemented. All sectors of the University should critically assess their programs, services, facilities, and general climate to ensure that all students are supported, and feel sup-
polar, in their education and development. It will also be necessary to get our mes-sage out, more resoundingly than ever. In most of our undergraduate programs, the academic quality of students admitted to Guelph is very high, as reflected in admission averages and the number of Ontario Scholarships. Our very effective liai-sion programs do make welcome offers to students especially in first-year, and the quality of our academic programs and faculty have contributed to this success. But we are entering a more competitive era and cannot allow ourselves to be become complacent. With respect to graduate students, as well, we must re-invest aggressively.

RECOMMENDATION #4: The University should continue to emphasize its residential character and to focus on recent high school graduates.

Our residential character, the quality of service that we provide to students, and the effectiveness of our orientation programs, and our first-year transition programs have contributed significantly to the appeal that Guelph has for recent high school graduates. We should continue to focus on these students. At the same time, the University should promote Open Learning as a means of serving part-time students and those wishing to access our programs from a distance. We should facilitate movement between workplace and university, and improve transition to the workplace for students in their third and fourth years.

2. FACULTY AND STAFF

A comprehensive human resources management plan is essential to the achievement of our strategic vision. The plan must include, the well-structured human resources management philosophy that helps to define the climate in which the faculty and staff work. This philosophy should outline what employees can expect from the University, and what the University expects in return. The human resources management plan must also address issues related to professional development, assessment of performance, compensation, and terms of appointment.

RECOMMENDATION #5: The University must develop by September 1996 a comprehensive human resources management philosophy. ACTION: Human Resources in collaboration with unit managers and employee groups.

We propose that the management philosophy include the following elements:

- Each member of the University community has an important role to play in fulfilling the mission of the University.
- We will pursue our mission in a climate of trust and respect for all members of the University community; differences of opinion are valued and must be aired openly and amicably.
- Staff, faculty, and students will be included in the decision-making processes of the University.
- Management will be practiced in a professional manner throughout the University.
- Individual contributions are valued, as are contributions involving collaboration. Creativity and responsible risk-taking in pursuit of educational, research, and service goals are encouraged.
- Wherever possible, employees are empowered to make decisions in their areas of responsibility.
- Management will be characterized by teamwork, openness, and honest communication, and a shared vision of the future of the University.
- The assignment of responsibilities should provide, on an ongoing basis, the best possible match between the unique skills, abilities, and needs of the individual and the needs of the institution.
- Cultural diversity is highly valued at the University of Guelph.
- University employees are expected to strive for excellence in their work, and excellence will be recognized wherever it is achieved.
- Continuous renewal and intellectual growth are required of everyone.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. The elements are not novel and not new to Guelph, indeed their value lies primarily in the articulation of a comprehensive philosophy that will guide our actions and decisions. The element of the philosophy related to cultural diversity merits specific comment. The University is committed to increasing the cultural diversity of its faculty and staff; the richness of perspectives and the breadth and depth of experiences and ideas that brings with it. We must be careful that the campus environment is welcoming, hospitable, and free of discrimination and disparagement of students. The issue of role models for students underscores the importance of continuing our efforts to increase the number of women on the faculty, especially given the very high proportion of women at the University of Guelph.

Provision should be made, in both policy and practice, for including more faculty members as full members of the selection committees for academic administrators and non-academic administra-tors. This reflects the principle that members of all sectors of the University are equally valued. At the present time, procedures for the appointment of academic administrators call for representation on selection committees by academic administrators, regular faculty, and students. In order to achieve a balanced representation on these committees, the University should establish a process for allowing the university to benefit from the expertise of staff members in these searches (see Faculty Policy C.1.4, Sec- tion 8). In some cases, (e.g. for research committees for senior non-academic positions (University Policy # 2D)) should be resisted, to make the inclusion of staff on these committees explicit.

Implementation of the human resources management philosophy will be the responsibility of the entire community. Accountability for implementing the philosophy must rest at departmental, managerial and individual faculty/staff levels. The President and Vice- Presidents must be responsible for ensuring that the philosophy of on-going success and for facilitating its implementation. Human resources management plans that reflect both a comprehensive human resources philoso-phy and decisions arising from strategic planning must be developed. These plans must motivate staff at all levels to fulfills their responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner. Some aspects of these plans are discussed below: others will be developed by University Human Resources in consultation with the appropriate units.

RECOMMENDATION #6: Professional development and renewal to ensure the acquisition of those skills most crucial to the implementation of the Strategic Plan must be a priority for all members of the University community, but particularly supervisors, including deans, directors, department chairs, faculty and librarians in supervisory positions, and non-academic managers. Accountability through the performance review process.

ACTION: Provost and Human Resources

The development of these skills will require that they be defined and that funds currently used to offer programs related to personal and professional development be appropriately focused. Wherever possible, employee-initiated professional development programs should be aligned with the Strategic Plan. The adoption of a more learner-centred approach to education will require training in the use of learning technologies and new thinking skills. The roles of Deans, chairs, and managers of the rele-vant support units, in collaboration with Teaching Support Services (TSS), will be critical in leading this strategy. This approach and in creating opportunities for faculty and staff to explore its implications and develop skills. Improved training of Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), as well as regular evaluation and constructive feedback on GTA performance, will be essential to our success. Cooperation with department, TSS should develop improved centralized training, including training in disciplinary classrooms, should supplement workshops with video, print-based, and computer-based instruction. The time required by graduate students to participate in these training programs must be funded by the University.

New managers and academic adminis-trators are often appointed with limited management experience. Skills related to budget and personnel provision are particularly important. The ongoing turnover of administrators, particularly department chairs, must and that the per-investment (of 25-30% of the time on a rotational basis or three to four years) would be of limited value. The development of self-study skills (see below), course development, and development and offered in collaboration with neighbouring universities, and courses such as SUAC (Senior University Administration Course) may be appropriate alternatives.

RECOMMENDATION #7: The University should introduce for all its managers and academic adminis-trators a performance review program that measures progress toward specific, agreed-upon goals.

ACTION: Provost, Deans, Vice-President Finance and Administration, Human Resources

RECOMMENDATION #8: Performance review programs for staff should recognize contributions in support of specific, agreed-upon goals and should include appropriate rewards on the part of individuals and units served.

ACTION: Chairs and Unit managers in collaboration with Human Resources

RECOMMENDATION #9: The current effort of the Joint Faculty Policies Committee (JFPC) to produce a common set of University-wide standards for tenure and promotion should continue and incremen-tal revision should be made a high priority matter, with the expectation that a common set of guidelines can be adopted by January 1, 1996.

The articulation of a set of minimal common standards on which departments can elaborate should lead to greater uniformity and recognition of faculty effort. Further, in order to encourage activity directed toward the achievement of strategic goals, the University-wide common standards should specifically include a reference to the recognition of faculty performance related to the University's Strategic Directions and to the recognition of interdisciplinarity. They should also emphasize the importance of the critical assessment of quality and impact in the evaluation process.

RECOMMENDATION #10: The University should make every ef-fort to ensure that all students receive a significant "merit" (or "pay for performance") component in the salary of all its employees.

ACTION: Vice-President Finance and Administration.

The current compensation structures for faculty and staff mean that many em-ployees are not paid according to their ma-npower receive minimal annual increase in salaries related to merit. The principle of merit should be considered in discussions of compensation packages. The SPC was particularly interested in the concept of a one-time bonus, as part of a strategy to address this issue. The SPC is also aware that training of managers and acade-mic administrators is essential if a merit system is to be implemented effectively.

RECOMMENDATION #11: The University will hire new faculty with potential to excel in both teaching and research, and will nurture their early careers so that they have the opportunity to reach their potential.
ACTION: Provost, Vice-President Research, Deans, and Chairs

Imprint here are two basic principles: that we must not predetermine the area in which research eminence will reside, and that the desired faculty norm is that of a distinguished scholar. It has been a distinguished researcher. While faculty may over time develop more pronounced strength in one of these areas than in the others, and while the University must then profit from that greater strength by assigning greater emphasis to it — we will begin by hiring faculty with strong potential for research, with the necessary support for development in each area. Very occasional exception may be made, where a candidate’s ability in either teaching or research is outstanding and the need lies in that direction.

RECOMMENDATION # 12: in cases where faculty are not significantly engaged in scholarship related to teaching or research during the research, study and professional development semester, or where the assessment of faculty, they should take on teaching or service responsibilities during that semester or move to 10-12 month appointments. ACTION: President, Provost, and Joint Faculty Policies Committee

The overall productivity of faculty at the University in teaching, research, and administration/service has increased steadily over the last decade. Indeed, what might be termed over-performance — a situation which used to be considered a mark of distinction in the past is now becoming increasingly common. Nevertheless, from time to time some faculty may be judged to be under-performing, particularly in terms of their activity during the research, study and professional development semester. In cases where the faculty member’s overall performance is deemed unsatisfactory with respect to both teaching and research, termination of employment is a possible consequence. In any event, in those cases where only the research component of faculty activity is deemed unsatisfactory, there are three options. The first step is for both the chair and the faculty member to determine whether he or she wishes to make a more effective contribution; next, what assistance might be provided to the faculty member in that regard. The second option involves negotiations between the chair and the faculty member that may result in the faculty member taking on additional teaching or service responsibilities. The third option is a temporary or permanent shift to a nine- or 10-month appointment. This option is consistent with Faculty Policies and would be most appropriate where the chair feels that the member wishes to pursue his or her interests away from the University to pursue other professional or personal interests.

RECOMMENDATION #13: The custom in many departments of assigning identical or very similar teaching “loads” to all faculty must give way to an emphasis on differentiated assignments, which reflect the quantity and quality of work carried out in the areas of research and service, as well as teaching. Such differentiated responsibilities, relabeled to graduate students.

ACTION: Chairs of departments and Deans

As indicated in 1.4 of the Special Plan and notwithstanding Article 19, the maximum teaching load of faculty members to elect their own career path. department chairs have a responsibility to assign variable teaching loads in order to achieve equitable workloads. The concept of variable teaching loads should not be linked too closely to the concept of paths. Election of the "Teaching Path" normally involves a heavy teaching load, but it is not the pre-condition of assigning teaching in excess of a departmental average and is not necessarily even an unusually heavy instructional load — since the Teaching Path is intended to foster excellence in scholarship related to teaching. The School Committee can be increasingly important in the learner-centred university. Recommendation #13 is consistent with the Human Resources Management Philosophy proposed earlier, which states that the assignment of responsibilities should provide, on an ongoing basis, the best possible match between the unique skills, abilities, and needs of the individual and the needs of the institution. It is also consistent with the need to prevent equity across the institution, with the Commission’s interpretation of research-intensive, and with the need to foster a greater variety of research areas in the University. A faculty are expected to engage in teaching to some degree.

3. ALUMNI

RECOMMENDATION # 14: The President of the University of Guelph Alumni Association (UGAA) This form of, to the Vice-President University Affairs and Development should develop opportunities for alumni to collaborate more extensively effectively in the work of the University. The President of UGAA should present an annual report to Senate on the nature and extent of involvement by alumni in activities related to our academic mission.

