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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

DIVERSITY INITIATIVES PLANNING COMMITTEE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
May 1, 2002

I. ASSIGNMENT

On November 10, 2000, the Chancellor and Provost appointed a campus-wide committee to recommend action items for enhancing diversity at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The committee is composed of students, faculty and staff. Its work focuses on the following areas: preparing students for a diverse workplace; recruiting and retaining students, faculty and staff from sectors of the population that currently do not, in large numbers, view Illinois as a place to study and work; creating a campus climate that values the contribution of all members of the Illinois community; and broadening the opportunity for Illinois to foster learning, discovery and engagement through diversity. The committee's work is ongoing; the recommendations that follow reflect the committee's work to date.

II. WHAT IS DIVERSITY

The committee has considered Chancellor Cantor's Diversity Statement and agrees with its central concepts. We strongly feel diversity should not be viewed through a narrow lens focusing on the traditional limited definition of race and ethnicity. Rather it should be extended to encompass multiple sites of engagement including disability, gender and sexuality, U.S. minorities, cultural, racial and ethnic diversity. In the university setting, appreciation for diversity is advanced through the exchange of ideas, the testing of

assumptions, and the enrichment of culture through exposure to many cultures. Diversity is vital moreover to our missions of teaching, research, and service. All of our work at the University is informed and enriched by diversity. By sharing our different life experiences, perspectives, and expectations, we create an enriched learning environment. Diversity challenges us to move beyond our automatic assumptions and reactions. Diversity in the University benefits all members of the campus community and those benefits extend to the broader society as well. Diversity comes from all of us.

III. THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The committee reviewed a number of UIUC reports and documents including Suggestions for Assessment of the Campus Racial/Ethnic Climate: A Coordinated Campus Self-Study (6 Feb 1991); Commitment to Inclusiveness, the Urbana-Champaign Campus Response to President Ikenberry's Statement on Inclusiveness (November 1994); The Framework for the Future, including the report of the subcommittee on "Building a More Inclusive Community" (May 1995); Sustaining and Enhancing A Commitment to Inclusiveness – A Report on Progress Toward and Challenges Confronting Achieving Greater Inclusiveness (February 1996). The committee also examined web materials and reports from other universities including Ohio State, Michigan (Ann Arbor), Wisconsin (Madison), Maryland (College Park) and Rochester. In addition, committee members discussed diversity issues within their departments to identify concerns and action items to help Illinois achieve excellence through diversity. However, on a campus as large and decentralized as Urbana-Champaign, there is no single way to address diversity. It should be noted that the committee has not had the

opportunity to hear most of the many voices existing on this campus and to build a consensus among those voices for solving some of our more difficult problems.

During the 2000-2001 academic year, the committee established a number of subcommittees. Through the deliberations of the subcommittees and the full committee six broad objectives were identified.

- Provide students, faculty and staff with an optimal environment for work and study, including appreciation for differences and diversity.
- Recruit and retain greater numbers of women and minority faculty, staff and administrators (including deans, department heads, and senior level administrators).
- Recruit, retain, and graduate larger numbers of ethnic minority students - undergraduate, graduate, and professional.
- Provide incentives to academic and support units who have demonstrated excellence in increasing diversity.
- Communicate, to both internal and external publics, that the Urbana-Champaign campus is an inclusive and welcoming institution that respects the dignity of all people, irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion or country of origin.
- Assign accountability to achieve the progress envisioned in this action plan.

This report identifies action items consistent with the foregoing objectives. The recommendations do not represent a hierarchy of priorities. The Committee feels

however that several action items should be implemented immediately. Concurrently, the committee believes that work should begin on other recommended action items if they are to be effectively implemented in the long run.

IV.   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2001-2002

The committee believes that the university should spare no effort in pursuing the goals of diversity on the Champaign/Urbana campus. These goals encompass both the recruitment of minority students and faculty and the creation of a social and intellectual atmosphere on campus that is both inclusive and welcoming. These goals inspire our recommendations that the university create new programs and initiatives and they also cause us to recommend that some current programs and practices be set aside. One important example of the latter group is the university's mascot or symbol, Chief Illiniwek. Regardless of the good intentions that first fueled this tradition, it is clear that insisting on its perpetuation in the face of strong local and national opposition (particularly from Native Americans themselves) undermines the goals of this committee as well as the ideals of the university. More generally, continuing the tradition of using a race-based figure to represent the university at sporting events can only divide a multiracial campus and make it significantly more difficult to recruit and retain faculty and students of color to the university. These larger objectives cause us to urge the administration and our colleagues to set aside the tradition while exploring new ways of bringing our community together.

