

GRINNELL COLLEGE



*Final Report to the
Grinnell College Board of Trustees:*

Strategic Planning for Grinnell College



April 30, 2004

Grinnell Planning Steering Committee

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Introduction and Acknowledgements

This document reports the results of a two-year process to develop a strategic plan for Grinnell College. This is not a strategic plan itself. A formal strategic plan must await the process of review and approval by the College's Board of Trustees and further examination by the College community. This report sets out what the Grinnell College Planning Steering Committee recommends that the eventual strategic plan contain.

The Planning Steering Committee wishes to thank a large number of people who contributed mightily to the production of this report. Foremost is Jonathan Brand, vice-president for institutional and budget planning, who was central to every part of the strategic planning process from beginning to end. The Planning Team contributed invaluable to the strategic planning effort. It included Scott Baumler, associate director of institutional research; Marci Sortor, associate dean of the College and associate professor of history; Carol Trosset, director of institutional research, and Karen Voss, associate treasurer of the College.

Most important, we would like to thank trustee Clint Korver '89 of Decision Quality International L.L.C., San Francisco, for his able leadership and direction of the entire strategic planning process.

Part I

A Brief History of the Planning Process

Some perspective on how the proposals in this document emerged can be gained from briefly reviewing the history of the strategic planning process.

In the spring of 2002, the Board of Trustees decided to develop a strategic plan for Grinnell College under the guidance of trustee Clint Korver, co-founder, The Decision Quality International L.L.C., San Francisco. That fall, President Osgood, with the help of the faculty's Executive Council, constituted the Grinnell College Planning Steering Committee (PSC). The committee was to be headed by Chair of the Faculty Mark Montgomery and assisted by a Planning Team of administrative support staff coordinated by Jonathan Brand, vice-president for institutional and budget planning. The PSC membership would draw from a wide range of Grinnell constituencies, including trustees, administrators, alumni, staff, students, and faculty. Table 1 lists the members of the PSC.

Table 1: Composition of the Planning Committees

Planning Steering Committee		Osgood, Russell	President of the College
Barber, Sig	Professor of German	Rosenberg, Gabe '03	SGA Officer
Barr, Bob '57	Trustee	Schneider, Mark	Associate Professor of Physics
Brown, Victoria (03–04)	Professor of History	Scott, Helen	Associate Dean of the College
Brue, Nord '67	Trustee, Chair of the Board	Spence, M. Anne '66	Trustee
Clay, David	Treasurer of the College	Swartz, Jim	Dean of the College
Crady, Tom	VP for Student Services	Thomas, Frank '71	VP for Diversity
Egan, John '57	Trustee	Vetter, Roger (03–04)	Associate Professor of Music
Finkelman, Patricia Jipp '80	Trustee	White, David '90	Trustee
Gregg-Jolly, Leslie (03–04)	Associate Professor of Biology	Planning Team	
Kaiser, Dan (02–03)	Rosenfield Professor of History	Baumler, Scott	Associate Director of Inst. Research
Korver, Clint '89	Trustee	Brand, Jonathan	VP for Institutional and Budget Planning
Lazier, Bill '53	Trustee	Korver, Clint '89	Trustee
Little, Caroline '81	Trustee	Sortor, Marci	Associate Dean of the College
Mohan, John (02–03)	Professor of Russian	Trosset, Carol	Director of Institutional Research
Montgomery, Mark	Professor of Economics	Voss, Karen	Associate Treasurer
Mutti, Jack (02–03)	Professor of Economics		

Following a planning model developed by Korver, the first thing the PSC did when it met in October 2002 was to brainstorm a set of goals for itself: why should Grinnell College strategically plan? The goals are listed in Table 6 at the end of this document, where we consider what strategic planning accomplished.

The next step in the Korver model was to develop a “decision table” of alternative preliminary strategies—more accurately, areas of focus—that the planning process should consider. By December of 2003, eight focus areas had been identified:

- Improve the Status Quo; More of Everything
- Focus on Attracting Talented Low-Income Students from Around the World
- Focus on Recruiting Top Faculty
- Focus on Becoming a More Humane Community
- Make Grinnell the College of Choice for Iowans
- Enhance the College’s National Reputation
- Make Social Justice a Top Institutional Priority
- Focus on Achieving the College’s Mission Statement

The purpose of the table was to speculate about how each strategy/focus would, if adopted, affect such aspects of college life as the composition of the student body, student recruitment and retention, faculty and staff satisfaction, and the College’s financial health, among others. This Decision Table was announced and made available, via the Internet, for comment by all interested parties. A wide range of people both on and off campus sent comments about the document.

At the board meeting in February of 2003, the PSC met to discuss community reaction to its Decision Table and contemplate the next step of planning. The result was a set of five full-blown alternative (though not mutually exclusive) proposed strategies for Grinnell:

1. Making Grinnell Tuition-Free
2. Providing a Full Ride for the Most Meritorious Students
3. Building on the College’s Strengths
4. Enhancing our Connection to Iowa
5. Enhancing the Student Experience
6. Recruiting Faculty Who Will Enhance the College’s Academic Reputation

The above list makes it clear that the strategies to be explored were not simply minor variations around some most-acceptable common denominator. The list would explore the boundaries of what was feasible for the College to do, and desirable on the part of its constituents.

To make rational evaluation of these six strategies possible, the PSC charged the Planning Team with conducting an in-depth analysis of them prior to the next PSC meeting in the fall of 2003. In March, the PSC consulted extensively with experts from the offices of admission and financial aid, the treasurer, student affairs, and others to predict the college-wide impacts of adopting these strategies. For example, how much would “Providing a Full Ride for the Most Meritorious Students” improve the academic credentials of the entering class? How would it affect the diversity of that class? How much would it cost to implement this strategy? The Planning Team reported its findings to the PSC.

At its August 2003 meeting, after digesting the Planning Team’s report, the PSC decided it was time to gauge community reaction to the six proposed strategies. Consultants from Iowa State University, under the direction of John Shuh, were brought in to conduct focus group discussions. In September, 16 focus groups met on campus and two were interviewed by telephone. (See Table 2 for composition of the groups.) The point was to identify those elements of the various strategies that the community considered worth exploring in the next phase of planning.

Table 2: Composition of Focus Groups September 2003

Constituency	Female	Male
Trustees *	4	6
Alumni	4	3
Class of 2004	7	5
Class of 2005	2	2
Class of 2006	2	2
Class of 2007	1	1
Staff	5	1
Senior Managers/Administrators	2	6
Mid-Level Managers/Administrators	3	4
Emeritus and Senior Faculty (SFS)	1	5
Tenured Faculty in Science Div.	2	5
Untenured Faculty in Science Div.	3	3
Tenured Faculty in Humanities Div.	1	5
Untenured Faculty in Humanities Div.	3	4
Tenured Faculty in Social Studies Div.	3	2
Untenured Faculty in Social Studies Div.	3	4

* Trustees were interviewed by telephone

From the focus groups—and a special faculty meeting on this topic held in December — there came some important signals about the community’s view of the alternative strategies. First and foremost, it was clear that Grinnellians happen to like what Grinnell *is* and do not want to see it become something else. Radical change would not be desirable. As one faculty member said, “The best expenditure of resources, both human and financial, is to focus on what we do and make those [things] stronger.” This widely held sentiment ruled out a number of proposed strategic elements. For example, there was little desire to substantially change the student body via a “Full Ride for the Most Meritorious Students,” or “Making Grinnell Tuition-Free.” Nor was there agreement to “Focus on Recruiting Faculty Who Will Enhance the College’s Academic Reputation.” People valued Grinnell’s tendency to define excellence in its own terms rather than solely by the traditional measures used at other “elite” liberal arts colleges. Targeting only students with the highest test scores for example, was not seen as consistent with Grinnell’s unique character.

Those strategic elements that generally were favored by all constituents included ethnic diversity and, not surprisingly, good teaching.

From the results of the consultants' report, the Planning Steering Committee produced a list of 15 ideas and concepts deemed worthy of further consideration as elements of an eventual strategic plan. This was called the "In List" (See Figure 1). It was decided that these could be fruitfully divided into four categories, each of which could be addressed by a special subcommittee constituted for that purpose. The four subcommittees were:

- Re-emphasizing the Liberal Arts
- Improving Diversity
- Improving the Grinnell Experience for Students, Staff, and Faculty
- Rethinking Tuition and Financial Aid Policy

Subcommittee members were drawn from a wide base of campus constituencies, although necessarily relying on local experts in the area under discussion (See Table 3). Unfortunately, the goal of completing this document by the April 2004 board meeting substantially limited subcommittee membership. Meetings had to be held on campus, which curtailed participation by alumni and trustees. This was seen as a definite loss to this stage of the planning process, but a necessary concession to the pressure to finish. The subcommittees deliberated for 10 weeks in February and March. In April 2004 they issued their final recommendations, which were then discussed by the Planning Steering Committee. Those recommendations constitute the bulk of this report on the strategic planning process.

Figure 1

Strategic Elements Deemed Worthy of Further Consideration

December 2003

1. Re-emphasizing the liberal arts
2. Increasing the diversity of the faculty, students, and staff
3. Rethinking the College's financial aid practices in light of the overall goals of the College
4. Reviewing the "sticker price" of a Grinnell education
5. Improving student life, including wellness, mental health, and residential life
6. Increasing faculty-student interaction in and out of class
7. Emphasizing teaching, mentoring, and small group research opportunities
8. Decreasing reliance on temporary faculty
9. Improving the local community economically and physically
10. Offering greater direct and indirect assistance for faculty partner employment
11. Strengthening the relationship between the liberal arts experience and post-graduate life, including career development
12. Improving the image of Grinnell College as a place "that is doing good" with its resources
13. Addressing the perception of Grinnell as ideologically narrow
14. Strengthening the international character of Grinnell College
15. Focusing more on recruiting proximate students, including from Iowa
16. Addressing the perception of Grinnell as ideologically narrow and intolerant

An Overview of the Subcommittee Reports

Re-emphasizing the Liberal Arts

This subcommittee emphasized the need for Grinnell to harness new interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge. This would require more team teaching across departmental boundaries, expansion of interdisciplinary majors and programs, and more effective use of mentoring relationships. Stronger mentoring is needed not just between faculty and students, but between faculty and other faculty. Most importantly, to truly reinvigorate our liberal arts program, we need to have less of our curriculum be taught by temporary faculty. The subcommittee outlines the costs—while acknowledging some benefits—of relying on temporary professors. It therefore proposes the addition of seven more permanent faculty positions.