The alumni of the University of Guelph and its founding colleges are an important and 3.3.2.5.1.4 of academic communities. Our alumni, who are distributed around the globe and through all walks of life, provide a vital link to the world outside the University. Often, they are eager to share their wisdom and experience, and it would be foolish not to take advantage of their willingness to do so. It is clear to the Commission that alumni have a key role to play in implementing the Strategic Plan. That role is reflected in the establishment of the University of Guelph Alumni Association: to sustain and strengthen the University of Guelph.

Alumni could strengthen the University through enhanced involvement in a range of activities such as following:

• networking with students to provide them with better understanding of the workplace and job opportunities;
• bringing (as resource people) real world experience to discussions in courses, in curriculum design, and in a range of experiential learning activities;
• networking with administrators to provide information on industry/university and government/university interfaces and potential new opportunities;
• liaising with prospective students;
• fostering international connections and promoting the University worldwide;
• collaborating in the design of Open Learning programs and participating in these programs; and
• fund raising.

Alumni have historically been generous with both their time and their money. Many of them would like to see their involvement more involved and even more helpful in strengthening the University. They are available, they are sympathetic, they have the expertise and the will — and they represent a much under-utilized resource, which we neglect at our peril. If any of our alumni feel that they are not recognized as members of our community, that their potential input into programs and vision making is welcomed, and that only financial assistance from them is of interest to the University, that perception must be changed. If the University’s fault is this perception exists, a fault that must be corrected by deliberate action. University administration, faculty, staff, and students share responsibility for increasing the involvement of alumni in the academic community. The SPC believes very strongly that increased involvement of alumni will be essential if the University is to realize its very ambitious vision. A database that includes a description of the interests of individual alumni would facilitate the use of their diverse strengths. As ongoing students of the University, alumni should also be well served by the choice of Open Learning as a strategic direction; but in fact all five of our strategic directions relate critically to contributions alumni are well positioned to make to the future of the University.

4. RETIREES

The University must rely increasingly on the expertise and generosity of retirees, as continuing members of the University’s community. Retirees, including the significant number of SERP retirees, will be a vital resource. We cannot hope to maintain strength, or realize our vision, without their help.

5. GOVERNANCE

RECOMMENDATION # 15: The Senate Bylaws and Membership Committee should explore a number of options for substantially reducing the size of Senate, the size and number of Senate committees and present a proposal to Senate by September 1996.

This recommendation addresses the streamlining of Senate, to which a high priority must be given. In addition to supporting a substantial reduction in the size of Senate, which is in keeping with the trend toward smaller bodies in other Canadian universities, the Commission favours a streamlining of Senate’s committee structure. The Commission is concerned, however, goes beyond Senate to the whole issue of governance, and in particular the need to ensure that faculty time spent in committee work (like time spent in research or teaching) is well invested.

A collegial structure has been an essential element of governance at the University since its inception, and it is essential that the most positive features of this structure (and its processes) be retained. The Commission is aware that this is associated with this will in future be borne by a smaller number of faculty and staff. This problem will be accentuated as we enter the period in which it is anticipated that faculty will be spending more time on curriculum review and development, and in which the University as a whole will be facing significant, if not unprecedented, change. While we recognize that time spent in committees and in consultation is an essential part of the academic and decision-making responsibilities of faculty, it is necessary to achieve a climate of trust and open communication — as well as good decisions — it is also true that in a climate of greater trust, openness, and accountability, it should be possible to spend less time in committees.

The automatic response to a problem that must not be "to throw a committee at it.” To achieve this result, it is clear that committees, we should also look very hard at the need for representation, while the participation of various constituencies will in some cases be increased. We see the automatic application of the representation principle can only lead to confusion and to its structure, and an excessive workload for the community as a whole. Part of the answer is making sure that people have ready access to information, and in much of the relevant information, so that they can contribute ideas and flag matters of concern. Administrators should be expected to follow, and be held accountable to, the context of full accountability. Committee recommendations should identify responsibility for implementation and should be rejected, delayed, modified, or implemented — and the community made aware of what has happened to them and why. Committee chairs should be responsible for follow-up. It is important for people who have worked hard on committees to know the consequences of their work. It is important that there be a whole to gather a clearer sense of what is and what is not achievable.

C. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Formulation of strategic directions has followed from the examination of the institutional mission, the review of our institutional values, the assessment of our strengths and weaknesses, and the formulation of our mission statement. To date, we have defined strategic directions as those key issues to which we must pay greater attention if we are to realize our mission. Further, the Commission is looking at two operational issues — the continuation and improvement of most of what we currently do and strategies to do more. Action on appropriate strategic directions, together with attention to change in our “operational” activities, will ensure that we can carry out our mission effectively.

The strategic directions that are proposed have several common characteristics. They have potential for all academic areas of the institution, not just a subset of departments or specialties. They are of a continuing,
long-term nature rather than involving a single act or decision. They represent our vision of what must be done to cope with the challenges of the near future, in the context not just of what we do but of how we do it. The two primary strategic directions reflect the core of the University's mission; the three additional strategic directions will enhance our ability to fulfill that mission. The primary strategic directions, learner-centredness, research-intensiveness and community engagement are deeply inter-related — as indeed are all five of the strategic directions.

RECOMMENDATION # 16: The University of Guelph should adopt learner-centredness and research-intensiveness as its primary strategic directions, and collaboration, interraction and the use of open learning as its secondary strategic directions. ACTION: Senate

1. THE LEARNER-CENTRED UNIVERSITY

Learner-centredness is an approach to education that aims at developing in each student, as early as possible, a sense of responsibility for his or her own learning. It recognizes that intellectual growth occurs only through vigorous, imaginative, and purposeful movement of the mind, and seeks to inspire and assist such movement; acknowledging (and acting to help meet) the need for rich and timely "encounters with the world" is an obvious and obvious the passive model of the mind as receptacle. The University has an opportunity to enhance its reputation for excellence through the implementation of a strategy that places increased emphasis on self-reliant learning, the research teaching link, skill development, and experiential learning. In these four ways (the critical elements of a learner-centred agenda) we can help to prepare all our students for learning, professional and academic careers, and responsible citizenship in society. The signature approach to work at the University is one of a purposeful integration of research and teaching, under the term learning or scholarship.

The University of Guelph is committed to undergraduate and graduate educational experiences that are designed, delivered, and evaluated to maximize student learning. These experiences are intimately tied to the creative research done by faculty, since the processes and results of research, when shared with students, can enhance learning. Students are also encouraged seek to involve all students in academic experiences in which they can learn the skills of discipline and inter-disciplinary collaboration. Self-reliance. At an early stage, students should begin to learn that research means people reading, thinking, testing, and challenging — a set of ideas, theories, and interpretations are explored and evaluated and give way to the discovery of new ideas. Thus, the student's own engagement in research should increase as experience is gained and methodological expertise is developed.

Self-reliant learning can be fostered by mentoring, where the instructor is seen as a resource person guiding the student's own contact with the material. Peer learning, through the use of open undergraduate and/or graduate students as supplemental instructors can complement such a teaching strategy. Students should develop an appreciation and understanding of research discipline, beginning in their early semesters, and senior undergraduate research projects should become more the norm. The role of graduate specializations. Appropriate ways of involving undergraduate students in faculty and graduate research and scholarship are an obvious. In the absence of additional burdens on research funding, must also be explored.

The development of self-reliance and the ability to work with others are critical elements of learning. When we require students to engage in well-conceived and managed research projects, we encourage them to use their critical thinking and problem-solving skills required for success in the world of work depend upon the development of these capacities. Skill development (at the expense of proliferating factual content) should be emphasized more strongly: it gives students what they will need for the future. More specifically, we need to ensure that students have oral and oral communications, numerical and critical skills, critical thinking skills, and leadership, and group skills. Experiential learning — or learning by doing — also fosters self-reliance and cooperation with others. The presence of a faculty time for the development of a curriculum that fosters active, hands-on; involving la-tutuar-experiences, the use of computer laboratory, teaching, and teaching work. In part because experiential learning also means co-work terms, it is often a challenge to the faculty time when the commitment is fed up. The challenge of providing such resources in the present climate of fiscal constraint and reduction of the faculty complement is indeed formidable. But the Commission believes that the challenge can be met, and that the future viability of our students requires less than a dedicated commitment to bring about such change.

That our responsibility to adopt a more learner-centred approach to education should be so compelling now, when many large lectures seem the obvious response to crowded faculty/student ratios, and nearly all faculty are heavily pressed, is a cruel irony. We can, however, reduce the amount of time that faculty spend in preparing and delivering lectures and courses for life-long learning, effectively. Other strategies aimed at liberating faculty time for learner-centred education (and the research upon which it is based) are proposed in the Strategic Plan; they include reduced course offerings, paring away unnecessary activity, and an increased use of seminar, graduate student, and staff in teaching or supporting learning. Computer-assisted instruction will not save faculty time or money in the short term, but for some kinds of learning it is monstrosity more effective, and there will be substantial savings down the line. Independent and distance education by research by students requires more supervision and will never save faculty time; it is obviously not a strategy for the development of our students to their own devices. Ongoing change to curricula, the preparation of learning materials, the construction of larger group work will all require a major expenditure of faculty time. We cannot do everything at once. But we can begin, consult widely, and critically — and hope that our collective ingenuity (and attempts to convince government of the folly of disinvestment in university education) will prevail.

RECOMMENDATION # 17: A mandatory first-year "inquiry" course should be developed, around the theme: Just matter it means integrating the humanities, social sciences, and science; its central aim should be to help students become more self-reliant learners and to promote an understanding of research and the process thereof.

ACTION: Associate Vice-President Academic

This course will be essential in helping our students to function within a learner-centred environment. To develop a rigorous and exciting course, a task force will be established, comprised of innovative and highly respected faculty, staff members, and students, working closely with program committee, the administrative, and the Board of Undergraduate Studies. (The work involved in developing, implementing, and evaluating such a course campus-wide will assist us in managing the community's transition to a more learner-centred approach.) By positing the inquiry course in the first year of our studies, we set the tone for our learner-centred environment. The inquiry course will promote an open and critical approach to education that will create the vital links between critical thinking, research, and learning. Students should have access to one or more "learning workstations" (e.g., library, computer software) that will be required of them throughout their studies at university and beyond. Other courses should also encourage learning skills acquired in this course. The course will draw on resources from across campus — faculty and support services alike — and can be offered in a modular form to accommodate special needs. It must afford opportunities for small group interaction and for writing.

RECOMMENDATION # 18: Certain courses within each program should be "designated writing courses," such courses should have a significant writing requirement and provide students with careful feedback on writing skills within the context of their various disciplines. The development of a specific number of designated writing courses should be a university requirement for graduation.