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The committee felt strongly that the many items below were all important. They recognize some of the items can be implemented sooner than others but declined to put them in priority order.

1. Consider the establishment of a Center on Democracy in a Multiracial Society [Progress was made during the second semester of the 2001-2002 academic year.]

2. Challenge the Research Board to add breadth to the projects it supports. Scholarship in the humanities and social sciences must be valued on a par with that from mathematics and the physical, chemical, biological and computational sciences.

3. Recognize the contributions of a diverse faculty by naming a chair for Richard and Mildred Barksdale.

4. Commit to hiring permanent directors for the Asian American Studies Program and the Latina/Latino Studies Program, during the 2001-2002 academic year and to maintaining permanent directors in each of these positions (as well as in Afro-American Studies and the Women's Studies Program). The Committee strongly believes that in order to ensure that the University is able to recruit and retain the best directors for these Programs, the campus must seriously consider granting these units faculty lines they control along with sufficient support staff and operating budgets. In tandem, when affiliate faculty of these programs are reviewed for tenure or promotion or when affiliates of these programs are the subject of retention efforts, these programs must be vested with the power and

resources to be equal partners in these tenuring, promotion, or retention efforts. [Searches for permanent Directors are in progress.]

5. Increase efforts to recruit and retain faculty in targeted academic departments. Such a program will increase diversity in areas where there does exist cooperation, support and demonstrated interest while continuing to develop progress in areas that are less diverse. It is important that cluster hires include one "tenured' hire whenever possible to help prevent the isolation of junior faculty.

6. Institute faculty, staff, student, and program diversity factors in the evaluation of units and top administrators (Provost's Document 10). Implement specific mandatory criteria in the hiring and review process for Deans, Directors, and Department Heads that will provide accountability for diversity issues.

7. Create a university environment in which opportunities for persons with disabilities to fully participate in, contribute to and/or benefit from U of I programs, services and resources are indistinguishable from those afforded persons without disabilities. This can be achieved by increasing the prevalence of persons with disabilities among the faculty, staff and students; promoting better understanding and use of universal design principles relative to all University resources, programs and services; enhancing academic discourse regarding disability by increasing disability content in UI curricula; and increasing campus-wide disability education to enhance disability awareness and knowledge of how to appropriately and effectively engage persons with disabilities. Specific recommendations for achieving these ends are contained in the addendum to this

report entitled *Appendix A - Working Group Recommendations on Disability Access.*

8. Increase hiring of diverse academic professionals particularly in central and campus administration.

9. Increase Graduate College Fellowship funds.

10. Increase fellowship funds for women graduate students in underrepresented areas.

11. Bolster the outreach activities of the Graduate College to attract the most promising students from underrepresented groups to graduate programs across the campus.

12. Establish partnerships with historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions and tribal colleges to recruit students into graduate programs.

13. Provide full measure of resources to units such as Office of Minority Student Affairs and Office of Admissions to ensure that undergraduate retention and collaborative efforts, as well as campus recruiting initiatives can be expanded.

14. Provide scholarship funding for out-of-state minority undergraduate students and more mid-range Illinois residents.

15. Extend health benefits to domestic partners. The proposal on extending health benefits to unmarried same-sex and unmarried opposite-sex domestic partnerships was first passed in the Senate in 1996 on three campuses and the University Senates Conference. Again, in April 2001, the proposal, with additional data on universities, Fortune 500 companies, and state and local governments, was reconfirmed and passed by the Urbana-Champaign Senate. The granting of health

benefits to domestic partners continues to increase---all Ivy League universities, major state universities, and 6 Big Ten schools subscribe to such plans.

16. Offer health coverage for contraception for women faculty and staff as well as spouses and partners of male faculty and staff. Women graduate and undergraduate students receive this benefit through McKinley Health Center but it is not offered for faculty, academic professionals and staff. Eight of the Big Ten Schools as well as the University of Illinois Springfield and University of Ilinois Chicago offer this benefit. [In February 2002, Chancellor Cantor announced female Urbana campus employees will be able to fill prescriptions for certain oral contraceptives at no cost through McKinley Health Center.]