Improving Diversity

The Subcommittee on Improving Diversity affirmed a number of our current practices, such as the Posse Program for incoming students, and the use of “opportunistic hires” to snatch up good minority faculty when they are available to us. They also proposed some new practices. True diversity should extend to *what* Grinnell teaches, not just who teaches it and to whom. In other words, we should make efforts to diversify the curriculum at Grinnell, not just the people.

Improving the Grinnell Experience

This subcommittee agreed with its counterpart above that the College needed more permanent faculty and also approved of creating some cross-disciplinary positions. These two items were considered critical to enhancing the student experience at Grinnell. Enhancing the faculty experience would require more attention to the issues of partner employment (which are complex and not easily resolved). The subcommittee recognized that the experience of support staff is sometimes ignored when colleges go about making new plans. It recommended that Grinnell find ways to improve staff morale through a greater sense of empowerment in the workplace, and more interaction with other elements of the community, notably the faculty. Finally, the subcommittee made suggestions for improving the Grinnell “community.” This was meant both as the physical community, ways to make the town we all live in better, and the *sense* of community, ways to better interact with each other in our various campus roles.

This subcommittee had the broadest range of issues to discuss, and so proposed the longest list of initiatives.

Rethinking Tuition and Financial Aid Policy

The subcommittee had to address only three simple questions: What should Grinnell charge in tuition? How much financial aid should we give? How much merit aid? Unfortunately, these questions are both extraordinarily important in terms of their impact on the College, and extraordinarily hard to answer due to innumerable uncertainties. The Subcommittee on Tuition and Financial Aid Policy considered three alternative strategies: one that maintains the status quo, one that increases tuition slowly but substantially, and a third that applies need-sensitive admission criteria to a fraction of the applicant pool. Their final recommendation is to avoid, for the time being, any radical action on tuition and aid. The College had gone through important recent changes, including a major upgrading of our physical facilities and increased attention from national media. The subcommittee recommends assessing the impact of these changes on our applicant pool *before* embarking on any new initiatives in tuition and financial aid.

Table 3: Membership of the Special Planning Subcommittees

Re-emphasizing the Liberal Arts

Victoria Brown, <i>Chair</i>	Professor of History
Sam Rebelsky	Associate Professor of Computer Science
Don Smith	Professor of History (senior faculty status)
Katya Gibel Azoulay	Associate Professor of Anthropology
Will Freeman	Associate Professor of Physical Education
Jon Chenette	Professor of Music
Todd Armstrong	Associate Professor of Russian
Elaine Marzluff	Associate Professor of Chemistry
Gail Bonath	Associate Librarian of the College

Diversifying Students, Faculty and Staff

Leslie Gregg-Jolly, <i>Co-chair</i>	Associate Professor of Biology
Sig Barber, <i>Co-chair</i>	Professor of German
Henry Rietz '89	Assistant Professor of Religious Studies
Tinker Powell	Associate Professor of Economics
Frank Thomas '71	Vice-President for Diversity
John Rommereim	Associate Professor of Music
Adrienne Enriquez '98	Assistant Dean of Admission
Michael Sims	Associate Dean for Student Life

Improving the Grinnell Experience

Mark Schneider, <i>Chair</i>	Associate Professor of Physics
Ira Strauber	Professor of Political Science
Sarah Purcell '92	Assistant Professor of History
Monica Chavez-Silva	Director of Community Enhancement
Deanna Shorb	Chaplain
Erik Simpson	Assistant Professor of English
Liz Allan '04	President, SGA
Carol Ahrens	Administrative Support Assistant

Rethinking Tuition and Financial Aid

Roger Vetter, <i>Chair</i>	Professor of Music
Arnold Woods	Dir. of Student Financial Aid
Jim Sumner	Dean of Admission and Financial Aid
Charles Cunningham	Associate Professor of Physics
Karen Voss	Associate Treasurer
Jack Mutti	Professor of Economics
Jim Swartz	Dean of the College
Tom Crady	Vice-President for Student Services
Jacob Kaufman-Osborn '04	Treasurer, SGA

Part II

Recommendations from the Subcommittee on Re-emphasizing the Liberal Arts

Introduction: Building on Grinnell's Strengths in Liberal Arts

Grinnell College attracts its high caliber of students, faculty, staff, and administrators because it is a strong *liberal arts* college. Participants in strategic planning discussions repeatedly spoke to Grinnell's need to continue to emphasize a liberal arts education. As the College's mission statement notes:

The College aims to graduate women and men who can think clearly, who can speak and write persuasively and even eloquently, who can evaluate critically their own and others' ideas, who can acquire new knowledge, and who are prepared in life and work to use their knowledge and their abilities to serve the common good.

A liberal arts education sets itself apart from other types of education insofar as liberal arts students learn for the love of knowledge, and not merely to prepare for a particular career. The best liberal arts programs regularly engage students in careful, creative thought and enable students to approach issues and problems from a variety of perspectives.

Beginning with the First-year Tutorial and proceeding through the curriculum, Grinnell distinguishes itself by engaging students in small-group learning and in close student-faculty interactions. Grinnell also encourages students to reflect upon their own education by carefully planning their baccalaureate course of study alongside faculty advisers.

Grinnell College's plans for the future should concentrate on supporting its demonstrated strengths by ensuring that our students can gain knowledge and guidance from a diverse, permanent faculty. At the same time, those plans must reflect global changes in the academy by harnessing interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge and challenging familiar departmental boundaries.

Enhancing our Intellectual Identity

We all know that intellectual and mental health are enhanced when we pause to share and enjoy the life of the mind. Yet, faculty members and students at Grinnell are often so focused on separate intellectual endeavors that they lose a revitalizing sense of the community's scholarly identity.

This committee recommends that the Executive Council, in cooperation with the Dean of the College, pursue the following initiatives:

- **Sponsor an all-college, weekend research conference.** Held in the spring, this conference would feature student and faculty research presentations, poster sessions, performing arts events, and art shows. The goal here is to trim the crowded, atomized spring calendar and to concentrate energy into a community celebration of these endeavors.

- **Establish each year an interdisciplinary theme around which convocations, symposia, art exhibits, etc. can be planned.** This theme would be related to the core values of the College, and would be announced two years in advance to aid incorporation of campus themes into curriculum and syllabus planning. The goal here is not a core curriculum but, rather, the provision of an all-college structure that will allow for greater synergy between courses, departments, programs, the classroom, and extracurricular activities.

Harnessing Interdisciplinary Approaches to Knowledge

The College has reached a turning point in its history of commitment to interdisciplinary scholarship. Thirty years ago, stimulated by cultural and intellectual shifts worldwide, Grinnell began to innovate with curricular “concentrations” that could expand on interdisciplinary course offerings first launched by the humanities program. Since then, the College has established 10 interdisciplinary concentrations¹ that reflect faculty and student engagement with developing intellectual trends. More recently, the College employed the Fund for Excellence to establish the Center for the Humanities, Center for Prairie Studies, and Center for International Studies. These centers join the already-established, interdisciplinary Rosenfield Program in Public Affairs, International Relations, and Human Rights, and the Noun Program in Women’s Studies. Additional efforts to bridge departmental boundaries are also evident in the new biological chemistry major, the team-taught humanities courses and “Freedom and Authority” seminars, and the programming of the Faulconer Gallery.

This impressive proliferation of interdisciplinary efforts testifies to Grinnell’s vibrant intellectual activity and to the commitment to integrated approaches to knowledge. However, current structures dissipate the great energy, scatter good intentions, and waste budgetary resources, leaving the whole less than the sum of the parts.

Just as Grinnell began innovating with new structures 30 years ago, so can the College innovate again in ways that preserve the strengths but maximize the resources and the communication across departments and disciplines.

This committee recommends that the Executive Council, in cooperation with the dean of the College, pursue the following initiatives:

- **Streamline or reconfigure existing concentrations, centers, and programs.** The first step is a one-year study of ways to accomplish this goal. The point is to design elegant, cost-effective structures that encourage faculty to actively engage with each other and with students across divisional and departmental boundaries, both within and beyond the classroom. Then the College *commits resources* of money and staff to implement the suggestions that emerge from this one-year design process. Without the commitment of resources, this study will be waste of time.
- **Design more faculty appointments and student “majors” that cross departmental boundaries.** Such innovation promises not only to produce a modernized curriculum, but also to increase diversity in faculty. Other institutions’ experience reveals that curricular structures and job descriptions that bridge standard academic boundaries attract a more diverse pool of applicants.

Getting More from Mentorship

Grinnell has a long and proud tradition of faculty-student mentoring and faculty-faculty mentoring. The College also fosters valuable mentoring relationships among students, faculty, alumni, and trustees. These are strengths on which we can build in re-emphasizing the liberal arts and responding to new emphases on research-based teaching and experiential learning.

This committee recommends that the dean and Executive Council strengthen mentoring on campus in the following ways:

Faculty-Student Mentoring

- **Exploit the advising potential of the tutorial by scheduling and funding three “reunions.”** Each tutorial class would reunite prior to pre-registration in the spring of the first year and the fall and spring of the second year.
- **Launch each year’s tutorial program with an outside speaker.** Invite a faculty member or off-campus speaker to address a given year’s tutorial population on the joys and challenges of a liberal arts education before breaking out into tutorial classes for discussion about curriculum planning.
- **Designate some formal occasions for intentional, shared reflection on the broad goals of a liberal arts education.** The goal is to emphasize the specific plans all students must make in order to gain curricular breadth and depth, research experience, and off-campus study or internship experience.
- **Develop and fund more internships involving alumni and trustee supervision.** The Career Development Office should be asked to plan ways to offer more alumni- and trustee-supervised internships in laboratories, archives, businesses, and nonprofit organizations around the world.