ACTION: Associate Vice-President Academic and program committees, to explore the development of this initiative in 1996

Of all the University's Learning Objectives, Literacy may require immediate and systematic attention. The development of writing and speaking skills required of the student in the demand in the world of work for more highly literate graduates is growing. "Designated writing courses" would intend to integrate writing from all disciplines and provide specific means to monitor and improve communication skills.

The original intent of the Learning Objectives was that there should be the generic outcomes of the baccalaureate experience. Few if any single courses will serve as a "literacy" objective at once. Our limited success in the implementation of the Learning Objectives is a function of inadequate attention to the development of skills on a whole and to the trajectories of students moving through the curriculum. The SPC reaffirms the University's commitment to the Learning Objectives and its responsibility to ensure that the aggregate of courses each student takes (together with
the learning that takes place outside of the course structure) will effectively address all of the Learning Objectives. The recommendation relating to designated writing courses is one important dimension of this curriculum-wide approach to improvement, but it is not implied that writing should be required only in designated writing courses; rather, attempts to ensure that in these courses at least a particularly concerted effort will be made, and that all students will be helped to write well. Designated writing courses will be resource-intensive; although additional resources (perhaps involving the Writing Centre) will be required for support in some courses, and the class size will have to be protected, many existing courses would simply require designation. The first-year incoherence should be made a designated writing course.

RECOMMENDATION # 19: With an increase in the use of computer-assisted instruction, it will be necessary for students to have increased access to computers. In the short term, we should increase computer workstations and encourage students to purchase their own computers; in the long term, we should require students to have their own computers.

ACTION: Provost

The University must be sensitive to the cost to students of acquiring their own computers, and explore ways of assisting them — e.g., bulk purchase, interest- or University-backed loans, loans/equities, and bursaries. Time lines should be established for the implementation of this, with a reference to Recommendations # 32.

RECOMMENDATION # 20: The University should offer a range of experiential education options. To this end, the University should establish by January 1996 an Experiential Education Advisory Group, involving faculty, staff, students, and alumni wherever possible — to consider issues associated with the work-related portion of an experiential education program and to advise the University on the placement of students in a variety of such experiential learning opportunities.

ACTION: President, Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs, and the Board of Undergraduate Studies subcommittee on Work/Study Programs.

Among the avenues to be explored are single or two-term work/study opportunities, the enhancement of co-op opportunities, and on-campus employment. The increased use of students in peer paraprofessional, volunteer, and participant programs in the University should be pursued as a means of facilitating involvement in the University and of providing cost-effective, experiential educational opportunities. The participation of alumni and other friends of the University in the Experiential Education Advisory Group will be critical, particularly as the need to fund these programs and the means to support them are under consideration.

The SPC interprets experiential learning broadly, to include all of what might be termed "learning by doing." Informa-
tion gleaned from our environmental scans clearly points us in this direction. Third parties will be addressed, and on work-related portion of the experiential learning, continuum, which may be less expensive to develop. Not all depart-

RECOMMENDATION # 21: All under-

graduates and all graduate research students should be evaluated stu-
dents. A common set of questions should be introduced university-

wide, to form a part of each department's curriculum.

ACTION: Provost, Joint Faculty Policies Committee

The SPC recognizes the challenge pre-

RECOMMENDATION # 22: A Learning Enhancement Fund should be established at a minimum of 0.5 percent of the University's MET operating budget and in-

prise as rapidly as circumstances permit.

ACTION: President and Provost

The learner-centred university cannot be sustained without an adequate funding of substantial resources. Enhancing learning, especially in ways that employ the new learning technologies, takes a significant commitment of resources. It is a critical accountability issue, as well. A common set of questions for under-

colleges to the identification of areas of strength and weakness, on a cooperative basis, different set of common questions could be used for graduate quizz.

reccommendations to the following for 

The University of Guelph seeks to main-

RECOMMENDATION # 23: During the first year, students should be encouraged to participate in the University of Guelph's International Experience Program.

ACTION: President, Academic Affairs, and Overseas Study Office

The University of Guelph currently operates, on a limited basis, an International Experience Program. Designed to give students opportunities for course work and/or research experiences in another country, the program offers a diversity of experiences, from short-term opportunities to full-year programs. In 1995-96, the program is being expanded to include longer and more diverse opportunities, with an emphasis on countries that are less developed. The program is designed to provide students with opportunities to gain a broader perspective on the world, to experience a different culture, and to develop skills that are valuable in the global economy. The program is open to all undergraduate and graduate students, and applications are accepted on a rolling basis. For more information, please visit the University of Guelph's International Experience Program website at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/ieg/ieg/index.html>.
3. COLLABORATION

Collaboration is not typically regarded as an end in itself. It is proposed by the Commission as a strategic direction because to pursue that direction vigorously would require a concerted effort and a change of mind-set throughout the University. It is an essential coping strategy, and a means of achieving more than can be accomplished by individuals alone. In the long term, however, it may also be an end in itself. The competitive orientation or focus on individual achievement that has characterized universities in the past will no longer suffice; collaboration, or cooperation, is now vital — something we must learn to earn more quickly, something we must help our students to learn. Clearly, it is important for our intellectual work. Collaboration is important not only within disciplines. The need to promote interdisciplinary teaching and research is made apparent by the increasing complexity and interconnectedness of the problems both university faculty and students in the workplace will be called upon to address. The “scholarship of the next generation” will occur between and within the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities — it will be critical for life in the 21st century.

Collaboration is a strategy that must be more prominent in our thought and in our functions, if we are to flourish in hard times. It is a strategy to be enacted on campus and off, locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally. It means (among other things) working much more closely with alumni, and with our educational institutions, government, and the business community. Collaboration is not a new idea at the University of Guelph. It has, for example, been a strategy of choice for our research endeavours. But we must be still more collaborative in the future, particularly with respect to undergraduate education, support services, and infrastructure.

The need to reinforce the partnership between the academic and non-academic is urgent. One suggestion is, perhaps, greater than ever. There is little doubt that our commitment to the education and well-being of “the whole person” is an effective and distinguishing feature of the University of Guelph and one that requires partnerships among all of us who dedicate ourselves to the development of our students. But we must be more than a strategy of choice for our research endeavours. Nor must we be more than a strategy of choice for our undergraduate education, support services, and infrastructure.

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the relevance of our curriculum. Several of our disciplines are particularly well-positioned to contribute to excellence and internationalization within the context of research, education, and service, with the added support of the University's global footprint. This includes students, faculty, staff, and the wider community who are engaged in international collaboration and partnerships.

4. INTERNATIONALISM

The world faces challenges arising from globalization, regionalism, and international cooperation. These challenges require expertise, resources, and partnerships across educational, research, and societal boundaries. The University of Guelph, as a leading institution, recognizes its role and responsibility to contribute to the global community.

In this context, the University of Guelph has a unique opportunity to strengthen its international standing and enhance its reputation in the global arena. The ambitious strategic priorities outlined in Making Change: The Strategic Plan for the University of Guelph will be realized through a focus on internationalization, which includes the development of partnerships, collaborations, and engagement with international institutions and organizations.

To achieve these objectives, the University of Guelph has developed a comprehensive internationalization strategy that encompasses research, teaching, and service. This strategy aims to enhance the University's global presence and reputation, while also contributing to the advancement of knowledge and understanding of global issues.

In conclusion, the University of Guelph is committed to building a strong international profile and fostering a culture of global engagement. This will be achieved through strategic partnerships, innovative programs, and a commitment to excellence in research, teaching, and service.

5. OPEN LEARNING

What do we mean by "Open Learning"? It is a term that encompasses the delivery of credit and non-credit courses to students, regardless of their physical location. This includes undergraduate and graduate degree/diploma programs. The non-credit portion of the Open Learning operation was formed in 1990 as a result of a government decision to focus on regional and community initiatives.

The credit portion of the Open Learning program is a significant and important part of the University's mission. This program offers a wide range of courses and programs, including degree and diploma programs, as well as credit and non-credit courses. The Open Learning program is committed to providing quality education to a diverse student body, with a focus on accessibility, affordability, and flexibility.

The Open Learning program is well positioned to deliver high-quality education and training to students who are unable to attend traditional classroom settings. This includes students who are unable to attend traditional classroom settings, as well as those who are interested in pursuing professional development, further education, or personal growth.

In conclusion, the Open Learning program is an integral part of the University of Guelph's mission to provide high-quality education to a diverse student body, with a focus on accessibility, affordability, and flexibility.

The University of Guelph is committed to delivering excellence in education and research, and is well positioned to meet the needs of a rapidly changing world. With a focus on internationalization, open learning, and research excellence, the University of Guelph will continue to be a leader in higher education, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and understanding, and making a positive impact on society.

The University of Guelph is proud to be a part of a vibrant community that values education, innovation, and research excellence. With a commitment to excellence in all that we do, the University of Guelph is well positioned to continue to be a leader in higher education, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and understanding, and making a positive impact on society.
D. SUPPORTING OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Support areas should support the academic enterprise. The recent decision to have the Vice-President Academic function also as Provost is an important step in providing adequate integration and clarification of roles, but these must be fostered at other administrative levels as well. In relation to such critical issues as enrolment management and close cooperation between academic programs and the Registrar's Office, the Welcome Centre will be essential. Close cooperation between the Office of Research and all academic units is equally critical; the creation of the position of Provost, to whom the profession looks with the DVC's will happen, we trust that research considerations will play an important part in decisions made by the Provost.

1. LINKS BETWEEN STUDENT SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

While opportunities for more effective collaboration with academic units exist across campus, student service areas may be particularly critical. Our challenge is to harness and coordinate the considerable strengths that exist both there and in academic units, so that the commitment both groups have to the welfare of our students will yield the best possible learning experience. Examples of such synergy include the development of the Office of First Year Studies associated programs, Introduction To Higher Learning (58-150), and the very effective involvement of student affairs personnel with the DVC's office. We believe that additional opportunities may exist. For example, the degree of integration between Teaching Support Services and the Counselling and Student Resource Centre should be examined by the units involved, with a view to clarifying roles and perhaps providing a joint learning and teaching group. Student affairs staff generally have an important role to play in support of an environment dedicated to learning. Not only do they deal with students, they can foster appropriate extracurricular activity and bring special expertise to bear on the education of the whole person, helping to integrate the learning that takes place in academic programs with learning that takes place elsewhere.

2. ADVISING AND COUNSELLING

RECOMMENDATION #30: The Associate Vice-President Academic should develop a plan for counselling and advising that reflects the following features:

- Program counsellors should report to the Associate VP Academic, as well as relevant deans.
- Greater equity must be achieved in the workloads of program counsellors.
- A central site for program counsellors (as opposed to academic advisors located in departments) should be created, with particular emphasis on the needs of students who have not yet declared a specialization.
- Career counselling should continue centrally, but must also make its way much more effectively into departmental advising and program counselling.
- First-rate counselling documents must be produced at the department and program levels.
- More regular and effective communication among program counsellors and between program counsellors and departmental advisors must occur, as well as between these individuals and curriculum and program committees.
- The importance of the advising function must be reflected in the training and selection of departmental academic advisors, and their evaluation by Tenure and Promotion Committee.