17. Increase support for and understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues and members of the campus community. Specific recommendations are provided in *Appendix B – Recommendations from Office of LGBT Concerns.*

18. Seek "legislative relief" that will allow the University to expand childcare facilities beyond research oriented centers. The Board of Trustees approved the expansion of the Child Development Laboratory, representing a first step to increase available campus childcare. However, one of the many issues affecting the recruitment and retention of women faculty and staff continues to be the lack of affordable, high quality childcare. [Progress is being made on this issue.]

19. Initiate a planning effort for a program to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education. A proposal for such an anniversary celebration is attached. [A committee has been charged to develop a year-long dialogue.]

20. Ensure that teaching workshops and orientation programs for faculty, staff and graduate students with assistantships include diversity content.

21. Establish a Graduate College lecture program to bring faculty members from minority-serving institutions to our campus.

22. Demonstrate the value to the campus community of the existing cultural programs, the Office for LGBT concerns and the Office of Women's programs by providing resources to enable them to enhance their ability to provide quality services to the campus and community.

23. Increase meaningful, well-coordinated and sustained campus engagement in the surrounding Urbana-Champaign community. Both the campus and local community need increased skills in navigating each other's environment with respect and understanding, and in a way that provides for the development of cooperative and meaningful community-campus engagement. Some specific suggestions are outlined in *Appendix C – Working Group Recommendations on Public Outreach*.

24. Design and build a web site where information on diversity in the curriculum, cultural activities, and existing campus policies is openly disseminated. This should include information on classes dealing with U.S. minorities, ethnic studies programs, cultural centers, student organizations focused on diversity issues, and a comprehensive list of diversity events that can be commingled with planning. [A web site is being developed; http://www.provost.uiuc.edu/diversity/.]

25. Establish both a Non-Western Cultures and a U.S. Domestic Minority Peoples and Cultures General Education requirement. The domestic minority requirement

should initially focus on a critical examination of racism and/or (a) racial/ethnic minority group(s) and should eventually facilitate course work on social groups identified by gender, sexuality, disability, and corresponding systems of discrimination.

We recommend that the domestic minority requirement be phased in over a three-year period. For three years, the Non-Western/U.S. Minority Culture(s) requirement can be met by courses certified as meeting the Non-Western Culture(s) requirement or the U.S. Minority Culture(s) requirement. During this three-year period a campus-wide committee should evaluate the best way to incorporate the study of gender, sexuality and disability into the general education curriculum. In the fourth year a separate U.S. Domestic Minority Peoples and Cultures General Education requirement should be instituted.

Since much of the responsibility for implementing a requirement on domestic minority peoples and cultures will be assumed by ethnic and women studies programs we recommend commensurate enhancement of the teaching and research resources of these programs.

26. Create a campus-wide task force responsible for developing a plan to transform the campus into a more diverse physical space. The task force should be comprised of members of the diversity committee and administrators responsible for the planning, design, and maintenance of campus spaces. The task force should explore the impact of physical spaces and aesthetics on perceptions of diversity, evaluate the diversity of physical structures and spaces on campus and

suggest actions that can be taken at both a campus and unit level to incorporate diversity more fully into the aesthetic of our campus.

27. Launch a campus initiative to highlight the historical contributions of people of color, people with disabilities, and women to our campus. The initiative should seek to create lasting physical reminders of these contributions. Individual proposals should be solicited from various campus constituencies. The campus should move forward with the Project 500 commemoration proposal, which can serve as a model for other such proposals.

28. The recent report by Trustee Roger Plummer concluded that there are two options before the Board regarding the issue of Chief Illiniwek: retention or retirement. The committee recommends that the Board select the option of retiring the Chief.

29. Identify a development officer at the University Office for Development to deal specifically with diversity issues. This diversity officer should focus the attention of college development officers on issues of diversity.

V.   Future Tasks

The Diversity Initiatives Planning Committee as well as its subcommittees will continue to meet during the 2002-2003 academic year. The committee will study, in depth, several issues that have been raised as well as solicit general input from the campus community on other issues that need to be addressed and recommend action plans for the future.