Faculty-Faculty Mentoring

- **Schedule an annual, all-faculty discussion of different models for successful faculty-student research, especially but not exclusively MAPS.** As supervision of undergraduate research is one of the most exciting, but by far the most labor-intensive, aspects of modern higher-education pedagogy, Grinnell faculty members can benefit from learning about others’ principles and practices in this particular arena.
- **Fund team-teaching within and across departments.** Historically, this has been a particularly successful mechanism for senior-junior faculty mentoring, but budgetary considerations have restricted this pedagogical advancement.
- **Actively and creatively encourage faculty members to collaborate across classes.** This would require prompting and staff support from the dean’s office. Explicitly encourage faculty members to pursue class-to-class partnerships that can profit from shared symposia, preparatory discussions for visiting speakers, collective research and creative projects, or hearing other students’ research presentations.
- **Sponsor and fund an expanded, annual New Faculty Orientation.** This is where new and experienced faculty can explore the goals of a liberal arts education and share syllabi and teaching techniques. Leadership of this annual program should rotate among

experienced faculty and should count as “service” to the College. The goal here is to cultivate the expectation of sharing and coordination among faculty in different departments, and to arrange for ongoing discussions about teaching between junior and senior faculty members across disciplines.

Relying Less on Temporary Faculty

The greatest advances at Grinnell in recent years have included an expanded leave policy for faculty to do research, increased faculty success in gaining outside research grants, the establishment of MAPS, and the institutional commitment to hiring a diverse faculty. All four of these developments trace a trajectory that can place Grinnell at the forefront of contemporary trends in academe.

With progress comes costs. Currently, our efforts to move forward are hobbled by too much reliance on temporary faculty and insufficient progress in diversity hiring.

The experience of comparable liberal arts colleges teaches us that success in diversity hiring requires readiness to make “opportunistic” hires and requires flexibility in defining positions across departmental boundaries. A serious commitment to the educational and intellectual benefits that derive from having a more diverse faculty necessitates the long-term allocation of resources to an expanded, *permanent* faculty.

In 1990–91, temporary and part-time faculty taught 8 percent of the classes at Grinnell. In 2001–02, temporary and part-time faculty taught 15 percent of the classes at Grinnell. There have been fluctuations in this pattern in the interim decade, but the overall upward trend threatens every other positive initiative on campus.

The College cannot “leave-proof” every department, because we cannot plan for every eventuality or every curricular need. If, however, Grinnell had had just seven additional faculty members teaching in permanent, full-time positions in 2001–02, the percentage of courses taught by temporary or part-time faculty would have been reduced to the 1990–91 level.

The disadvantages of relying upon temporary faculty

A temporary faculty member costs the College, on average, \$64,400 annually. The average annual cost of a tenure-track faculty member, amortized over the individual’s life, is \$109,800. The “saving” of \$45,400 must be compared to the following costs to the academic program:

1. The pool of temporary-job applicants is academically weaker than the pool of tenure-track applicants. Aspirants to an academic career almost invariably want tenure-track positions, so willingness to accept temporary employment at Grinnell generally implies failure to obtain a tenure track offer at a comparable school. There are many reasons that can happen to a strong candidate in a tight labor market. Temporary faculty are often exceptionally good in and out of the classroom. Nevertheless, the strongest candidates are those most likely to disappear from the market before we can recruit them to a temporary job.

Using temporary faculty often results in poor academic quality control, which students and their parents see as a violation of the trust they have placed in Grinnell.

2. Even when temporary faculty are excellent in the classroom, the College realizes only a fraction of the benefits of hiring a good professor. Temporary faculty cannot serve as tutorial professors, academic advisers, MAP supervisors, committee members, or participants in ongoing curricular innovations. In sum, temporary faculty cannot assist in any of curricular features in which Grinnell takes particular pride.

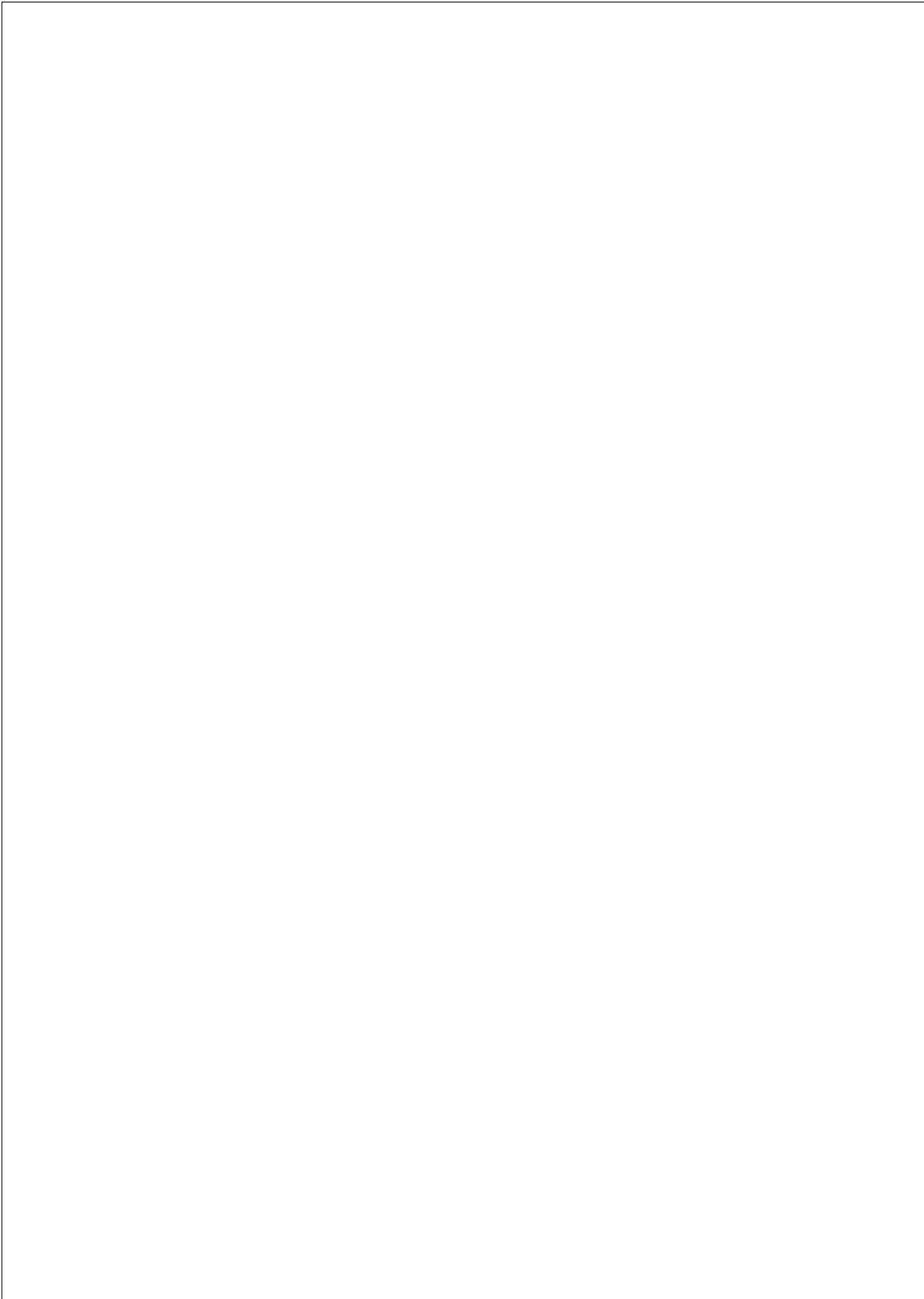
3. Faculty members expend enormous amounts of time every year searching for suitable leave-replacements. This is time taken from preparing classes, meeting with students, supervising student research, engaging in one's own scholarship, and recharging work energies with non-work activities. As none of this hiring activity leads to the addition of a permanent colleague, faculty experience it as wasted time and energy.

Therefore, this committee recommends that the Board of Trustees commit resources to the following goal:

Creation of seven additional faculty positions over the next five years.

The proposal to appoint seven additional faculty members must be considered alongside the proposal to strengthen the interdisciplinary, cross-departmental structure of the curriculum. Rather than try to replace, course-by-course, every professor on leave, this proposal seeks to expand the number of course offerings and thereby support a revitalized curriculum that offers students greater diversity in their curriculum design.

A trio of goals—reducing reliance on temporary faculty, increasing interdisciplinary approaches in the curriculum, and increasing faculty diversity—are all advanced by a strategic plan to add seven faculty positions over the next five years.



Part III

Recommendations from the Subcommittee on Diversity

Introduction: What Diversity Is and Why It Is Important

This committee recognizes the broad range of what constitutes “diversity,” but for the purposes of this planning process the committee defines diversity as that heterogeneity of our institutional makeup that represents race, gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity, and the international presence that reflects our multicultural world. The committee wishes to affirm the institution’s commitment to increasing the representation of traditionally underrepresented minority groups, primarily from the United States.

Improving campus diversity improves learning outcomes for all students. “Grinnell’s **primary** mission ... is to ‘educate citizens and leaders for our republic and the world beyond our borders’” (Grinnell College Catalog). The College cannot fulfill this mission without preparing **all** of its students to perform well in a diverse, multicultural world. Students must be exposed to, and confronted with, the complexities involved with true intellectual and social diversity in their classrooms, and in their lives outside the classroom. Studies show that diversity has a positive impact on cognitive development, academic success, and student satisfaction.

Goals and Objectives in Achieving Diversity

This subcommittee recommends that the Planning Steering Committee set the following goals for the College to achieve in improving diversity on campus.

- Significantly increase the percentage of the student body, faculty, staff, and administration that is comprised of people of color.
- Achieve retention rates of U.S. students of color and international students that are approximately the same as those of white U.S. students.
- Achieve retention rates of faculty members of color that are approximately the same as those of white U.S. faculty members.
- Improve dialogue about and between diverse groups in classes and the College in general. This would include improving classroom climate and would be shown by increases in retention rates and on the quality of life reviews (see below).
- Work toward greater diversity within the curriculum of the College. (The first stage of this process should begin with the Curriculum Committee.)