Effective academic advising and counselling is critical for students, and must be a high priority for the University. Our counselling function has been examined from different perspectives and by several different groups over the past decade, and positive changes have occurred as a consequence of these reviews. Still, students looking back on their undergraduate careers remain seriously dissatisfied: only 45 percent of graduates express satisfaction with the quality of academic advising/program counselling, and only 29 percent with career counselling. The problems identified in earlier reviews can only be addressed by the above recommendations. The University should also explore a range of options for making counselling and advising, both academic and personal, more cost effective.

3. LIBRARY RESOURCES

RECOMMENDATION #31: To take advantage of changes in computing and networking technology, and to support our learner-centred, research-intensive agenda, a full range of electronic information sources and access tools must be made available to supplement conventional forms of information. The appropriate balance between monographs and journals (including electronic forms) must be examined in each discipline in light of needs related to self-reliant learning and research-intensiveness.

ACTION: Chief Librarian, Pro- vost, and Senate Library Committee.

The core function of the Library is to acquire, organize, maintain, and provide access to ideas and information essential to the academic mission. The digital body of this information will be available electronically, and the Library's ability to facilitate access, search, and retrieval of electronic information will be critical to the realization of a more learner-centered, research-intensive university. Dramatic advances in technology intro-duce new challenges, but are extraordinary and continually timely: in an era of proliferating materials and escalating costs no re- search library can afford to own everything that faculty and student researchers will require. The solution to our library's immediate and long-term needs is the use of document delivery systems, which can provide timely access to rarely used but essentially essential periodic. Increased electronic access to information and bibliographic data bases around the globe will have far-reaching implications for Library acquisitions and priorities, as well as computing and communications infrastructure.

The Library budget as a whole must be re-examined in the context of strategic directions, access to a global information infrastructure and ever-increasing demands for new kinds of services. Provost and Provost's Office in particular, will play a greater role in collection development. Historically, Guelph has relied heavily upon the efforts of faculty in this regard. While faculty, and outside. to continue to play a major role, it is worth noting that most prominent university libraries are engaged in a comprehensive and systematic approach to collection development libraries, to achieve balanced collections. A hybrid model seems desirable in a research-intensive, learner-centred university.

4. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

RECOMMENDATION #32: The Provost should create a task force (a) to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the needs and responsibilities of the University with respect to computing and communications hardware, supporting software, resources (human and financial) and decision-making structures, and (b) having sought out and selected appropriate strategies and private-sector computer companies, develop a comprehensive plan that will be responsive to evolving needs and technological opportunities over the next decade, particularly as these relate to the delivery of academic programs.

ACTION: Provost should present the report to Senate for information and action by June 1996

Recent advances in computing and communications technology are nothing short of revolutionary. Powerful low-cost workstations, the convergence of voice, data, image, and video technologies, and the exponential growth of worldwide networks offer opportunities that will have a profound impact on the University of Guelph. Soliciting the best possible advice, developing the right decision-making process, choosing the right opportunities, and then investing in hardware, software, technical support, and appropriate training will be essential.

Equally challenging is the need to preserve flexibility; we must be able to adapt to changing needs and opportunities.
E. CHANGING OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Given a reduced faculty complement, we have no choice but to reduce the number of our courses and course offerings. While the recommendations contained in this section of the report are not very significant, the implications, all (in varying degrees) will help us to prosper in the face of significantly reduced faculty and staff numbers.

1. THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

RECOMMENDATION #34: The University should move to fall entry only for new undergraduate degree students, as soon as it is operationally feasible to do so. ACTION: Senate and Associate Vice-President Academic

The report to the SPC on "The Advantages and Disadvantages of the Semester System" concluded that there are very few fundamental differences between the semester and the "continually enrolled" or "annually renewed" systems operated by most Ontario universities. The feature that makes our system unique is only an operational one: the University of Guelph offers three annual entry points to its credit courses and most of its degree programs for undergraduate students. Although all our entry points provide students with more flexibility, the great majority still choose to begin their university career in the fall semester. The impact of accommodating the small number of students who enter in spring or winter is enormous; it pervades almost every aspect of our undergraduate curriculum, learning and working environment, allocation of resources, and administrative procedures.

These entry points generate multiple student cohorts, and this influences curriculum design, including the timing and frequency of course offerings over the academic year. Multiple cohorts also require different academic procedures and the way in which non-academic units deliver course offerings to their students. Lack of intensive student cohorts within many programs may actually impede peer-based learning because of a lack of familiarity with one's classmates.

All of this takes its toll on the community. We do almost everything three times during an academic year. Each semester, students spend inordinate amounts of time and energy "charging" the system with its steady diet of pre-registration, drop/add, renewal of library privileges, fees to be paid, and other bureaucratic features. Doing everything three times a year in order to accommodate approximately 100 to 200 students is inefficient and has high opportunity costs. Everyone agrees, except students' time, could be spent more profitably if we reduced the number of "classes" over the academic year.

With the elimination of the winter undergraduate registration period, all students entering and in-course undergraduate students would register for fall and winter courses before the beginning of the fall semester. This might bring single billing periods for the two semesters. The option of two installment payments for tuition should be retained. The SPC does not believe that the single entry point should be used as a method of generating additional revenue for the University related to the timing of fee payments.

RECOMMENDATION #35: The spring semester must be reconstructed with a view to increasing efficiency. ACTION: Associate Vice-President Academic and Board of Undergraduate Studies

The University should continue to operate a summer session, but to increase efficiency course sections should be reduced at least in the short term; the mix of course offerings should change; and distance courses should play a more important role. The details and process of downsizing must be left to programs, departments, and colleges.

The spring semester was expected to play an important role in the University of Guelph's semester system. The 1990 report of the Senate Committee on University Planning clearly shows that our expectations have not been realized. Over the 1979-1989 period, Guelph's spring Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment averaged 14 percent compared to the Ontario university system average of 22 percent. Many attempts have been made to improve the performance of the spring semester, but despite these, the relationship of spring enrollment to fall enrollment has never increased beyond 19 percent. The vast majority of students registered in the spring semester take three or fewer courses. The relatively small size and rural nature of Guelph are prevalent in our courses are attractive, but must be weighed against resources implications and inequities created. We expect that the fall and spring semesters. In Spring 1993, for example, the University offered courses equivalent to 30 percent of those offered Fall 1993, but received only 18 percent of the fall enrolment.

The University cannot rely on in-course students to sustain the viability of the spring semester. Moreover, the issue of required courses for co-op students in the spring semester must be re-evaluated. The overriding principle is that classes in the spring semester should be as independent as possible. Spring semester classes, and the number of classes in the other semesters. To achieve this, we will have to reduce the number of spring offerings at least for the short term. A reduction of course offerings would also extend the availability of campus facilities for other educational purposes, including those that generate revenue for the University.

The SPC strongly recommends also that the University investigate the feasibility of creating additional credit course offerings, including distance courses, with the summer offerings of other institutions. This matter will be important particularly when we regard the needs of co-op students. Such an investigation should include the development of reciprocal agreements with other institutions of course equivalences.

2. COURSE CREDITS FOR GRADUATION

RECOMMENDATION #36: The University should adopt a credit system in which courses are weighted as 0.5, 0.6, 0.5, 1.0 (the current norm at Guelph) 1.5, 2.0 credits.

ACTION: Board of Undergraduate Studies

Our current system requires a specified number of courses for graduation from a program, e.g., 30 credits for B.A. or B.Sc., 40 courses for an Honours B.A. or B.Sc.). All courses have equal weight. (The very few year-long or double courses in the computer science program carry two course numbers.) This system has been criticized as inflexible and inequitable. Students carrying a full course load generally take five or fewer courses per semester, thus, it is argued, having to focus on too many different things at once. A more flexible system permitting greater concentration, would increase learning.

Courses having very different workloads associated with them — e.g., science courses requiring more study than the same value for graduation and competition of average, and this is widely regarded as unfair. Courses must be evaluated to determine their relative value: this credit value should not be based on contact hours, because that is inconsistent with the nature of the teaching activities. The current system of steady credit value should reflect the time required for students to do their work well. This recommendation will allow the University to examine the time required to complete courses of different lengths and allow students a more intense intellectual focus. The credit system allows program committees to take into account the number of specially designed courses — e.g., three courses at 1.5 plus one or 0.5 at 1.0 in one term or four or five at 1.0 or 0.5 at 1.0 in another term or fourth year of a particular program — will result in greater student learning. It increases flexibility for students, and small group and independent study possibilities, in making it possible to offer a course at 1.0 or 1.5 credits according to whether the student takes an attached seminar, lab, or research option. The 0.5 option facilitates a modular approach to curriculum development, and makes it possible to address the problem of substantial (but not complete) duplication across programs: thus, a single course for 0.5 might contain the common material and different specializations. Specialized material serving different programs. This single model — 0.5 plus 0.5 — would make it possible within a given term (or across terms) for students serving all students in a particular subject area and a choice of related seminars. The 0.0 weight is proposed as a means of tracking required non-credit courses or modules. The credit system is NOT a strategy for short-changing our students. While it will reduce the number of courses that some of our students take overall, its intent is to increase learning.

If the recommendation is accepted, there are implications that program committees and the Associate Vice-President Academic will have to address — including graduation and program requirements, rules concerning continuation of students, calculation of grade averages and tuition fees, and the definition of a full-time student. A credit evaluation system could be introduced to the current system of courses and may require adaptation to ensure consistency between the graduate and undergraduate systems.

3. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

RECOMMENDATION #37: The University should adopt a system for assessing prior learning and
skill development; a student who can demonstrate possession of the knowledge and skills required to complete a course would receive credit for that course towards a degree.

ACTION: Board of Undergraduate Studies

Some students enter the University with experience and knowledge equivalent to that offered by some university courses. There are restrictions in place to give them advance credit on entry for knowledge or experience acquired in other educational institutions, but there is no mechanism for recognizing the additional knowledge acquired in a non-institutional or continuing education setting. One way of giving such recognition is to establish courses from which they have the equivalent knowledge, if such courses are required or prerequisites for required courses. But such students will have to meet graduation requirements in terms of total number of credits acquired at Guelph to qualify for a degree. Our system is a waiver of requirements, rather than direct credit. Another approach is to allow students to demonstrate that they have the knowledge or experience to complete a course.

This approach, also known as "challenging a course," is already allowed in some other institutions. If the assessment or "challenging a course" is successful, the student is given credit for the course, and total requirements for graduation are reduced. Program committees, in consultation with departments, will probably wish to place a limit on the number of courses for which a student may request an assessment of prior learning. The prior learning assessment option is proposed as cost-effective. The Committee recommends that credit be given on the basis of an assessment met by a fee assessed to students, and the University reduces enrolment pressure. The student avoids wasting time and money.