Diversity Initiatives Committee (Academic Year 2000-2001)

James D. Anderson, chair
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Appendix A

Working Group Recommendations on Disability Access

I.   The Significance of Disability to Campus Diversity

As U.S. institutions, including those in higher education, endeavor to "recast" themselves in response to a new and rapidly changing demographic reality, it is critical that they not neglect to both consider and address the implications of our largest and fastest growing minority constituency, forty-nine million Americans with disabilities. One in every five U.S. citizens reports some type of disability, with one in 10 reporting the existence of a severe disability (Bureau of the Census, 1997). Internationally, the world population of persons with disabilities has grown to exceed 500 million (United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development, 1999). Looking ahead, the prevalence of persons with disabilities is expected to continue to increase as a result of ongoing advancements in medical technology and treatment for previously fatal disorders and illnesses, and the increasing prevalence of older individuals both nationally and worldwide. Current data suggest that our nation is ill prepared for this eventuality.

Since the enactment of the ADA in 1992, the U.S. has experienced the greatest period of economic growth in its history; however, persons with disabilities have generally not benefited from this unparalleled prosperity. Indeed, unemployment among non-institutionalized persons of working age with disabilities was consistently reported to be in the vicinity of 70 percent during that period. According to the *2000 National Organization on Disability/Louis Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities*, 12 years following the passage of the ADA, substantial gaps continue to exist between persons with and without disabilities with regard to employment, education, income, access to

transportation, health care, entertainment/going out, frequency of socializing, attendance at religious services, political participation/voter registration and life satisfaction.

Higher education has been found to be an efficacious means of countering these foreboding outcomes. For example, the rate of employment among respondents to the aforementioned *NOD/Harris Survey* with at least some college education was 44% higher than that reported for those who had not attended college. Of course, even for those who attend and graduate from college it has been estimated that a differential of 15 percent or greater in annual income exists between full-time employees with and those without disabilities (Hendricks, Schiro-Geist & Broadbent, 1997). However, a study of UIUC graduates with disabilities from 1952 to 1991 found the salary gap between University of Illinois graduates with disabilities and their able-bodied cohort, when matched for age, gender, and college major and when health status effects were controlled, was statistically insignificant (Hendricks, Schiro-Geist & Broadbent, 1997). **Clearly, *when persons with disabilities have had the opportunity to avail themselves of the resources of the University of Illinois, significantly more positive outcomes have resulted.***

Proactively seeking to increase the participation of persons with disabilities among the students, faculty and staff would not only serve to significantly enhance the quality of life of persons with disabilities, but it would also benefit the institution by:

- decreasing the demand placed upon pension systems, worker's compensation, and/or other government social welfare resources (e.g., SSDI) thereby directly and indirectly increasing the net financial resources available for mission critical institutional activities

- improving the retention of academic and operational expertise by reducing the frequency of retirements attributable to unaccommodated disabilities

- contributing to the development and support of critical research initiatives with applied disability-related foci

- enhancing sensitivity to the potential impact of disability-related factors in the research and curricula of all disciplines

- improving our knowledge and understanding of disability within the context of each discipline, and thereby improve the academy's ability to effectively respond to the questions and needs of a growing number of practitioners with disabilities

- improving curricula by forcing the academy to regularly consider the necessity of its assumptions, traditions, and approaches

- improving teaching by reinforcing the use of universal instructional design which emphasizes multi-modal instructional approaches, more flexible approaches to the evaluation of knowledge/competence and, thereby, makes the classroom more effective for all students

In light of this information, the working group recommends that the University adopt the following four disability access objectives.

Four Disability Access Objectives

1. Increase the prevalence of persons with disabilities among the faculty, staff and students

2. Promote better understanding and use of universal design principles. (http://www.cast.org/udl/) relative to all University resources, programs and services

3. Enhance academic discourse regarding disability by increasing disability content in UI curricula

4. Increase campus-wide disability education to enhance disability awareness and knowledge of how to appropriately and effectively engage persons with disabilities

II. Prioritized Disability Recommendations (FY03)

1. Increase the presence and visibility of academic courses that address disability in UIUC curricula (addresses objective 3)

   a. Promote dialogue on opportunities for creating an interdisciplinary disability studies program. There are a number of options for the form of such a program (e.g., an undergraduate minor or an interdisciplinary degree program in disability studies). What is needed at this time is encouragement for relevant units to consider such an initiative.

   b. Consider infusing central issues pertaining to disability within the general education curriculum, in order to ensure that all UIUC students secure a fundamental knowledge base in this area. This recommendation could be implemented in a range of ways (e.g., asking general education courses in appropriate areas, such as social and behavioral science, to infuse content on

disability within course offerings; adding a disability requirement to the general education sequence).

Rationale: Educating tomorrow's leaders about disability today helps to minimize tomorrow's barriers to participation.