Toward the achievement of these goals, we make the following recommendations.

Making the Campus More Aware of the Need for Diversity

- **Increase understanding of the ways that increasing diversity improves learning outcomes for all students.** This may involve studies, workshops, retreats, or the like. Strategies employed should be cognizant of the fact that previous studies have indicated that the campus and classroom climate at Grinnell places extra burdens on persons of color in all areas of the campus community.
- **Conduct all-campus discussions about improving the classroom climate and the overall campus climate with regard to diversity.** These discussions should be facilitated by outside consultants. The structure for these discussions should be developed in conjunction with the facilitators, and a synopsis of the proceedings should be produced. Provide incentives for participation. We should pursue outside funding for these activities, perhaps from the Mellon Foundation. The dean of the College, the Diversity Steering Committee, and the vice-president for student services would coordinate these efforts.
- **Reserve annually one convocation slot to address diversity.** Preferably this convocation would reinforce the positive relationship between diversity and educational outcomes. The convocation committee would make the appropriate arrangements.
- **Regularly review the definition of “diversity.”** Such discussion should also assess, for example, to what extent the campus is open and welcoming to persons with disabilities (attitudes and physical impediments in our buildings). The Diversity Steering Committee and the Executive Council would have this item on the agenda annually.
- **Regularly and periodically collect data regarding quality of life and academic issues for students, staff, and faculty of color.** This may include data from exit interviews, regular assessment data, and/or reflective data from alumni. Examine such surveys to identify issues regarding diversity that need to be addressed and take positive action to rectify concerns. A committee comprised of a faculty member, the vice-president for diversity, an associate dean, and representatives from the Offices of Institutional Research and Human Resources would be responsible for implementing this recommendation.
- **Have the vice-president for diversity disseminate to the entire campus community an annual State of Diversity report.**
- **Provide incentives for efforts that are geared to improving campus diversity.** For example, add a category to Faculty Activities Reports (FARs) reporting efforts that have contributed to diversity. The Executive Council would discuss implementation of this idea.
- **Meet regularly to coordinate diversity efforts.** Institute an annual meeting of the vice-president for diversity, the Executive Council, and a tenured faculty member of color to monitor adherence to those measures that have been instituted to improve the hiring and retaining of faculty members of color. The Executive Council would determine appropriate measures of accountability for offices engaged in hiring.

Diversifying the Student Body

- **Continue our efforts in recruiting students of color.** The Office of Admission has done well in increasing the applicant pool of students of color in the past two years. The increased investment in the Office of Admission has paid off, and we urge continuation of such substantial investment to recruit a diverse student body.
- **Re-evaluate the requirement that students should graduate in four years.** In order to improve retention and graduation rates, not only for students of color, but all students, the College should re-evaluate the requirement that students must graduate in four years. The requirement that students earn a certain number of credits every year to remain on track to graduate in four years puts a great deal of pressure on students who come to Grinnell with weaker academic preparation than the average Grinnell student. Students who currently struggle to succeed in four courses per semester might be more successful if allowed to focus on three courses for 12 credits. The Committee on Academic Standing would be charged with addressing this recommendation.
- **Develop summer supplemental work for students who have inadequate academic preparation for studying at Grinnell College.** This would follow the structure of the successful Honor Scholars Program. The mathematics, science, writing, and reading labs have been invaluable in aiding our students. However, it appears that there might be a need for more supplemental opportunities, which again would improve retention and graduation rates for all students. The Curriculum Committee and the Diversity Steering Committee would be responsible for discussing ways to implement this summer supplemental work.

Diversifying the Faculty and the Curriculum

There is a reason why the faculty and the curriculum are lumped together here. The absence of centralization in our hiring structure, as well as the departmentally centered focus of our hiring process, pose difficulties to achieving the goal of greater representation by persons of color on the faculty at the College and efforts to retain them. The institution must take measures to assure that “diversity positions” do not become marginalized. The College needs to beware of tying demographic diversity to curricular diversity in its appointments, i.e., the expectation that a minority faculty member will be expected to be the one responsible for courses in the curriculum that deal with diversity. The operative formula needs to be “diversity **AND** (not *OR*) curriculum.” Thus the committee makes the following recommendations and notes that adequate resources should be made available to facilitate these activities. Recommendations, where appropriate, should be carried out in conjunction with the Office of Diversity.

To Achieve a More Diverse Curriculum:

- **Hire Curriculum Diversity Consultants.** Bring discipline-based diversity experts to campus to consult with specific departments on diversifying their courses and curriculum. An associate dean and the Instructional Support Committee can coordinate these efforts.
- **Support the development of new pedagogies.** Maintain academic support for pedagogical methods effective for a diverse student body, including stipends for course development and support for multicultural curricular development workshops. Such work falls within the purview of the Instructional Support Committee. Additionally, consider extra support for scholarly pursuits related to diversity (Committee for the Support of Faculty Scholarship).

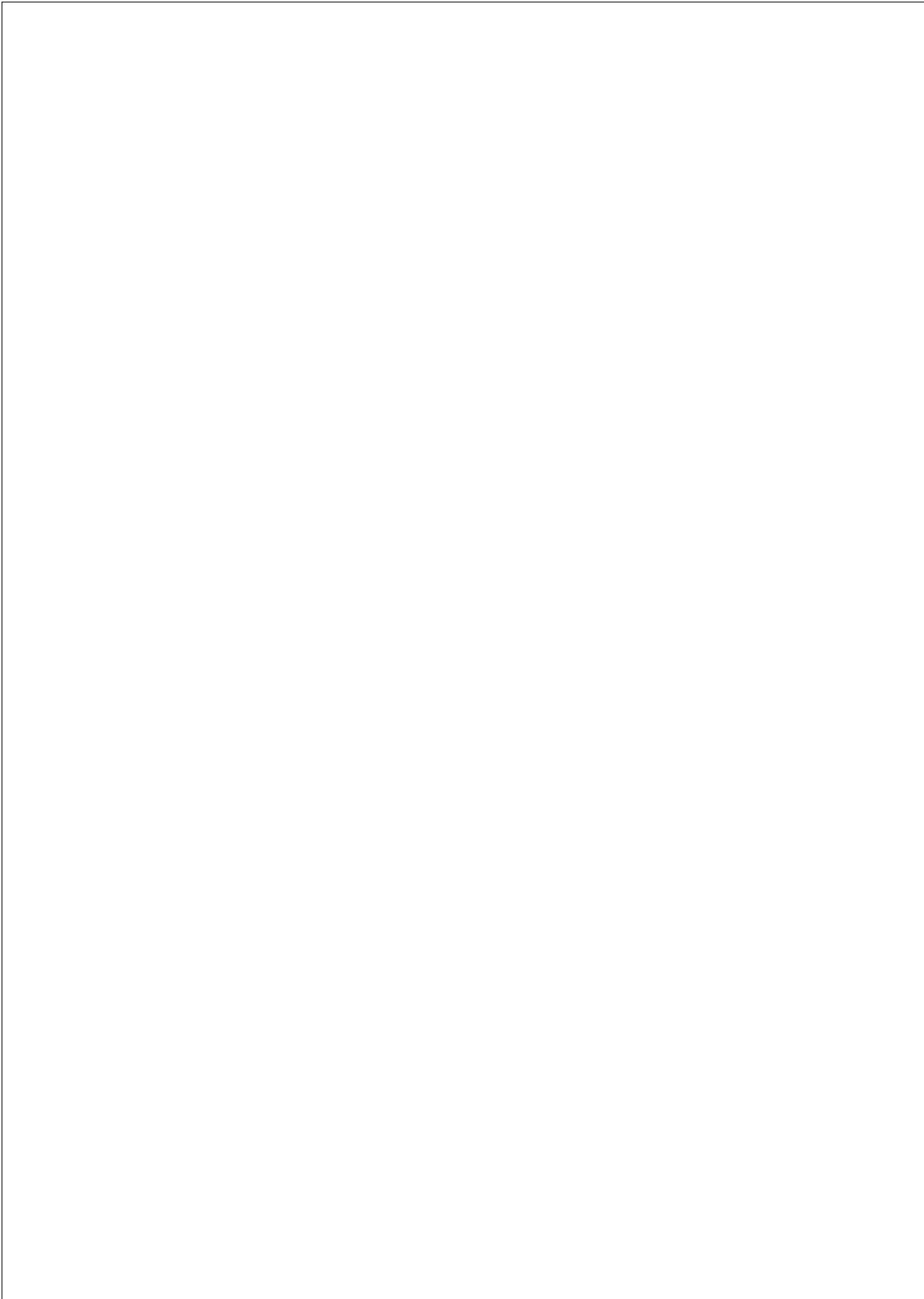
To Achieve a More Diverse Faculty:

- **Enrich the Applicant Pools for Faculty Positions.** This suggestion has a number of components. The recommendations below will require increased staffing in the office of the vice-president for diversity.
 1. *Educate chairs of searches about the possibilities for adding diversity candidates to the pool.* Make departments accountable during searches, including the definition of positions and efforts made to recruit and attract diversity candidates. (See also point 6 in this section.)
 2. *Identify and increase support for broadening the base of searches to recruit diversity candidates.*
 3. *Encourage faculty members to attend conferences about diversity.*
 4. *Notify department chairs about diversity conferences.* It would be useful for chairs to attend conferences sponsored by traditionally underrepresented groups within a relevant field and/or conferences with high numbers of potential diversity job candidates.
 5. *Put a diversity link on the College website.* Make the link available to all faculty members and be sure to highlight that funds are available for attending such diversity conferences.
 6. *Establish a structure in which there will be a systematic review of current non-tenure track faculty members of color, and determine procedures for pursuing possibilities of retaining such faculty members.* The dean of the College, the Executive Council, and the vice-president for diversity would be responsible for establishing this structure.