4. REVIEW OF PROGRAMS, SPECIALIZATIONS, AND COURSES

A great task that faces the University is the thorough review of its programs, specializations, and courses. Part of this task is a paring away of courses and specializations that are no longer relevant or appropriate to the faculty and to achieve greater efficiency; and part is a vital reconstruction of the curriculum, in pursuit of our strategic directions. We do not have the luxury of standing back from the curriculum, reimagining it in its entirety, and then implementing change. In particular, we cannot wait to remove from the system work that will no longer have the faculty to perform. This must be our first priority. Without this, the risk of the reorganization of the regular faculty complement, the increased sessional budget, increased per capita responsibility for the teaching and supervision of graduate students, and the additional time needed for initiatives related to the learner-centered University will be multiplied. A reduction of 400 undergraduate course sections (or 20 percent of existing course sections) will have to be dropped. Approximately 100 scheduled changes in the current academic year would be made by the move to single enry; others involving duplication of effort can also be removed from the real hardship list. The challenge is still considerable time. But we must find time, and then spend time, if we are to use time more effectively in the future.

As courses and specializations are de- duced, it will be important to keep certain principles in mind. We consider that, to the extent possible, the objectives of the learner-centered curriculum we will be constructing over the next decade, to our Strategic Directions document, and to the specific needs and aspirations of students should be served by the courses and programs of the system. Not all of this will be clear at once, but to the extent possible we should coordinate course deletions with future and anticipated changes in the curriculum. The firm grasp of reality will be needed, as we begin this iterative process. Coopera- tion among deans, program committees, and the Board of Undergraduate Studies will be critical. Information related to changing re- sources must be fed into the process; the Board of Undergraduate Studies and senior academic line managers will be responsible for ensuring that this es- sential link is made. The Board itself will require of program committees, and pro- gram committees will require of departments, a commitment to expedite change in keeping with the University's Strategic Plan.

Goals must be set quickly for the reduc- tion of course offerings. Some departments have already reduced course offerings to the necessary minimum, but most departments will need to have goals for reduction, and these will vary considerably. In addition, the Board of Undergraduate Studies must ensure that course offerings vital to students in other departments or programs are not elimi- nated by departments seeking to maintain an impec- table level of cur- ricular richness for their own Sonors programs.

A reduction in the number of offerings will indeed reduce curricular richness and result in an increase in average class size. While a move to reduce the richness of our offerings cannot be lightly done, it is worth noting that the diversity of our offerings is far exceeds that of other uni- versities with whom we compete for students. The increase in the size of some classes is at least equally problematic, because that impact must be reconciled with the objectives of maintaining the number of small group learning experiences available to students. The extent to which these competing objectives are realized will depend partly on the degree to which efficiencies in other aspects of teaching occur, and partly on a more flexible approach to course scheduling.

With effective independent learning modules in place, faculty members could spend less time in lecturing and more time supervising research or designing tutorials to be led by graduate students. The increase in the size of some classes is at least equally problematic, because that impact must be reconciled with the objectives of maintaining the number of small group learning experiences available to students. The extent to which these competing objectives are realized will depend partly on the degree to which efficiencies in other aspects of teaching occur, and partly on a more flexible approach to course scheduling.

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RECOMMENDATION # 38: The Board of Undergraduate Studies (BUGS) must begin an ongoing re- view of all specializations, and with a view to reducing the number of specializations. The review should be based on a common set of criteria which in- clude:

1. the compatibility of the speciali- zation with the University's mission;
2. the extent to which the specialization duplicates or overlaps with other specializations on campuses, and the societal need for the specialization, including the availability of similar specializations at other Ontario institutions;
3. the availability of necessary re- sources (including personnel, library and computer resources, studio and laboratory space) to offer the speciali- zation at a level of quality the community (i.e., Senate) deems ac- ceptable academically;
4. the actual or anticipated enrol- ment in the specialization.

The Board of Undergraduate Studies will be expected to fine-tune these criteria and subsequently apply and enforce them in assessing proposed and ongo- ing specializations and report annually to Senate.

Further, we recommend:

1. that new specializations should be approved by Senate only if they satisfy all criteria;
2. that the number of courses appro- priate for any specialization should be a minimum requirement to maintain a viable specialization with additional courses only where enrolment war- rants;
3. that BUGS and Senate should approve new specializations only where all necessary resources are being available to support them;
4. that in cases where apparent dupli- cation between undergraduate specializations exists, BUGS should instruct the relevant program commit- tee(s) to determine how the specializations concerned should be differentiated or amalgamated;
5. that for existing undergraduate specializations, BUGS should in- struct program committees to complete and then continue the re- views on a five-year basis; that these reviews will include a consideration of specializations with the lowest enrolments and that special efforts should be made to determine whether the viability of low-enrolment specializations can be improved by inter-institutional collaboration.

Explicit recommendations should be made for discontinuation or change in cases where either enrolment falls be- low a minimum acceptable or resources are insufficient to ensure acceptable quality.

RECOMMENDATION # 39: A re- view of courses must be carried out in conjunction with the reviews of specializations, with a view to re- ducing the number of courses. The Board of Undergraduate Studies should take the following criteria into consideration in the review of courses; and the assessment of whether undergraduate courses are introduced, continued, or discontinued:

1. the possible requirement of the course within an approved speciali- zation;
2. the availability of sufficient re- sources to offer the course;
3. the extent to which the course duplicates or overlaps with other courses or campus;
4. the frequency of offerings and the feasibility of offering the course either in alternate years or in the distance mode;
5. the opportunity for collabora- tion with neighbouring institu- tions;
6. the infrastructure — such as library and computer resources, studio and laboratory space — needed to operate the course at a level of quality the community feels is acceptable academically;
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(7) the actual or anticipated enroll-
ment in the course.

The Board of Undergraduate Studies is expected to fine-tune these criteria and apply them in assessing proposed and ongoing courses and report annually to Senate.

Further, we recommend:

(i) that new courses not be approved by Senate without consideration of all the points listed;

(ii) that specializations, to the extent possible, specify courses as "required" or "elective," rather than as "choose x from among y," so that the impact of continuing or discontinuing a course offering can be more readily ascertained;

(iii) that enrollment be a more significant consideration for introducing or continuing courses that are used only as electives;

(iv) that BUGS give special consider-
ation to low enrollment courses that serve as honours projects, occasionally offered special topics, and reading courses at the 400 level;

(v) that complete listings of all under-
graduate courses offered during the previous two years and their enroll-
ments be available, on an ongoing basis, to departments and program committees to assist them in the de-
velopment and management of their programs;

(vi) that courses appearing in the cal-
endar be listed no less frequently than on a two-year cycle; that semes-
ter offerings be designated; and that any course not offered during this cy-
cle be removed from the calendar unless it is a special topics course.

Irregularly offered courses should be confined to a series of course numbers reserved for "special topics" under each specialization.

RECOMMENDATION #40: Program committees must assume institutional responsibility for ensuring that the objectives of the learner-centred agenda (self-reliant learning, the research-teaching link, skill development, and experiential learning) and the Strategic Directions of the Uni-
versity are addressed optimally by the curriculum they oversee. In par-
ticular, they should promote:

• methods of instruction that foster self-reliant learning, including the involvement of undergraduates in research and other creative activi-
ty;

• small group experiences, such as seminars, tutorials, and projects in which communication and interpersonal skills are pur-
posely developed;

• the internationalizing and cultural inclusiveness of curriculum; on this matter, the Board of Undergraduate Studies will report to Senate by September 1997, informing the community of progress made by its program committees.

This recommendation calls attention to the pivotal role of program committees, which must in general become more proactive as we develop a more systemic approach to curriculum. Too great a proportion of the effort of many program committees is currently being spent on the minutiae of course changes and program changes, and too little on the overall management of the degree program. Senate has given clear mandates to pro-
gram committees, and these mandates must be carried out under the leadership of program committee chairs and BUGS. Program committees may also require restructuring. Members of program committees should be appointed by the Dean(s) to guide the program, Commit-
tees must be not all departments, councils, or interdisciplinary programs will be represented.

b. Graduate Specializations and Courses

Separate internal reviews of graduate specializations are considered unnecessary, since these are all externally appraised. As far as possible, depart-
ments should organize their graduate courses in the manner best suited to the program, an exception being courses that have "outside" or "calling" for students outside the department. In this case, the Board of Graduate Studies, acting in a role parallel to that of an undergraduate program committee, would need to pro-
tect the interests of students outside the home department. We suggest that the Graduate Calendar follow the practice of the Undergraduate Calendar in identify-
ing semester offerings for all courses, and list only those courses that would be available on a two-year calendar cy-
cle, with less frequent offerings advertised as special topics. The rati-
est for this choice is to allow incoming Master's students, typically stay about two years, to plan their course work upon arrival.

F. CHANGING OUR ACADEMIC STRUCTURES

The SPC's Academic Planning Com-
mittee was asked to assess the University's current structure in incoming departments, colleges, faculties, pro-
gram committees, and centres in relation to alternatives and the potential for re-
configuration. The objectives of the assessment included enhancing interdisci-
plinary teaching and research, improving the University's ability to re-
new and reform curricula, and increasing efficiency in the use of resources. Among the weaknesses of the current academic structure identified by the Acade-
ic Planning Committee, the following are particularly significant:

• Boundaries between departments and colleges inhibit interdisciplinary and interdepartmental activity in nu-
merous ways, including lack of resources for programs that are not clearly identified with a specific de-
partment and lack of recognition for faculty engaged in work outside the department's major area. Another consequence is a lack of flexibility to pursue new initiatives occurring in disciplines that bridge the mandate of more than one department, e.g., environment, bio-
technology.

• In order to promote interdepartmen-
tal/interdisciplinary activities, the University has established a system of research/departmental/inter-
disciplinary committees, faculties, councils, and research centres. These structures have been designed to fa-
cilitate the creation, but their effectiveness is limited to a signific-
antly smaller degree by their virtual isolation from the resource-allocation proc-
ess.

• A number of departments assigned to different colleges in the 1969 con-
figuration of the University have contingent roles. Mandates of such departments were distinguished pri-
marily by their applied orientation (e.g., Family Studies) or basic orien-
tation (e.g., Psychology). As these departments and their colleges have evolved, the distinguishing features have begun to blur, introducing real or potential duplication in academic programs and with faculty resources.

• To accommodate the required down-
sizing of faculty and staff, and project quality in teaching programs, the University must have flexibility. But departmental and college boundaries have been a difficult factor for flex-
ility in one department to teach courses in another, even if academically qualified. Teaching assign-
ments are sometimes made not in the best interest of the University, but in the best interest of the department.

• Most degree programs have evolved in such a way that they are no longer embodied in a single college. As a consequence, administrative respon-
sibility for some of our major undergraduate programs is separate from control of the budget, staff and faculty hiring, teaching assignments, merit evaluation, etc. In one case, the BSc(Evan), a complete degree pro-
gram lies outside the college structure. Most program committees do not fulfill the mandates given to them by Senate (see Senate Bylaws pp. 55-57, especially 8). The exception is the BSC(Agr) committee, but in this case the OAC Dean could use his budget authority to im-
plement changes proposed in Vision '95. Similar changes to the under-
graduate curriculum in the BSc and BA programs require coordinated action by two or more deans and are therefore harder to achieve.