2. Create a central fund to underwrite expenses associated with disability accommodations for faculty and staff (addresses objective 1)

Rationale: Departmental funding for accommodations invariably results in a situation where faculty/staff must "beg" for accommodation resources that, too frequently, are begrudgingly allocated by unit heads. For faculty, such expenses should also be considered outside the start-up laboratory assistance negotiations. Generally, colleges should not be required to account for unbudgetable accommodation expenses with limited local resources. Centralized funding for disability accommodation would also seem appropriate given that "appropriateness" is judged in reference to an institution's total resources. The best approach would be for central campus to allocate a portion of the campus reserve for the purpose of underwriting these expenses.

3. Improve the utilization of universal design principles in all programs, systems and services (addresses objective 2)

   a. Formally incorporate input from individuals with universal design expertise in all strategic information technology systems planning

   b. Underwrite the development of instructional resources pertaining to accessible courseware design for faculty and staff

c. Support the development of tools that may be used inconspicuously by course developers to create accessible online instructional resources

d. Promote standardization in IT procurement practices of CIC institutions related to accessibility standards to improve vendor compliance

Rationale: Now that the State of Illinois has specific policy guidelines that the University must follow regarding IT accessibility (http://www100.state.il.us/tech/technology/accessibility/iwas1.0.html) it is critical that the process of IT resource development incorporate individuals with universal design expertise in IT to ensure compliance and, more importantly, to ensure that our IT resources are not innately inaccessible to persons with disabilities. Inter-institutional collaboration in the promulgation of procurement standards would help to ensure that vendors take the matter of product accessibility seriously.

4. Fund a new tenure track faculty position to support the American Sign Language curriculum on the UIUC campus. The involvement of a faculty member who is a native user of sign language and/or a deaf individual would be highly advantageous to enhancing the curriculum and research agenda in this scholarly area (addresses objectives 1, 3 and 4).

Rationale: Now that ASL has been approved by the General Education Board as an option for meeting the foreign language graduation requirements of U of I colleges, funding for an additional faculty line is needed to support the full implementation of this four year curriculum option and enhancing existing courses on campus in this area.

5. Increase scholarship funding for undergraduate students with disabilities by college (addresses objective 1)

   Rationale: The economic impact of a U of I education on the status of graduates with disabilities noted earlier augurs best for the importance of this action.

6. Provide Graduate College fellowships to support the successful recruitment of the most highly qualified graduate students with disabilities (addresses objective 1 and 3)

   Rationale: The previously noted economic impact of a U of I education on the status of graduates with disabilities is echoed in support of this action. In addition, such action will increase the likelihood that disability will be better incorporated into the academic and administrative activities of all units.

7. Establish an academic professional position to coordinate faculty/staff accommodations (addresses objective 1)

   Rationale: Just as Division of Rehabilitation-Education Services staff with disability and 504/ADA expertise work collaboratively with campus units in planning and implementing academic adjustments and auxiliary aids/services for students with disabilities, similar personnel would benefit the process by which accommodations are identified and introduced for employees with disabilities.

8. Include faculty with disabilities in existing campus programs designed to enhance faculty diversity (e.g., allow recruitment of faculty members with disabilities to participate in the Target of Opportunity Program). Assistance with recruitment should particularly be prioritized in instances where faculty member's knowledge of and experience with disability will enhance curriculum (addresses objectives 1, 3 and 4)

Rationale: Disability research over the past four decades has well established that the best means of improving the attitudes about persons with disabilities held by persons without disabilities is to promote the sustained interaction of both in roles of an egalitarian nature. Unfortunately, the sparse presence of faculty/staff with disabilities greatly limits the possibility of such contact on a campus-wide level.

9. Provide funding to support neuropsychological testing for enrolled UI students at risk of not being retained who have been identified by the staff of the UI Counseling Center, McKinley, or DRES as very likely having undiagnosed cognitive or psychological disabilities (addresses objective 1)

   Rationale: Each year, neuropsychological testing is performed on approximately 60-100 students suspected of having undiagnosed cognitive and/or psychological disabilities, and who are on the verge of being dropped from the University for academic reasons. In those instances where disabilities are diagnosed and accommodations are introduced, significant improvements are typically observed. The current "wait-list" for this service is between 20-30. For many students, this wait list translates into academic probation and/or dismissal. This program, which is critical to the retention and graduation of these students, is funded exclusively through internally reallocated DRES funds. Additional funding will be necessary if we are to be able to effectively reduce the wait-list to zero.