- **Create Dedicated Diversity Positions**
 1. *Affirm the practice of “opportunistic hires.”* Establish a reserve fund, similar to the capital reserve fund (in this case a “human reserve fund”), to ensure that funds will be available. The president of the College could coordinate this effort.
 2. *Maintain the (five) hires originally approved under the “Diversity Initiative.”* These diversity positions need to be considered as true additions rather than tied to departmental retirements, curricular issues, etc.; otherwise these initiatives will be eroded over time.
 3. *Institute a one-semester to three-year “diversity” term position for a senior faculty member (perhaps a named chair).* This position would include a substantial salary, research funding, reduced teaching schedule, and would complement the current CSMP and MSIR programs. Its similarity to the Heath Professorship suggests that it could be packaged as an *expansion* of the MSIR program. The dean of the College would lead this effort as well as the following one.
 4. *Establish postdoctoral positions in a diversity context.* The dean of the College would lead this effort.

Diversifying the Staff

- **Expand the use of affirmative action in staff hiring.** This should include active pursuit of recruiting opportunities as the population of Iowa diversifies. Employment opportunities should be advertised strongly in the Marshalltown, Tama, Iowa City, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids areas to target the diverse populations there. The Office of Human Resources and the Diversity Steering Committee would monitor this effort.
- **Have vice-presidents in their reports to the president address their own efforts with regard to issues of diversity in hiring and/or workplace climate.**



Part IV

Recommendations from the Subcommittee on Improving the Grinnell Experience

Introduction: Our Guiding Assumptions

The Subcommittee on Improving the Grinnell Experience started with the mission statement, with the assumption that the reason for improving the Grinnell experience was to better fulfill our mission of liberally educating the students of Grinnell College and preparing them “in life and work to use their knowledge and their abilities to serve the common good.” This makes it obvious that the experience of our current students is absolutely central to our concerns. It also brought us to focus on improvements in the faculty experience that will allow the College to recruit and retain the most effective faculty and provide an environment in which those faculty can perform their best. Beyond this, we recognized that the health of Grinnell College as a community affects the education of students. For example, the frequent interactions between students and non-faculty employees of the College (e.g., custodial or dining services employees) can have significant positive or negative effects on student experiences. Similarly, the City of Grinnell and its residents will have effects, positive and negative, on students, and offer, at best, opportunities for formal and informal real-world experiences.

In short, while we see fulfillment of the College’s educational mission as our underlying reason for improvement of the Grinnell experience, we recognize that all members of the Grinnell community (students, faculty, other employees, alumni, and the town) are important to that mission, and therefore we took pains to consider the experience of all of those constituencies.

Because of the interrelated nature of any complex community, it is impossible to consider any one element in isolation. However, to allow some structure to this report, we have divided consideration of the Grinnell experience into the four broad categories of students, faculty, other employees, and the city of Grinnell. Often our proposals might benefit multiple groups; occasionally recommendations have positive effects on one group at the expense of another. We have tried to point out these overlaps without becoming overly repetitive.

The Student Experience

There are many ways in which one might enhance the student experience. We considered improvements that contribute directly or indirectly to our educational mission; so for example, country club amenities (a spa and tanning salon?) do not make a significant contribution, whereas student health and wellness facilities clearly do. The student experience also includes a wide range of contexts that are addressed by other subcommittees (e.g., we left consideration of the classroom experience to the “liberal arts” subcommittee, and financial issues to the “tuition and financial aid” subcommittee). We also recognized that the student experience starts with prospective students and continues through to alumni.

Five different areas of concern arose in our discussion: facilities, health and wellness, informal student/faculty interactions, careers, and ongoing assessment.

Facilities

To a great extent, the ongoing improvements of facilities address serious needs for students, particularly relieving residential overcrowding, providing improved and expanded student center space, and expanding opportunities for physical wellness activities. In one regard, the recent renovations, despite their positive contributions, have moved in a direction contrary both to some student desires and educational goals—the dramatic reduction in what at Grinnell is known as Off-Campus College-Owned (OCCO) housing. Many students desire a more independent living situation, and often such housing situations foster groups with a particular educational interest (e.g., foreign language houses). Other colleges have successfully constructed residential structures that economically address these needs, and still provide a proximity to the campus that allows integration into the residential life support and governance system. For example, Carleton has recently constructed a complex of townhouses immediately adjacent to the main campus that allow independent living for students while maintaining integration within the main campus community and student life system. These structures are also energy efficient and low maintenance in comparison to converted homes. Therefore, we recommend:

- **Consideration of more independent living options as the College considers completion of the proposed fifth East Campus dormitory.**

Health and Wellness

In the wake of the suicides of the spring of 2003, the issues of student health and wellness continue to assume great importance in the minds of students, faculty, and staff. Many steps have been taken to enhance mental health care both on campus and off, and we see these as very positive steps. The establishment of on-campus mental health services has seen a considerable increase in the use of these services, and use of off-campus services has not dwindled. This suggests that similar unmet needs might exist for other on-campus health care. Some students and faculty have actively campaigned for this enhancement. With the presence of both physician assistants and nurse practitioners in town, the possibility of having such a health care person on campus a few hours a week to diagnose illness and issue prescriptions seems like a logical way to examine such a potential service. We recommend:

- **Trial of expanded on-campus medical care that includes diagnosis of illness and issuing of prescriptions.**

In addition to the intervention of health professionals, it is essential to promote healthy lifestyles on campus. The availability of facilities such as the PEC has been central to this, and the expansion of those facilities will be a welcome enhancement to wellness activities for students. Many other issues enter into the development of wellness; we wish to mention one of those issues—that of abuse of drugs and alcohol.

Substance abuse is a complex problem that faces virtually all college campuses, and Grinnell's situation, while not enviable, is also not the worst. The College already has mechanisms in place (the Alcohol Task Force in particular) for monitoring and recommending action regarding this issue. We believe that this issue would benefit from higher profile, especially with faculty. The reports of the task force should, by some mechanism, be presented to the faculty, and perhaps the task force could provide regular discussion points for faculty leaders, perhaps through faculty meetings or Executive Council. We recommend:

- **Greater publicity about drug and alcohol issues and periodic reports of the Alcohol Task Force.**

Informal Student/Faculty Interactions

Grinnell prides itself on the close interaction between students and faculty. Small class sizes and a dedicated faculty give rise to close connections in many “formal” settings: the classroom, advising, office hours. This character of Grinnell is a message that is given to prospective students. While this is, in general, a characteristic of the institution, the extent of close connections between faculty and students in more informal settings varies a great deal from individual to individual, and from department to department. Enhancing these informal interactions is seen as highly desirable by students, but many faculty are justifiably worried about the time demands that close individual connections with many students would entail. However, for many students, some of the most meaningful interactions are often (informal) group activities (e.g., “my tutorial professor had us out to his house for dessert”), which are much less demanding of faculty time. A variety of ideas were discussed in our subcommittee that might be of this character—many of which have had incarnations at Grinnell—such as:

- 1) Departmental or other topical lunches;
- 2) A common eating area that is attractive to and affordable for faculty and staff;
- 3) Informal open discussions with students preceding or following formal talks (with “snacks” or other informal fare provided);
- 4) A regular campus ice cream social/tea/lunch/study break (along the lines, perhaps, of the summer ice cream “social”).

We recommend:

- **Encouragement of informal student/faculty interactions, especially in ways that involve students in groups and are less demanding of faculty time.**

Careers

Presently the Career Development Office has targeted its resources toward career counseling and exploration. A result of this is a very successful and heavily utilized internship program. A corollary of this effort (and a reflection of limited on-campus demand) is that Grinnell does relatively less in the way of career placement. While there may not be presently enough demand on campus among students for this service, and not enough interest to attract recruiters to campus, we suspect there may be additional interest among recent graduates for such a service, which might now be relatively easy to satisfy by e-mail and the Internet. An enhancement of a placement aspect to the CDO might also be useful for the issue of partner employment, and could potentially be a resource to temporary faculty. We suspect there may be a synergistic effect that would benefit all parties and decrease the perception of Grinnell, and Grinnell students, as not being career-oriented. We recognize there may be many models for this expansion of services: internships and career counseling might take place in separate offices, or services for alumni and partners might be separated, or perhaps one might simply add staff to the present CDO. It is also possible that enhanced use of the Internet can facilitate career services, especially with alumni, through the establishment of virtual communities. By whatever mechanism, we recommend:

- **Consideration of additional career placement services that could be used by present students, alumni, faculty partners, and temporary faculty.**

Assessing the Student Experience

Student satisfaction and needs are dynamic qualities. We found by looking at other institutions' self-studies and planning documents that routine satisfaction surveys of graduating students are useful instruments when tied to ongoing planning. We recommend:

- **Institution of a graduating student satisfaction survey, the results of which are communicated on an annual basis to Executive Council, SGA, and other relevant planning bodies.**

The Faculty Experience

A consistent and undisputed theme among faculty is excessive workload. Faculty feel that time demands on them prevent them from doing an excellent job in the classroom, and lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction that may affect faculty retention. Moreover, faculty feel that the satisfaction and rewards associated with service responsibilities are not worth the time and frustration of leadership roles; one only has to look at the flight of faculty from elected positions such as chair of the faculty for evidence of this dissatisfaction. Time is certainly an element, but only part of it—one would be hard pressed to claim that the institution of more leave opportunities for both junior and senior faculty has led to a more satisfied faculty over the past decade. For example, many faculty express a feeling that they are disconnected from decision-making processes on campus.

Some issues are of specific concern to junior faculty. This is a particularly important group, since our rate of retention of junior faculty is not enviable. A frequently cited issue for junior faculty retention is that of partner employment. In addition, the stresses of pre-tenure faculty can be considerable; good communication between senior faculty and junior faculty can be very important to minimize these stresses—both within departments and on campus more broadly.