• There are problems in tying graduate teaching assistantships, and there-
fore the Dean of the Dean's financial support for graduate programs, to the undergraduate teaching needs of a department. Departments with large undergraduate service courses have GTAs to support their graduate pro-
grams, whereas those without them must find research or other external funds to support their graduate pro-
grams.

1. COLLEGES

RECOMMENDATION #41: A re-
view of the college structure and the effectiveness of councils should be undertaken and a report made to Senate by June, 2000.

Possible realignments of departments with the view to enhancing the degree of interaction between departments with a "pure" and "applied" science focus, as well as reducing the number of colleges. Some reduction of administrative costs could also presumably be achieved in this way. However, a compelling case has not yet been made for any particular reconfiguration of the colleges. Sub-
sequent recommendations regarding colleges and interdepartmental structures may result in considerable change over the next five years. A re-ex-
amination of the distribution of programs across the colleges and of the number of colleges will be appropri-
ate at that time.

2. DEPARTMENTS

Every department was reviewed by the Commission's Academic Planning Committee. Several departments, or parts of departments, were considered to have roles that were contiguous and/or overlapping. In these cases, we have taken a detailed analysis of the relationships between these depart-
ments, their academic offerings, or the allocation of resources. Any further strengthening of the programs in these departments through greater co-
laborations or realignments, however, do merit further examination; the depart-
ments in question are best positioned to undertake this assessment. Other depart-
ments are strongly encouraged to pursue similar opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION #42: Discus-
sions should be initiated (or continue where already under way) in the following departments to ex-
amine the advantages and disadvantages of realignments or closer association through participa-
tion in councils:

• Veterinary Microbiology and Im-
munology/Pathology

• University School of Rural Plan-
ning and Development/landscape Architecture/ Rural Extension Studies

• Environmental Biology/ Horticul-
tural Science

• Land Resource Science/Geogra-
phy

Particular attention should be paid to implications for change in ad-
ministration, hiring of staff and faculty, sharing of space and equip-
ment, and coordination of course and program offerings (graduate and undergraduate). Discussions should be facilitated by the Dean where the departments are in the same college and by the Provost where the departments are in dif-
ferent colleges. The facilitator should define a schedule for com-
pleting each discussion, and the Provost should report the results of all discussions on realign-
m/association of departments to Senate no later than January 1996.

The nature and extent of collaboration that is appropriate for different units will vary. Departments associated with the
first two of the combinations identified in the introductory section have already begun discussions on merging.

3. COUNCILS

Various structures have evolved that cut across departmental lines and are intended to facilitate communication and collaboration between faculty and departments. Interdepartmental structures vary in purpose and duration, and are appropriately established with varying degrees of formality. Some structures can operate as vehicles for departments with contiguous responsibilities to examine operational overlaps, such as undergraduate and graduate programs and for using physical, financial, and human resources more effectively; they may represent in some instances an intermediate stage in the evolution of such departments into new, larger departments — which the Commission believes should evolve, as opposed to being forced. Facilitating the evolution of structures, achieving efficiencies, and enhancing interdepartmental activity are, of course, key objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Where interdepartmental activity occurs within a college, the Dean and Dean’s Council should be responsible for the management of these structures. More problematic are interdepartmental structures that span colleges. The concept of councils has been employed in many colleges to ensure that both faculty are working well for the University. Building on this experience seems to the Commission a sensible approach. Recommendation #43 articulates the general responsibilities (and composition) of councils; it is not expected, however, that a single model or set of rules can be imposed on all councils. In its discussion of particular areas below the main body of the recommendation, the Commission proposes several new councils and identifies issues that should be addressed by existing councils.

Although the work associated with councils must be tied to (through associated departments and colleges) to resource allocation processes, councils are not proposed as budget units. Neither are they envisaged as adding an extra layer of bureaucracy. Instead, they have been viewed as usurp normal departmental activity. Councils are simply coordinating bodies for facilitating interdepartmental activity. Decisions affecting interdepartmental activity must be made; and the alternative is to transfer this responsibility to the vice-presidential level, where subject-specific expertise will be less. Councils, the SPC believes, should be seen as extending the reach of accredited faculty to all departments.

Councils would involve departmental Chairs in more complex issues of management. It would still challenge them to play a decisive role in fostering the strategic direction of collaboration. The membership of councils will vary in accordance with the primary functions of each, but must be kept at a manageable size.

The relative emphasis to be placed on communicating and coordinating across disciplines, the ranking of opportunities for consolidating departments and their teaching programs, will vary with the council. The recognition of interdepartmental barriers, and the reflection of differences in the nature of responsibilities and the stage of development of councils in the different areas. Many of our interdepartmental graduate programs and undergraduate specializations, as well as service courses in science, have been located in small divisions that span colleges, relate to one of the councils discussed below. It is reasonable to expect that councils would take on responsibilities for the most evident programs and centres; interdisciplinary programs or centres that are not compatible with the proposed set of councils could, of course, continue in their present form.

RECOMMENDATION #43: Present and proposed councils should be given the necessary authority to coordinate interdepartmental activities and, where appropriate, to coordinate faculty and staff hiring. For those parts of departmental undergraduate activity that fall within the Council's purview, the following responsibilities currently vested in departments should be coordinated by councils: curriculum development, student advising, administration of the relevant majors, minors, and specializations, and teaching assignments. Each council should, at a minimum, include: Chairs and/or Deans of member departments and colleges, and might be chaired either by these individuals in rotation or by a specially appointed member. One Chair or One Dean should be appointed ("designated") to represent the council on VPAC. One of the responsibilities of councils is to determine whether, at what rate, cooperation between units should evolve towards merger of departments. A senior academic should be appointed as "facilitator" in each case to monitor progress towards the Council’s specific goals and report to the Senate Committee on University Planning (SCUP). Councils should be reviewed by SCUP every five years to determine whether they are meeting their mandate, and whether there is a continued need for their existence.

Business

- The Business Council should extend its efforts in coordinating undergraduate and graduate education on campus and include involvement with neighbouring universities. Attention should be given to a growing need to include business-related experiences for students in other programs and growing opportunities related to Open Learning.

The Business Council has been one of the Senate’s most successful initiatives, attempting to break down the barriers between departments. The successes include the recent opening of the IJcComm undergraduate degree through cooperation between the Departments of Agricultural Economics and Business, Consumer Studies, Economics, and the School of Hotel and Food Administration. This effort has also led to the development of two niche MBA programs, and all of this in a time of decline in faculty numbers and of increases in student interest in the various programs offered by the department. The Commission supports the work of the Business Council, noting that there would be value in expanding the Council to include Psychology and Sociology/Anthropology (e.g., sociology of organizations and labor relations). It also acknowledged the possibility of joining the William Penn Association to collaborate with nearby universities (e.g., between HAFA and Waterloo in the area of Tourism). We also foresee that there will be great pressure to include business-related experiences for students from other programs. This exposure could run all the way from the additional few weeks a program to the addition of a complete year of such courses as part of a five-year program. However, such initiatives would have significant resource implications.

Environment

- The existing Environmental Science Council, together with the deans of the relevant colleges, must reconsider the membership of the Council with a view to enhancing collaboration among all departments with an interest in the environment. In the light of recent environmental changes, priority must be given to including these deans as members.

Five years ago, the University made a decision to build upon its many relevant strengths to develop an undergraduate program in environmental science to complement the more common environmental studies programs at a number of other institutions. The (EVI) degree program that was developed, as an initial step, remains perhaps the best example of a broadly based environmental science program in Canada. The Faculty of Environmental Sciences was created with membership drawn from faculty across campus to support this program and to promote the range of environmental programs offered by the University. The Faculty has subsequently become the administrative "home" for the Director of the Institute for Environmental Policy and for three major interdisciplinary research initiatives — the Tri-Council Research Program in Agroecosystem Health, the Tri-Council Chair in Ecosystem Health, and the Computing Research Laboratory for the Environment. A proposal for a new Master’s degree program is currently being developed. While these accomplishments are significant, there are issues that merit further attention.

Foremost among these issues is the structure of the Faculty itself. Many faculty members are involved in teaching and research related to the environment, and yet there is no formal administrative link between three faculties, their chairs, and the Associate Dean of Environmental Science. Opportunities for coordination are hiring, the use of campus facilities and resources existing among these units. The sheer number of units involved, however, creates a major challenge. Related to this issue is the need to accommodate "non-science" units with interests in the environment, such as those supporting the environment major within the BA program.

The Academic Planning Committee considered a number of options for the Faculty of Environmental Science, including the formation of a separate college. That option was not viable, given its limited scope and potential for interdisciplinary engagement. The form of the SPC fully supports this recommendation. The position of the Associate Dean of Environmental Science is unique among the Faculties and the Commission supports retaining that position with the responsibilities currently described. The need for more effective coordination, however, still remains.

The present Environmental Sciences Council was established to advise the Associate Dean, assist with coordination, and provide a point of contact for liaison to that of a college Dean’s Council. The membership of the Council includes the Associate Dean, the Designated Dean, and a chair from each college that is directly involved in the BSc(Env) program. Membership is that similar to the membership of other councils may be appropriate to address the need for increased collaboration. This would require, at a maximum, participation of the deans of the relevant colleges. In this way, all departments would be represented at least by their deans. (The inclusion of over 20 chairs is thought to be too unwieldy.) It may be possible, in this Council particularly, to include in the Council’s membership some additional faculty with an interest in the field.

Food

- After paying much attention to the area of research and the interface with industry, the Food Council should now pay more attention to undergraduate matters, where the students to be trained are relatively rich course offerings and relatively low enrollments in several of the food-related undergraduate programs, an administrators being Hapla, Plant and Animal Nutrition.

Since its creation almost five years ago, the Food Council has served as a link between the many departments on campus that have a role to play in the area of food. The recent relocation of federal and provincial government administrators...
tion and research facilities, as well as the establishment of the highly innovative Guelph Food Technology Centre, should provide many new opportunities for fruitful collaborative ventures among the University, government, and industrial sectors. The departments constituting the Food Technology Centre strive to the equal extent in its activities, nor has there been balanced involvement of the Food Technology Centre in undergraduate, graduate, and research matters.

Microbiology

- A Microbiology Council should be formalized to coordinate the University's activities in microbiology. In all, there is a responsibility for determining whether any consolidation of microbiologists into a smaller number of departments should occur.

Microbiology is a cross-departmental activity that takes place in the Departments of Microbiology (CBS), Environmental Biology (OAC), Food Science and Technology (OUV), and Veterinary Microbiology and Immunology (OVC). All four departments, together with Molecular Biology and Genetics, cooperate in offering a full range of teaching and research opportunities.

Molecular Genetics

- A Molecular Genetics Council should be created and have responsibility for coordinating aspects of the relevant teaching programs. The Council should coordinate and develop the full range of teaching and research opportunities.