10. Incorporate information related to UIUC disability policies, procedures and resources for students, faculty and staff into the systemic training activities of senior administrators and college intake specialists (addresses objective 4)

Rationale: Due to the infrequency with which most faculty have to respond to the needs of individual students with disabilities, and the difficulty of effectively reaching faculty with disability-related training, it would be best to focus disability training upon senior administrators and intake specialists to ensure that knowledgeable contacts are present in each college.

1. Hold campus-wide "town meetings" on disability issues every 1-3 years. A description of the most recent town meeting on disability access is available at the following URL: http://www.rehab.uiuc.edu/access/meeting.html (addresses objectives 1-4)

Rationale: In the absence of systemic, recurring data collection regarding disability access, this approach helps to ensure a feedback loop regarding the status of disability access on the campus.

III. Other Issues For Ongoing Consideration

Several other issues were brought to the attention of the working group that warrant future consideration. First, to reinforce the perception among outside constituencies that disability is considered a value-adding element of our diversity agenda, it was recommended that persons with disabilities be given greater visibility in campus promotional media, and that a standard "access statement" be included on all published campus media. For example, all campus publications could include the following statement, "a copy of this publication may be obtained in an accessible, alternative format upon request" (Note: to accommodate compliance with this policy, it will be essential

that all units maintain accessible electronically formatted copies of all documents produced for public dissemination).

To enhance instructional access, it was suggested that the Office of Instructional Resources develop a mechanism for the systemic evaluation of disability access and support in the classroom context. This could greatly aid in identifying access issues for which educational responses were required. However, due to the typically small "n" of students with disabilities in any given class, it would be essential that these data not be communicated back to instructors on an individual class basis, or in any other manner that would compromise the anonymity of the student respondent. It was also suggested that the campus enforce the statutory textbook procurement timetable for all courses, and/or enforce a policy that no materials are distributed to students until instructors have made timely arrangements for their conversion to accessible formats. The latter recommendation was based upon the observation that the "just-in-time" approach used with increasing frequency to identify and order textbooks and other readings, including course-packs, invariably compromises the equal access requirements of the law relative to students with disabilities. This happens because most of the material is made available in a print format that must be converted to an alternative format to accommodate access using assistive information technologies. The time requirements of the latter process cause students with disabilities to receive materials after they are made available to others in the class, and/or they must accept their readings in a piecemeal, sequential manner based on their scheduling within the syllabi of their courses.

Finally, it was also brought to the attention of the working group that the Chancellor's Committee on Access and Accommodation devoted a considerable amount

of time last year to the issue of providing more equitable support for the University's highly regarded varsity athletic programs for student athletes with disabilities. Student athletes with disabilities have been extraordinarily effective ambassadors for the University, and they have contributed immeasurably to the positive changes that have occurred in societal attitudes toward disability over the past five decades. Therefore, it would seem reasonable that the University evaluate the qualitative and quantitative differences in the gymnasia access, scholarship funding, travel, and operational support afforded students with disabilities in comparison to their able-bodied cohort, and that strategies be implemented for reducing or eliminating significant qualitative differences in institutional commitment and support.

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Appendix B

Recommendations from Office of LGBT Concerns

Current estimates of the LGBT population range from two percent to Kinsey's 10 percent and most students acknowledge they have at least one LGBT acquaintance, friend or relative. Consequently the presence of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people affects all members of the campus community. Unfortunately there is little awareness of or attention to LGBT needs outside Student Affairs. This became painfully clear at the recent Chancellor's Conference on Diversity when two different panels that dealt with faculty diversity issues did not consider the value of LGBT faculty. Indeed segments of campus have long histories of homophobia.

LGBT people have been taught by the larger society that their orientations are shameful and even sinful. Indeed segments of the larger society actively seek to oppress and cause physical and emotional harm to anyone whose sexual orientation is outside of identified norms. During the coming out process, which frequently begins during the college years, resources and support are needed as sexual identities are explored and questioned. Support is also needed to help individuals unlearn the messages received from society at large while simultaneously learning to be proud of their individuality. Additionally LGBT people need to be provided with the tools to protect themselves from and to help educate the straight community. Resources are needed to help the campus community learn how best to interact with and support LGBT people as they go through the coming out process and develop into happy, productive adults.