Workload

The issue of workload is difficult to address. More generous distribution of teaching reductions (or other compensation) for specific tasks also carries a cost; are we to become a faculty of “piece-workers” who will not consider taking on another responsibility without compensation? We do believe, however, that our heavy reliance on temporary faculty certainly is a piece of this puzzle that we can address; temporary faculty contribute less to shared responsibilities such as service, and are demanding of time in the hiring and mentoring process. Expansion of permanent faculty to supply replacement faculty for as many leaves as practical is a natural solution that has broad campus support. We recommend:

- **Leave-proofing of departments where appropriate, including creative use of inter- or multi-disciplinary faculty to aid small departments, concentrations, and tutorials.**

Wellness

There are many parallels between the stresses on faculty and those on students. Similarly, it makes sense for the College to offer wellness opportunities for faculty as well as for students. Faculty and other staff are more likely than students to have more sedentary work habits and would benefit even more from wellness programs. Funding for faculty and staff wellness

programs is minimal, and a minority of College employees participate. Expanded support for the new facilities and programs would include adequate staffing to accommodate a variety of schedules even when classes are not in session, bike- and pedestrian-friendly considerations for campus planning to allow for alternate transportation on and to/from campus, and support for expanded outdoor recreation opportunities off campus (e.g., bike path to Rock Creek). For these reasons, we recommend:

- **Enhanced wellness opportunities for faculty and staff.**

Institutional Goodwill

There was considerable agreement on this subcommittee that the size of the endowment has, perhaps counterintuitively, led to some considerable degree of deterioration of goodwill of faculty toward the institution. There is also a perception that it has provided an additional wedge between the faculty and the upper levels of the administration and the Board of Trustees. And while the budgetary process now has considerably more input from faculty and students than a decade ago, the largest discretionary portion of the expenditures of the College (formerly the Fund for Excellence and presently the Capital Reserve Fund) is controlled outside of the base budget with little or no faculty input. We realize that ultimate financial responsibilities must lie with the board and the president, but we recommend:

- **An increased systematic faculty advisory role in the expenditure of endowment funds.**

Partner Employment and Dual-Career Issues

There appear to be two different types of partner employment issues—dual-academic couples and partners with professional employment goals. First, we consider the latter case. Since the city of Grinnell has a relatively limited number of professional opportunities, partner employment continues to be an issue with faculty and staff. According to a 2001 campus faculty/staff survey, of those with a partner, over half claim dissatisfaction with their partner's job opportunities here—despite the fact that most partners have found employment, many within Grinnell.

We recognize this is a difficult problem, with no ideal or complete solutions. The College has recently made use of a program through the University of Iowa (the Dual Career Network) to assist partners. The program has been restricted to new faculty, has been used infrequently, and has had only moderate success. It seems likely that an employment counseling service with greater familiarity with the immediate region, and made available to staff and to more established faculty, would have greater success. We recommend:

- **Assistance with partner employment through Grinnell College, perhaps in the context of an enhanced Career Development Office, and probably in tandem with the Dual Career Network.**

As for dual academic couples, the College and the relevant faculty are already aware of logical options: shared positions and openings at nearby institutions. We believe there may be some other possibilities that might expand local opportunities. For example, faculty partners are sometimes employed for leave replacements, or to teach part-time. For such individuals, who have already met criteria of acceptability of appropriate departments, the College might consider offering longer-term adjunct status that could enable those individuals to maintain a professional affiliation even if intermittently and/or under-employed. Such an affiliation could allow the individual to apply for external grant support and otherwise improve his or her resume. The

College could also make funds more easily available to departments to employ such faculty for minimal teaching loads when endowment income is adequate. In general, we recommend:

- **More creative use of qualified academic partners to maintain their professional status.**

The incidence of dual-career couples has clearly increased over the past generation, and the resources of the city of Grinnell are not always sufficient to the needs of these couples. Our committee discussed a number of possible ways of assisting dual-career couples; many, but not all, of these ideas are particularly addressed at junior faculty. Some of these ideas are: commuting options (e.g., shuttles) between Grinnell and communities such as Des Moines or Iowa City, and loan funds for assistance with starting a small business or other needs for settling in Grinnell or environs. The initial settling-in period is challenging for all faculty—arguably even more so for dual-career couples. Many new faculty would benefit from improved relocation allowances or more faculty housing for new appointees. We recommend:

- **Investigation of need and feasibility of other innovative ideas for support of dual-career couples.**

The Staff Experience

This category, which we will refer to collectively as staff, contains two very different groups, which we will refer to as administrators and support staff, although exactly who falls in which group is not so obvious. At least one way to make the distinction is between salaried and hourly employees. Overall, we find that a disconnect between all staff and the rest of the campus community is sizable.

Some of this is purely geographic; for example, Facilities Management and the Old Glove Factory are simply far from the center of campus. Some of this is due to administrative climate; most of the academic governance is very democratic and more collaborative, with elected leaders and rotating chairs; most staff work under a much more hierarchical structure with a business-oriented management model. Some of this division is social; for example, staff members are not welcome, and/or feel that they are not welcome, at Faculty House, and many staff are explicitly or implicitly discouraged from participation in College events such as concerts and plays.

This isolation leads to instances of misunderstanding or even distrust, which has a negative effect on Grinnell as a college community, and secondarily on our educational mission. As the College gradually grows in size (in terms of area, buildings, and people), we need to increase our efforts at communication and at simply knowing one another better. This can be done in purely social ways (e.g., opening Faculty House to staff), or in our daily work (e.g., through more integration of faculty, students, and staff on committees). In fact, the College seems to be making decisions that minimize the interactions between faculty and staff (e.g., hour changes for custodial staff that virtually eliminated overlap with faculty). Although we recognize enhancing these connections and communication is a problem not easily addressed, we believe even small efforts are worth trying. We recommend:

- **Greater opportunities for social and professional interaction among all members of the College community, especially faculty and staff.**

It is our understanding that support staff in general receive competitive salaries and benefits at Grinnell. It appears the College has been attentive to this issue, and we encourage continuation of this attention. However, there is a perception that many support staff work in a climate in which they are fearful or resentful of their supervisors. The members of the committee are aware of

reports that support staff often feel that their needs and requests are at best unheard. Support staff in offices often speak of the difference between academic offices and administrative offices as very dramatic—clearly indicative of the different administrative structures between academic and administrative sides of the College. We have heard that some Facilities Management staff feel afraid to express dissatisfaction with working conditions or the response of supervisors to their concerns about working conditions or their needs for performance of their duties. Representation through the Staff Relations Committee does not deal with many of the details, and is not seen as adequately influential. This committee has not had time to do a thorough assessment of staff attitudes across campus, but to the extent these thoughts and feelings are indeed accurate, and widespread, they may well leave many support staff with a negative attitude toward their supervisors and the College in general. And it may lead to greater inefficiencies and less dedicated work; it certainly has been a concern to some students and faculty who interact with these staff. Moreover, many of these employees have their roots in the community, and represent an important link to the local environs; to the extent that there is distrust and resentment of the institution on the part of support staff, this distrust and discontent may be communicated to the wider community.

In addition, and no less important, students sometimes develop close and supportive relationships with custodial or dining services staff; we should take advantage of and cultivate those connections. Overall we feel that a greater appreciation and encouragement of support staff contributions will have a positive effect on our community and on performance of our mission. We recommend:

- **Independent assessment of staff satisfaction at Grinnell, with a possible eye toward greater empowerment of staff representatives perhaps through the Staff Relations Committee or perhaps through a new body, with opportunities to report to someone of influence who is not seen as supervisory.** Also, thought should be given to ways in which custodial or dining staff can be given the opportunity to cultivate close connections to students, if such staff should choose to do so.

The Community Experience

Although the question of the College and the city of Grinnell is usually framed in terms of what can one entity do for the other, we chose to think a bit more broadly as the city of Grinnell and its residents as a part of the College community and vice versa. Enhancing the experience of the residents of Grinnell as members of the broader College community will ultimately be of benefit to our educational mission. Our students interact with the surrounding community, and feel safe and supported (or unsafe and isolated) in part as a result of those interactions—with businesses, with individuals, with government agencies. Retention and satisfaction of faculty and professional staff, who are the employees most likely to relocate from distant places to take a position at Grinnell, depends a great deal on interactions with and successful integration in the community. The College and the city must coexist and cooperate in dealing with many issues, and such cooperation is easier when it follows upon a friendship and respect that is a product of dozens of smaller interactions between College and town. There are seemingly countless examples of positive interactions between College and town: sporting events, use of facilities, support from local medical community, collaborations between the College and the schools, and joint sponsorship of events, to name a few areas. These interactions should be encouraged.

The health of the College and that of the town are clearly intertwined. We chose to focus on two areas that we thought could benefit from some particular attention. The first we refer to as community development, which primarily focuses on the businesses and institutions downtown. The second area is connections with the local school system.

Community Development

Grinnell College is a significant business presence in the city of Grinnell, but is far from the sole economic engine of the community. The city has a great deal of vitality on its own, but is clearly not as prosperous and attractive as the cities of some of our peer institutions. Some of our peers have taken a very active and direct role in development of the community, purchasing sizable amounts of commercial real estate and maintaining tight control on the resulting economic activity. The most successful example of Grinnell College's involvement in community development has been more as a financial partner in development projects (residential real estate development and the Strand Theater project being two notable examples). This seems to be a model that works well and preserves a cordial relationship between the College and other business entities in the city.

In addition, the College provides funding to nonprofit organizations (e.g., Grinnell Renaissance and the Grinnell Regional Medical Center) for operations and capital projects. This support is valuable, but has been somewhat volatile and less predictable. The ill will generated by significant variability in such support, especially given the College's resources, can be sizable and long lasting. We recommend:

- **Continue and institutionalize College commitment as a financial resource for local development.**

There also has been some variability of the public relations aspects of connections with the community. Money of course is important, but reaching out to many organizations in town is also quite valuable. The College has recently made efforts to reestablish efforts of this nature through the Office of Alumni Relations and Development, which we support strongly. We recommend:

- **Continue revitalizing community relations program.**

Connections with School System

Connections with local schools are natural—we are, after all, in the same business. We examined a partial list of the ways in which the College and the local schools cooperate, and were both impressed by the list and also instantly came up with a half dozen other examples that were not on the list, suggesting the true number of connections and interactions is really staggering. Virtually all of these have had very positive outcomes, but there are a handful of instances of unintended and perhaps undesirable outcomes that have left individuals at the College and in the schools a bit circumspect about potential future interactions.

The quality of the local schools is often of considerable interest to faculty and professional staff with families who relocate to Grinnell for employment. The schools can play a significant role in attracting and retaining these employees. In this way, the College has a great self-interest in contributing to improved quality schools.