The field of molecular biology has revolutionized teaching and research in all areas of biology, and has spawned the growing biotechnology industry. Biotechnology is taken here in the broadest sense to encompass an array of scientific tools used to study or modify the growth, reproduction, and development of living organisms. Biotechnological methods are used in both basic and applied research, and their widespread adoption has blurred historical distinctions among many biological disciplines. These technologies are being used to dissect the complex molecular processes that control activities at the cellular level. The products of biotechnological research are expected to have a profound effect on life in the 21st century.

Faculty, staff, and students located in many departments are involved in basic and applied areas of molecular genetics, using all the techniques of biotechnology. Our use of such techniques in biotechnology, and in plant and animal biology in particular, is quite dissimilar to that of other Canadian universities, many of which emphasize medical biotechnology. This suggests an opportunity for Guelph — in undergraduate and graduate education and research — to apply our expertise in pure and applied molecular biology in areas of strength such as agriculture and environmental science. Indeed, there is a growing need for research in these areas, and the opportunity to perform such research is increasing.
than the inclusion of all within a single council. Much will depend upon the extent and nature of development in these interrelated areas. Building upon bringing together representatives of each group to consider potential collaboration across disciplines, the University would develop a model for any, some, or all of them should be initiated by the Dean of Arts and the Dean of Social Science.

- Discussions among ecologists and evolutionary biologists should be facilitated by the Provost to determine whether the formation of a council is viable.

Ecology is an important element of Guelph's emphasis in life sciences and environmental sciences. Ecologists and evolutionary biologists are located in several different departments. Undergraduate programs in ecology are offered in both the BSc and BSc(Eco) programs, and an emphasis in ecology exists in several graduate programs. In the late 1980s, a College of Biological Science Ecology Advisory Committee recommended the establishment of a separate Ecology Department. The Commission recognizes the importance of promoting interdisciplinary research but whose interests lie at the level of organization of ecology and population dynamics. It also recommends the formation of a new department. A council is considered to be a better alternative.

G. RESOURCE ALLOCATION

1. PRINCIPLES OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The process of allocating resources (human, physical, and financial) among academic and all other budget units is an increasingly potent force in helping the University as a whole to pursue its vision to be a major research university. This capacity to fulfill defined functions, should provide incentives to use resources effectively, should reflect and enhance quality, and should make it possible to respond to Strategic Directions and new opportunities. It must also permit flexibility in the implementation of resource allocation, the resource allocation process should not be a proxy for decision-making; rather it should be a means of implementing decisions made outside of, and prior to, the resource allocation process.

A university is a large and complex community, encompassing many academic cultures and a wide range of support functions. The University also has a built-in "delay times" dictated by the duration of degree programs, the pace of retirements, etc. For these reasons, the University can neither allocate its resources in a purely mechanistic way nor proceed in a purely subjective way.

The desire to maintain a climate of optimization but it does not mean that the resource-allocation process be rational and transparent and that there be a clear line of accountability. There are obvious advantages in making explicit the criteria or data associated with the resource-allocation process. First, there is a need for more explicit accountability in the use of public funds. Second, we are entering into a period of intense fiscal constraint. Third, accountability by senior administrators in the allocation of scarce resources is essential.

Fourth, a clearer understanding by faculty, staff, and students of how and why funds are allocated may induce a greater sense of realism in the expenditure of these funds.

The Commission has not solved the question of the appropriate distribution of resources between academic and non-academic units. This is no stable answer to this question; there must, however, be a shared understanding that the fundamental potential of non-academic units is to support the academic mission of the University. Resources must be allocated with that end in view. It is clear that the allocation process for both areas be sensitive to the changing nature of the allocation process for both areas is to provide resources in such a way that maximizes the potential of each academic unit.

2. ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AMONG UNITS

RECOMMENDATION # 44: The allocation of resources to academic units should not be strictly formulaic. The process, while taking due account of numerical adequacy, should be flexible to allow deans and chairs to exercise appropriate judgment on the requirements of each academic unit. The allocation of resources should be based on the following elements:

(i) rational and transparent measures of instructional effort including:
- undergraduate and graduate instruction, both interdisciplinary and interdepartmental;
- activities supporting undergraduate education such as advising, coordinating semesters abroad, supervising experimental education programs, and curriculum development;
- participation in undergraduate and graduate courses taught outside the academic unit;
- activities supporting graduate education such as participation on advisory, evaluation, and examination committees;
- and
(ii) quality of teaching, research, and service. The process for establishing common indicators to assess the quality of the three of these elements of scholarship is described in Recommendation # 45.

In addition, the mechanism should permit short-term or one-time funding for programs that will allow or encourage:
- implementation of the University's Strategic Directions;
- development of new opportunities;
- increased efficiency in the use of resources (increased efficiency should not be a prima facie reason for the reduction of resources to a unit);

ACTION: The Provost and Deans, in consultation with SCUP, should develop a plan for allocating resources to colleges and to the departments based on these elements and report to Senate by January, 1996.

The resource-allocation process should make explicit the instructional effort for which resources have been allocated. The issue of funding for distance education courses, for example, is addressed by the requirement that departments carry the burden of many students and/or course are they are expected to teach within the allocated budget. Similarly, the extent of expectations related to interdisciplinary programs and University service (e.g., summer semester-abroad coordination) should be made explicit, as a component of allocation of resources.

The allocation of resources to academic units cannot be considered isolation from issues of enrolment management. There are no general controls on enrolments in specializations. Departments currently "manage" enrolment by imposing limits on enrolment on individual courses — and the first students to be dropped (within the program or outside it) are those who do not require the course. Limits are determined by available resources, and have become increasingly common, and will increase further as resources become even more constrained. The process, if allowed to continue without controls, will undermine the benefits of study in a comprehensive university and make it impossible for students to graduate in a timely fashion.

There is only so much that we can do about this problem. One part of the answer is gate-keeping at the point of entry to specialization; but that, of course, leaves untouched the question of what happens after included students can be accommodated and the degree of choice that will be available to them. Another part of the answer is the need for departments to organize themselves in such a way that their responsibility with respect to accommodating students outside of the department in "service courses" and through reserved space in courses that fund their use as electricians is met, the resource-allocation process must include a measure of the University's expectations in this regard. The SPC recognizes that such expectations on themselves, can only the expense of curricular richness within specializations; however, an appropriate balance must be struck and cannot be left to the discretion of any one of the academic units. Automated registration procedures should make it possible for students to prioritize desired electives — thus allowing the University to make the best possible use of a limited capacity.

Beyond the allocation that supports necessary activity, departments may receive additional resources to support non-traditional quality. Thus, for example, the number of positions allocated to a particular department may be sufficient to serve the university's research needs. However, additional funding may be needed to support research-intensive services or, or some other more resource-intensive style of teaching, where past performance and institutional need indicate the appropriateness of such additional support. Some additional resources may also be allocated to departmental short-term, one-time basis, to support new initiatives.

The resource-allocation process proposed here streamlines the life management model (central administration, centre office, college — department, etc.). It includes provision of resources for work carried out under the purview of councils. Councils can be effectively integrated with the resource-allocation process when a dean functions as senior fiscal advocate, and as the person to be held fiscally accountable for a given section. A dean may not have the expertise to make the allocation but would have the same role to the designated dean as the chair of an academic department has to a dean, in terms of advising on the allocation of resources.

The resource-allocation process must also take into account existing levels of support (e.g., numbers of faculty and operating funds). Given our budgetary commitment to permanent positions, it is simply not possible to adjust budgets as quickly as we might wish. The ratios of instructional effort to existing levels of support could, however, be related to norms that vary across "cultures" in the institution; departments with ratios falling outside of a predefined corridor around the norm would have their budgets adjusted over time and/or change their instructional effort.

RECOMMENDATION # 45: The Provost, in conjunction with Academic Council, should develop by December 1995 a set of common indicators to be used annually that quality of scholarship (teaching, research, service) of departments; in addition, each department will be involved in the development of indicators to be used in its own assessment. It is expected that some indicators will involve national and international comparisons.

These common indicators and collection of supporting data will be used primarily for the purpose of measuring the academic units at an overall basis. Such annual assessments may be one component of the resource-allocation process; outlined in Recommendation # 44.

RECOMMENDATION # 46: Academic departments should undergo a comprehensive period review with (self-assessment and self-examination) every seven years, in conjunction with reviews of graduate programs whenever possible, and standing committee should be established to advise the Provost and Academic Council. Such department reviews may be conducted by the University Planning on an appropriate institutional response to this comprehensive review.

The primary purpose of the comprehensive review process is to provide each department with information needed for periodic, periodic re-evaluation and departmental improvement. The proposed standing committee should be struck by the Provost, with the advice of Senate; its five to seven members will consist of respected faculty who do not hold administrative appointments, and one or two students, at least one of whom should be a graduate student. The task of this committee will be to examine the functioning and goals of the department and make recommendations to the Provost concerning issues arising from the review. The committee must assess quality in relation to available resources. Recommendations for change must be made within the context of needs and opportunities facing the University. It will be the responsibility of the dean and Provost to allocate resources as deemed to improve the quality of the department's mission. — that
is not related to level of the resources provided. Any suggested structural changes resulting from the comprehensive review should be examined by SCUP.

RECOMMENDATION #47: Annual reviews and comprehensive reviews of the resources always should become part of the resource-allocation process for all non-academic units, and the Provost and Vice-President for Finance and Administration should develop the review process by December 1995. Information about the procedures to be used for evaluation. These will be based in part on external comparisons and will involve evaluation by those who use the service.

The review process for non-academic units should be regular, rather than periodic on an irregular basis, and should follow well-defined criteria for assessment; should inspire trust, avoid false expectations, and enhance collaboration between those who participate in the same function; should identify ways of offering a better or more efficient service and of creating a better working environment for those offering the service; and should assess the claim of the function to scarce financial resources.

Factors to be taken into account in the review process may vary with the function being reviewed and will need to be defined in consultation with units serving that function, before the process begins. The following factors should be considered in all reviews:

- current goals and workplans, in relation to the mission of the University and relevant trends or forces originating from inside or outside the University;
- demand for services and critical cost-benefit analysis of service; high demand for a service does not imply affordability, and low demand does not imply that the service is unimportant;
- evaluations by users of services and response of unit to evaluations;
- strengths/weaknesses of unit;
- opportunities for similar services to be provided off-campus;
- linkages to academic and research programs and the needs of these programs;
- income/expenditure/level of service in relation to units performing a similar function in other universities considered to be performing this function in an exemplary manner.

Each unit should review itself annually according to a prescribed set of factors and outline its work plan for the following year in consultation with any other units participating in the same function. The work plan of the unit should be linked with the individual work plans of members of the unit. Reports should move through the unit to the unit’s president, and then to the Provost and President. Senior administrators should be involved in reviewing and proposing modifications to work plans and recommendations arising from the review.