LGBT people are an invisible minority existing within all other categories of people. Consequently programming for this population must intersect all other categories and is often overlooked. Specific recommendations to meet these needs are listed below.

1. Provide additional funding for the Office for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns.

   Although the Office of the Dean of Students has traditionally and consistently strongly supported the LGBT Concerns Office and the needs of LGBT students additional support through other campus resources is warranted. Current staffing and space arrangements make it difficult to provide a safe and supportive space in which LGBT students can meet as they navigate the difficulties of the coming out process. Adequate programming to explore and celebrate their existence while educating the entire campus about their needs and goals, and the ability to provide an easily accessible set of current LGBT resources is essential and will require significant additional funding and space.

2. Establish a Task Force on the Status of LGBT People

   A Task Force on the Status of LGBT People would say powerfully to the LGBT student/faculty/staff community that the University cares about its needs and that it is willing to engage in the investigation of those needs and provide the support essential to create an environment in which LGBT people will thrive. The task force could monitor the efforts of campus units to seek and nurture LGBT faculty as valuable additions to the campus. It would provide a forum to help the LGBT Concerns Office most effectively define and meet the needs of LGBT and straight campus communities.

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As a campus we have not confronted the challenges faced by transexual, intersex and transgender students, faculty and staff or the impact of their presence on campus. We need to educate ourselves so that we can create a campus environment that is welcoming and healthy and that has positive and productive responses to the discrimination they face. Transgender faculty members are currently present on campus. It is foreseeable that Campus Housing will have to serve transgender students in the future. To begin our education, a three day symposium on transgender issues that brings experts of the caliber of Lynn Conway, Leslie Feinberg, Loren Cameron, Kate Bornstein, Deirdre McCloskey, Debra Davis and others to campus should be held during Spring Semester 2003. This symposium would introduce the issues and lead discussion to help us all begin to understand the types of issues faced by transexual, transgender, and intersex people on a daily basis. It will provide a framework of understanding to lead to development of policies and support systems that will allow trans- and intersex people to flourish on our campus. While here, symposium speakers should also have opportunities to interact with students and student affairs staff as well as campus administrators and faculty.

Appendix C

Working Group Recommendations on Public Outreach

Though the University of Illinois and the local Urbana Champaign community have some complimentary needs relationships between researchers and the local community have not always been productive and helpful. We must allow the local community to identify and prioritize issues and then develop relationships which will allow university participation in development of appropriate solutions. It is important community leaders be provided an equal voice during all phases of any project. The recent establishment of the Urban Exchange Center can facilitate this goal. However other means should also be explored.

- Develop an appropriate format to establish ongoing exchange between community members, faculty, staff and students to increase opportunities for academic outreach into the community and to establish criteria for how research projects in the community are identified, implemented, conducted and evaluated. Representative groups would include, but not be limited to, the following: community representatives, faculty and staff, Urban Exchange Center personnel, Cultural Program representatives, Office of Volunteer Programs, U of I Extension (ACES) and America Reads / America Counts representatives.

- Continue the immersion experiences organized by the Urban Exchange Center in Spring 2001. A community inversion experience for faculty was conducted providing faculty an opportunity to visit key community people and resources. This first step provided faculty a sense of the needs and assets in the community and presented them with an opportunity to think of ways to connect their

individual teaching and research with the community. Immersion experiences that are focused in specific areas (e.g., housing, education, economic development) need to be conducted. Similar immersion experiences need to be offered for community leaders to provide them with an understanding of university resources, intellectual and otherwise, available to help them develop strategies to resolve problems.

- Develop a mentorship program thought the Urban Exchange Center for community leaders and program directors to foster linkage between the university and the local community. The program will:

    a. Engage in leadership skill development clinics & workshops.

    b. Research best practices with mentorship and tutorial programs and share this information through seminars, workshops, brochures, etc., to the program coordinators.

    c. Develop training for mentors and help program coordinators develop the skills to train the mentors themselves.

    d. Create a "community scholars" program that allows community members to take university courses that deal directly with the work they're doing in the community. Enrollment could be limited to potential students who are directly involved in the partnerships created in accomplishing our second goal.

- Provide resources to the Urban Exchange Center to allow it to function as a more effective conduit between community needs and university resources and expertise. The UEC should continue conducting a needs assessment of the local

community as well as an inventory of university programs, faculty and resources. A database and interactive web site should be developed and housed at UEC to make this information readily available. The database should contain tools to evaluate efforts and disseminate information on best practices.