Most of the programmatic connections between the College and the schools appear to be initiated at the grassroots level, often with connections between individual faculty members at the respective institutions. Some are more formal institution-to-institution connections, such as agreements for education certification practica, equipment donation, or joint grant-supported programs.

We see a number of ways that the College can positively affect the local schools, especially in the face of tight budgets for state and local governments. We understand that counseling staff has been cut; College students and employees might be able to assist with presentations about the college application, admission, and financial aid process. College students, paid by the College, could also serve as tutors in some areas. We suspect there are a number of ways in which the

resources of the College could be mutually beneficial, which would require some brainstorming of a group with constituents from all of the involved institutions.

Recent years have seen an increase in the presence of Iowa Valley Community College on the Grinnell scene. The high school recently announced expanded opportunities for high school students to take IVCC courses. Grinnell College might also wish to investigate useful curricular connections with IVCC, and perhaps the possibility of an articulation agreement to encourage more local Iowa students to consider Grinnell College.

High school students have also become more of a presence in College classes, at a time when concern over closure of many popular introductory level classes is high. The ability of high school students to take Grinnell College classes is an excellent benefit for them, but because of the difficulties in scheduling and the natural assumption of priority for full-time enrolled students for class spaces, this mechanism does not provide an adequate substitute for advanced courses at the high school—which is often the way the program is advertised to prospective college employees. The ground rules and procedures for enrolling have been clarified in recent years, but still could be improved (e.g., instituting a registration time, rather than requiring a drop-add process that can put undue pressure on College faculty, and potentially developing some advising process with faculty or College student mentors).

To consider and address these many issues related to the local school system, we recommend:

- **Formation of a College-School System liaison committee to serve as conduit, and to discuss issues of mutual concern (e.g., Community of Scholars, high school students in College classes, IVCC).** This committee should include the registrar, the director of admission, and an administrator familiar with college budgetary issues.

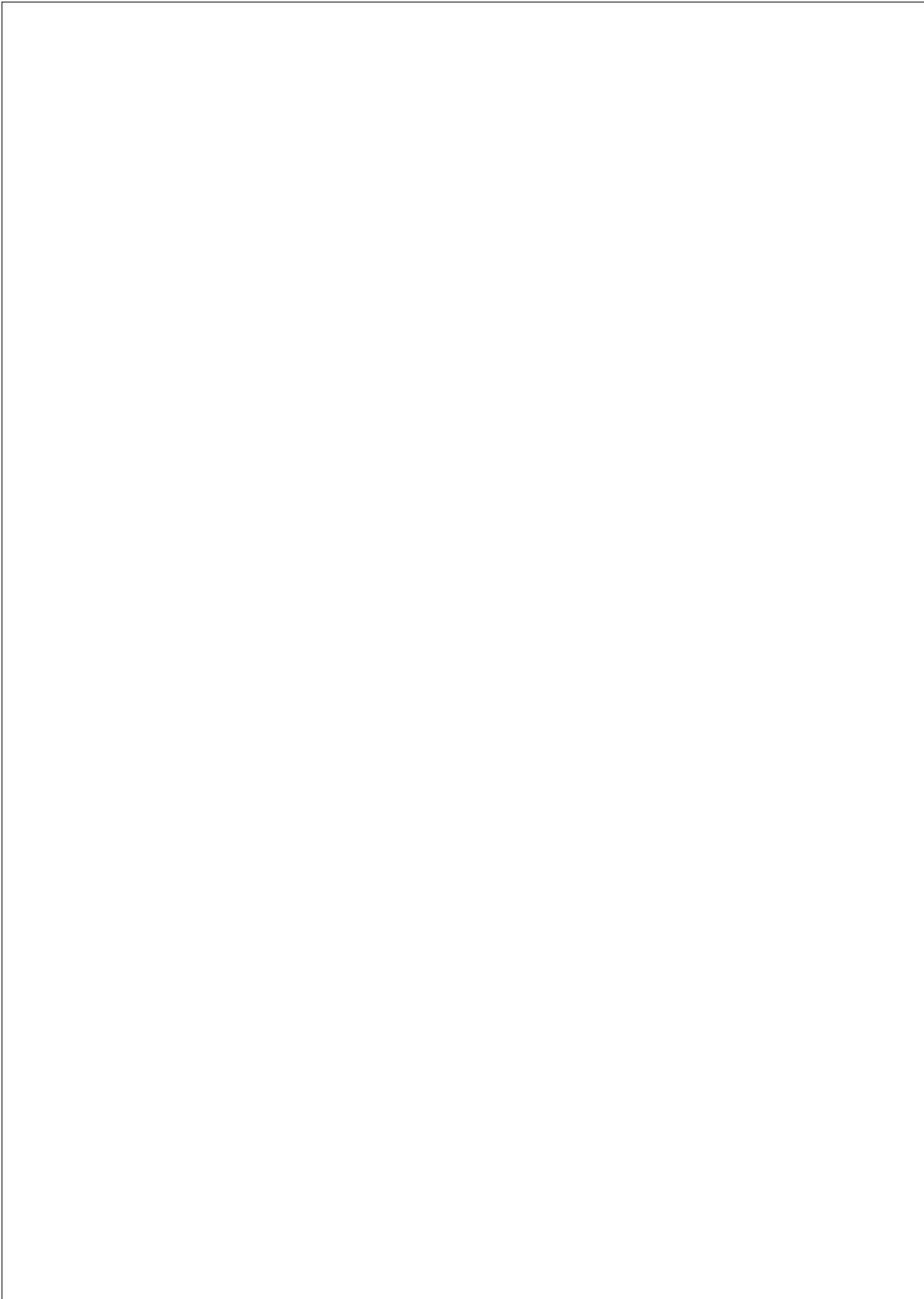
Improving the Sense of Community

For a small institution, Grinnell College has a number of sharp divisions. Often students are unaware of faculty concerns and vice versa; often faculty and administrative orientations seem very different. Communication within these groups is much more effective. We believe that some of these divisions are unavoidable, but perhaps they can be minimized through better communication. From a top-down perspective, we recommend:

- **Annual joint meeting of [perhaps just representatives from] Student Government, Executive Council, and Staff Relations to discuss broadest campus issues.**

There also are few social occasions in which the entire campus is encouraged to participate. From a bottom-up perspective, we recommend:

- **At least one all-campus event each semester.** An example might be an all-campus picnic made attractive and accessible to virtually all students and employees, or a College-wide community volunteer day.



Part V

Recommendations from the Subcommittee on Tuition and Financial Aid Policy

Because of their impact on the operating budget, the annual setting of tuition and of financial aid are among the most important short-term decisions a college can make. It follows that any long-term institutional plan should consider some guidelines for this annual process. It has been argued that Grinnell has never really formulated a “strategy” for tuition and financial aid—that the yearly decisions tend to be made ad hoc. Over the last two years the Planning Steering Committee spent a good fraction of its time contemplating issues in this area. Due to the critical impacts of changes in tuition and aid, and the inherent uncertainties about how applicants will respond to those changes, this subcommittee made no specific recommendation to the Planning Steering Committee. Instead it presented three alternative strategies, which the PSC considered at its final meeting in April 2004. The final recommendation described in this section emerged from that discussion. Unlike in the previous sections of this document, here we do not simply report the recommendation, but discuss in some detail the deliberations that led to it.

Some Background: Putting Grinnell’s Tuition and Financial Aid Policy in Context

The tuition policy of Grinnell College is designed to meet several different needs. The first and most obvious to is help defray the cost of a necessarily expensive form of education, one that relies upon low student-to-faculty ratio, facilitates individual and small-group learning, and encourages instruction through mentoring relationships. Added to this expense is that of maintaining superb academic and student life programs, a goal central to the College’s mission. The Grinnell model of education requires an extraordinary number of dollars per student. Still, that model has brought the College a reputation for academic excellence that extends around the world, and our tuition helps us sustain that reputation.

Counterpoised to the need for providing funds is the goal of making a Grinnell education affordable to as wide a range of students as possible. Obviously, a fee structure that charged the true cost of our education would drive from our classrooms most students not lucky enough to be from well-off families. That would hardly be compatible with the College’s mission. And of course, a full-cost tuition charge would destroy our efforts to enroll a student body that reflects the ethnic and social diversity of our nation and our world. It should be remembered that the focus groups last fall showed how strongly Grinnellians were committed to the concept of diversity.

Improving the economic and social diversity of Grinnell’s student body is, however, an expensive undertaking. U.S. students of color enrolled at Grinnell generally get one and two-thirds times as much need-based financial aid as their counterparts from the demographic majority.² Consider, for example, our recent participation in the Posse Foundation programs in Los Angeles and, beginning in fall 2005, Washington, D.C. Each “posse” we accept brings to campus 10 to 12 well-qualified students who help diversify our entering class. But these students pay no tuition in four years at Grinnell. In a steady state, therefore, having 80 or so Posse students on campus in a given year requires that we forgo several million dollars in annual tuition revenue. A similar situation exists for international students. A student from abroad typically gets almost one and a half times as much aid—when merit and need are combined—as a domestic student. And because their need-based aid is capped at 50 percent of tuition, for most international students we still do not manage to meet full financial need.

A final goal of tuition policy is to make Grinnell attractive to the kind of student most likely to benefit from our brand of education: a bright, motivated young person who loves to learn. Naturally, all colleges want such students. Consequently, we must compete for them, not only in terms of the quality of our education, but also in the price we charge for it. This means offering merit aid. Merit aid provides our best applicants with more attractive grant-to-loan ratios to meet their demonstrated financial need and, in some cases, with grants beyond their need. In recent years, increases in our merit aid offerings have improved both the academic quality and the diversity of our entering classes. For example, our regression models predict that, absent merit scholarships, 72 of the best students in the Grinnell class of 2007 would have chosen to study elsewhere.³ Our average SAT for that class would have fallen 30 points. Offering half as much merit aid as we did would have reduced the average SAT score by 15 points.