Each function should undergo a comprehensive review every seven years by a review team whose membership includes external consultants, the Vice-President Administration (or designate), a dean, and members of the University’s appropriate academic program. The team should provide a confidential basis for comment before the final copy is prepared and is forwarded to the Provost and President.

H. RECONFIGURING THE UNIVERSITY

The work of reconfiguration is aimed at getting better and at optimizing the distribution (as well as increasing the sum) of our resources. Given both a pervasive drive to excel and existing financial limitations, the work of reconfiguration will be challenging in the academic unit, ensuring that every institution is sufficiently large to satisfy every laudable ambition. Nevertheless, we are convinced that the outcomes of major decisions and CACAN result in a strengthening of the University overall. The discussion that follows relates to money; the improvements we are calling for, however, as well as the excellence we wish to preserve, are not at the most fundamental level capable of purchase. They depend essentially on the determination and vision of our people; and the future well-being of the University will depend on that determination and vision being manifest both locally (in the work of individuals and units) and collectively. That being said and meant, the obdurate fact of constrained resources remains to be addressed.

The Commission has not recommended the elimination of any academic program or department. It has, however, recommended new and resource-supported process through which we will examine the needs and viability of each academic unit, ensuring that the University is funded at a level that makes possible sense within the context of the whole. One critical dimension of this process is an assessment of faculty workload (including teaching, research, and service), followed by an adjustment of resources or workload to achieve equity overall. This will address two important questions: Is each unit doing its fair share of the University's work? Is the work important? Is the work necessary to the University?

One crucial question remains. Can this work be accomplished more efficiently another way? This question must be fed into the process of review and resource allocation. (Thus, for example, resources may be provided for the short term to achieve efficiencies that will ultimately reduce the unit’s costs.) The Learning and Research Enhancement Funds will also be critical in this regard. But several other processes, essential features of the Strategic Plan, come into play at this point, and must be reflected in the resource-allocation process: the review of courses and specializations, and the work of constructively. By these means we will increase efficiency within and across units. Changes in our existing department (or college) structure will occur as it becomes clear that the necessary work of some units can be carried out more efficiently and more effectively through reconfiguration. Essentially the same set of questions would apply to non-academic units as well. When all of these changes are in place, and the budgetary adjustments made, we will have achieved optimal use of our resources.

The University must enhance budget flexibility by holding fixed costs (primarily associated with permanent faculty and staff positions) to an optimal level and by identifying new sources of income. Such flexibility is vital both for the University as a whole — in which unforeseen opportunities to venture funds, short-term or one-time money, must be found to begin investment in changes called for by the Strategic Plan — and for the long term. Although we cannot hope for any substantial budgetary flexibility until the University can achieve fiscal self-sufficiency, we must use every dollar we can find to begin the task of change. The Commission recognizes that entrepreneurial activity entails both an initial outlay of resources and a considerable element of risk; fund-raising activities also require an investment of funds. What we envision is a period prior to the repayment of the SERP debt in which small amounts of money for strategic investment will be identified and disbursed. A period of substantial investment is needed.

RECOMMENDATION #48: Funding from all vacated faculty positions (except those resulting from negative tenure decisions) and staff positions should be used to create a Strategic Plan and Faculty Development Fund to facilitate reallocation of resources and enhance budget flexibility. Historically the University has changed its conformation through the allocation of new resources to support new opportunities. In an era of declining resources this approach is no longer tenable. Instead, reallocation of existing resources must be our primary means of supporting new initiatives or strengthening existing areas. With most of our budget tied to personnel costs, the recommendation above is essential if we are to reconfigure our institution.

RECOMMENDATION #49: Commitments to fill faculty positions on a permanent basis must not be made, except in the most extreme cases, until the resource-allocation process has been developed and implemented, and must be for the continuation of specializations and courses and courses have been accepted and approved.

ACTION: President

RECOMMENDATION #50: To support initiatives called for in the Strategic Plan, the University must aggressively pursue alternative sources of funding, earmarking soon on a major fund-raising campaign, and making best use of opportunities to enhance revenue that are consistent with our academic mission. To attract donor funds and entrepreneurial partnerships, we should make a greater effort to publicize and promote both the Strategic Plan and the University and its Strategic Vision.

ACTION: President

The force of this recommendation should be obvious to all; its implementation will require the assistance of all members of the University community.

I. PRIORITIES

The Strategic Plan has assigned to the community what may appear an absurdly ambitious program to carry out over the next few years. While individuals in central administration and groups such as the Board of Undergraduate Education and the Provost have responsibility for the completion of these tasks, the real work involved must, of necessity, be the highest priority. The Commission has understood from the beginning that the work of strategic planning will enter its most critical stage at commencement when the Commission itself dissolves. The first requirement, of course, is the need to make decisions on the recommendations, beginning with the proposed mission statement and strategic directions. Then unit plans will have to be crafted, studies completed, processes developed, and initiatives begun. The demands made on the time of all members of the community will be considerable, but if we share the work appropriately — and if we approach it with some excitement, and a determination not to waste time — we can get it done.

1. ENHANCING FLEXIBILITY AND EFFICIENCY

This set of inter-related recommendations will establish the framework within which the University can work effectively and become more efficient. In the first year, our task will be to (a) carve out work system of the out, making room for more effective work in the future, and (b) establish procedures for the reallocation of resources. We must proceed immediately with the reduction of course offerings (39), the reform of the semester system (which has facilitated specialization), the reduction of specialized (38), the credit system (36), and the resource-allocation and review procedures (44, 45, 46, 47). We should move immediately to streamline governance and committee structures (15) and to achieve more equitable workloads for faculty (13). Also in the first year we must begin to determine efficiencies that can result from greater cooperation across department (42, 43). Decisions related to the reversion of positions (48) and strict limitations on hiring (95) must have been made at one. Work to increase our resource base (50) will be an ongoing challenge, while planning for the capital campaign should begin as soon as possible. Efforts to increase collaboration (24, 25) must begin in the first year, but will be accelerated in the years ahead.

2. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

In the first year, our energies should be directed primarily to planning at the local level, completion of a number of studies, and assessing costs. Thereafter, and as resources can be redirected, we will begin to pursue these initiatives. The information technology (32) and space (33) studies, as well as the development
of a plan for improved counselling (30), must be completed within the first year; the critical recommendation related to the library (31) involves continuing ef- fort. The work of faculty, departments, and program committees in revising cur- ricula and implementing the learner-centred agenda (40) will be on- going. The creation of a task force to develop the inquiry course (17) and of the Experiential Education Advisory Group (20), targets for study abroad (26), and the development of a common set of questions for the evaluation of teaching (21) should occur within the first year; the creation of a plan to enhance lan- guage instruction (28), as well as work on designated writing courses (18) and prior learning assessment (37), can, if necessary, be undertaken in the follow- ing year.

3. EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE

In the first year, we must develop the Human Resources Management Phi- losophy (5), reach out to alumni (14), and develop University-wide standards for tenure, promotion, and selective incre- ment (9). Recommendations related to professional development and performance appraisal (16) should be acted on as speedily as possible.

NOTE: The previous discussion does not address all of the Commission’s recommendations; it merely attempts to establish some priorities within the clusters identified.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Strategic Plan has particular rele- vance to the concept of accountability. A university must be ac- countable to the public at large, to the community (or offices), and to its internal constituencies. The Report of the Task Force on University Accountability (the breadthurth Report) emphasizes that "Each university should be held account- able primarily by reference to how it fulfills the mission it has determined for itself within the broad objectives of pub- lic policy. The development of a strategic plan is thus an essential prereq- uitie for an accountability framework. Further, the Broadhurst report charac- terizes a proper system of accountability as involving broad consultation and a framework and processes that are readily understandable, open, and accessible. In the development of Making Change: The Strategic Plan for the University of Guelph, we have worked to be faithful to these precepts.

The Broadhurst Report identifies 16 main issues of accountability, 13 of which are the responsibility of the Board of Governors. Those that relate to the Strategic Plan are as follows:

- to assess progress towards the fulfill- ment of the institution’s mission;
- to assess admissions policies and practices;
- to monitor academic program re- views undertaken by the Senate, the Provost’s Office, or outside bodies;
- to monitor the application of policies covering terms and conditions of academic appointments.

These, and other elements of accountabil- ity are as important to faculty, staff, students, and alumni as they are to the external community. It will be essential that we communicate our progress to- ward the desired outcomes of the ongoing strategic planning effort.

RECOMMENDATION # 51: Pro- gress reports on implementing the Strategic Plan should be issued regularly to the appropriate office, or individual, and to the Board of Governors by the appropriate Vice-President, deci- making decisions that have been made, the progress (or failure) of re- sponsible for implementing the decisions, the date or period of im- plementation, and measurements of progress using well-defined indi- cators. An annual progress report should be presented by the Presi- dent and widely distributed on and off campus.

RECOMMENDATION # 52: Work- ing with appropriate committees and units, the Senate Committee on University Planning should oversee the development of indicators to measure progress on major deci- sions that arise from Strategic Planning.

The primary purpose of developing and using these indicators will be to improve institutional quality and internal account- ability. An additional purpose is to provide the Board of Governors with evidence of our success in meeting the objectives emerging from the Strategic Plan. Serious consideration should be given to evaluating levels of competence (or "value added") in the skills we intend to foster through a more learner-centred approach to education. Exit surveys and employer surveys should also be ex- plored. A proposed set of indicators should be brought to Senate for approval within six months; decisions having been made on SPC’s recommendations. It may be appropriate, in some cases, to compare measurements at Guelph to similar measures at other universi- ties. Information on indicators should also be made available to external con- stituencies. This would help the University to communicate its mission, and demonstrate its commitment to both accountability and continuous improve- ment. The indicators should be strongly contextual, as opposed to an absolute or comparative use of numbers. Indicators must not result in just another reporting requirement. They must be part of ongo- ing self-assessment by the University. The role of senior academic leadership, as well as a measure of consensus within the community on the indicators se- lected, will be critical. The following criteria have been suggested by the Council of Ontario Universities’ Com- mittee on Accountability:

- relevance (does the indicator demon- strate what it is purported to test?);
- reliability (is the indicator based on statistics that can be assembled consist- ently and accurately?);
- accessibility (can the indicator be measured as a regular, consistent basis and at reasonable cost?);
- clarity (is the indicator readily under- standable?).

RECOMMENDATION # 53: A "change auditor" should be design- nated for a limited period to promote and monitor the change process as measured by Strategic Planning.

ACTION: President

The intent here is primarily to ensure that someone is keeping track of ongoing discussions, of our overall process, and of communications regarding that pro- griss. Regular progress reports will not suffice. Careful monitoring by a design- nated person or office will be required for the immediate future, to maintain momentum and keep senior administra- tors and the community at large adequately informed. The President’s support and active championing of approved recommendations will be critical to their implementation.

RECOMMENDATION # 54: A compre- hensive analysis should be carried out in 1999/2000 to assess the impact of the current strategic planning exercise.

ACTION: Senate Committee on University Planning.