Historically, Grinnell's tuition and financial aid has been set with a mind to balancing the three goals described above. In many ways it has succeeded well. Nonetheless, a consistent and, to some, disturbing trend has emerged in our revenue patterns: **In recent years tuition has provided a decreasing fraction of the College's operating budget.** Over the years more and more of Grinnell's operating expenses have been paid for by the endowment. *This trend has been sustained only by spectacular endowment returns; it would be unwise to expect such returns to continue indefinitely.* Several strategies considered by the Subcommittee on Tuition and Financial Aid Policy reflected this concern.

Given the critical nature of the subject examined, before announcing a recommendation, this subcommittee first reviewed the several tuition and aid strategies considered at various times by the planning process.

A Review of Various Tuition and Aid Proposals Considered by the PSC

1. *Strategies that Would Lower Tuition and Raise Aid*

As explained above, tuition and financial policy has been a main focus of strategic planning since the process began in October of 2002. Two of the six preliminary strategies reviewed by the College community last fall were essentially about tuition and aid: A) Tuition-Free Grinnell, and B) Full Ride for the Most Meritorious Students. As the names imply, the former strategy proposed eliminating tuition and fees (save room and board) for all students, while the latter proposed doing so for students with sufficiently strong academic credentials. However, when focus groups discussed the six strategies, neither A nor B got much support. The majority of Grinnellians seemed to feel that forgoing tuition would excessively burden the operating budget, while at the same time giving financial benefits to too many students with low financial need. The Full Ride for the Most Meritorious Students strategy was seen as potentially successful in improving the academic quality of incoming students, but in a way that would make many Grinnell folks feel uncomfortable. People were made uneasy, for example, by the image of socially-conscious Grinnell College obsessively pursuing National Merit Scholars. The Full-Ride Strategy might affect other characteristics of the student body as well, especially since the pool of talented-but-needy students is concentrated in Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe. While the varied backgrounds of our students help make Grinnell such an interesting place, a dramatic shift in the proportion of international students was not perceived as particularly desirable.

2. *Our Current Practice Reconsidered: Relatively Low Tuition, Need-Blind Admission*

The subcommittee reexamined our current tuition and aid practices in the light of some of the suggested changes considered during the planning process. Our current policy can be mainly characterized by the three following elements:

- Our tuition is low relative to our peers.
- We have need-blind admission and yet meet the full need of our domestic students.
- We award significant merit aid to our best students.

Advantages of Current Practice

Our current admission and financial aid practices have succeeded in a number of important ways. For example, the academic quality of the class of 2007 is higher than that of any entering class in the College's history. Also, initiatives such as the Posse program have given us an unusually diverse group of new students. The College has recently received much positive publicity at the national level. Our merit aid policy seems to have been a significant factor in these successes.

Disadvantages of Current Practice

While successful in producing top-notch classes, the current tuition and aid policy offers few opportunities for increasing annual revenue. In fact, while this year's entering class was exceptionally talented, the financial aid budget was overspent by \$750,000. Also, as stated, our push for greater diversity necessarily lowers tuition payments. Therefore, if we maintain the status quo tuition policy, the dependency of the operating budget on endowment contributions is unlikely to fall anytime in the near future. Certainly our current policy cannot be relied upon to fund any proposed *expansions* of our academic or student life programs.

3. *Strategies that Would Raise Tuition and/or Lower Aid*

By the time the Subcommittee on Tuition and Financial Aid Policy was constituted in February 2004, strategies that relied upon drastic cuts in the comprehensive fee had been winnowed out of the planning process. What remained for the subcommittee to consider were strategies that moved us in the opposite direction: *increasing* tuition revenue. Because tuition's contribution to the budget is proportionately much lower at Grinnell than at its peers, there was a serious case to be made for this. Two possible revenue-increasing strategies were considered. The first of these maintains our commitment to need-blind admission and to meeting demonstrated need, but increases tuition and decreases merit aid. An alternative strategy involves more modest increases in tuition, smaller decreases in merit aid, but abandons need-blind admission for some portion of the entering class. The advantages and disadvantages of each strategy are discussed below.

Revenue-Increasing Strategy 1: Increase Tuition over the Long Term

Tuition increases would be implemented in a careful and deliberate way; we would retain need-blind admission and continue to meet the full demonstrated need of domestic students. This strategy would entail the following:

- Increasing our tuition and comprehensive fee gradually to a level commensurate with other nationally-ranked liberal arts schools in the Midwest.

- Maintaining a commitment to need-blind admission and meeting the full need of our domestic students.
- Reducing, gradually, our use of merit and other forms of non-need based aid.
- Developing admission and marketing strategies that will increase the number of students who pay the full comprehensive fee.
- Making admission of international students need-sensitive, but relaxing the half-of-tuition aid cap on aid for the most needy of these students.

This last point requires some explanation. Why adopt a need-sensitive strategy for international but not domestic students? One result of the aid cap for international students is a disturbing phenomenon increasingly observed on campus. Often we have a low-income international student who manages to cobble together enough financial support to spend one year studying at Grinnell, at the end of which she essentially goes broke. Faced with a second-year student who has exhausted her resources, the College has two unpleasant choices: 1) truncate the education of a usually-successful student who has made great financial sacrifice to come here; or 2) come up with support that is substantially beyond what it had committed to—or planned to—provide to this student. A need-sensitive admission policy for international students would likely forestall most instances of this problem. More importantly, perhaps, the added revenue generated under a need-sensitive admission policy could help provide more aid to those international students whose needs are not met under the current policy.

Advantages of Raising Tuition

This strategy would allow us to maintain our social commitment to providing access to all qualified domestic students without regard to their ability to pay for their education. Yet it would also permit us to gradually increase the net tuition revenues by raising the sticker price and lowering merit and other non-need based aid. In this way, those students best able to pay would pay more, while those in need would continue to have all need covered. If, by this method, Grinnell were able to increase its per-student net revenue to the level of, say, Macalester College, we would have roughly \$2.7 million additional dollars annually. More optimistically, if Grinnell could increase per-student revenue to the average of what Macalester and Carleton get, we would have an additional \$9 million annually.

Another potential advantage of raising tuition is that increasing our sticker price might enhance our reputation. In terms of tuition, we are currently in the company of Midwestern schools that are similar, but of lesser reputation, schools such as Beloit and Lawrence. The top liberal arts colleges charge more than we do. To the extent that price is a signal about quality, ours may suggest to some prospective students that we are not in the same class as places like Amherst or Swarthmore. It is conceivable (though by no means certain) that pricing ourselves closer to other highly-ranked Midwestern liberal arts schools could improve perceptions of our academic quality.

Disadvantages of Raising Tuition

A higher sticker price will almost certainly discourage some students from applying. Also, if we decrease merit aid, many of our top applicants could defect to other schools, thereby lowering the quality of the incoming class. Student retention might also suffer. As the family contribution of low-need students rises faster from year to year than it currently does, more students may transfer from Grinnell to less expensive institutions.

The factors identified in the previous paragraph certainly reduce the attractiveness of the raising tuition option. It is worth pointing out, however, that these negative consequences are not necessarily inevitable. They could be mitigated by changing how low-need prospective students perceive the value of a Grinnell education, which is to say they could be mitigated by better marketing of our product. This subcommittee concluded that adopting the raising tuition strategy would *only* make sense if coupled with a significantly expanded college-wide marketing effort. We return to this below.

Revenue-Increasing Strategy 2: Need-Sensitive Admission for a Subset of Applicants

An alternative to substantially increasing tuition is to cull from the applicant pool some of the students who will require the most need-based aid. With this strategy the sticker price could remain relatively low compared to peer institutions, but some fraction of qualified applicants will be denied admission on the basis of high demonstrated need. Following this strategy would entail:

- Maintaining a policy of moderate tuition increases.
- Applying need-sensitive admission criteria to approximately 10 percent of the applicant pool. (The remaining 90 percent would still be evaluated on a need-blind basis.)
- Reducing the amount of merit-based aid.
- Abandoning the half-tuition aid cap for international students; meeting 100 percent of need for those international students who are admitted under the need-sensitive policy.

Advantages of a Need-Sensitive Admission Approach

This strategy would increase net tuition revenue by expanding the number of full-pay students. We could continue to attract some strong students with large merit packages, but, overall, we would reduce our current level of merit-based awards. This approach would reduce the annual increase of grants and scholarships, which currently grow at twice the rate of the comprehensive fee. Ultimately our discount rate would fall. Greater revenue from students admitted under the need-sensitive approach would permit further subsidization of the majority that remains in the need-blind category. So, for example, needy students could be asked to contribute fewer work-study hours to support their education.

Disadvantages of a Need-Sensitive Admission Approach

This strategy abandons (at least to some extent) our core value of coupling need-blind admission with meeting the full demonstrated need of domestic students. This value has strong support in the Grinnell community. Moreover, even a limited abandonment of the principle of need-blind admission might discourage some higher-need students from applying to Grinnell. Also, the way this strategy will increase tuition revenue is by replacing high-caliber, merit-eligible students with some of lower-ability who can pay the full fee. The academic quality of the incoming classes will almost certainly fall. Finally, additional program costs could result from the need to expand the academic support system (e.g., the writing lab, reading lab, math lab, and Science Learning Center).

Again, as with raising tuition strategy, the subcommittee felt that the success of implementing a need-sensitive admission strategy would depend upon enhanced marketing efforts by all constituents of the College.

Final Recommendation:

Maintain Current Policies in the Short Term—Re-evaluate in Three to Five Years

One thing about which admission experts agree is that setting an “optimal” tuition and aid policy requires information on a number of factors that are difficult to measure. How responsive is demand for a Grinnell education to its sticker price? How responsive is it to financial aid offers, both merit and need?

On top of these uncertainties is the question of how demand has shifted as our “product” has improved. Grinnell’s facilities are currently undergoing substantial upgrade, and the College is receiving unprecedented national media attention. These things should be increasing our popularity. The evidence, namely the highest application rate and most talented entering class in the College’s history, suggest that they are. A better academic reputation and stronger general appeal should allow us to eventually raise our sticker price without sending the most promising applicants into the arms of our competitors.

Are we there yet? Can we now begin to raise tuition? This subcommittee believes that we are only beginning to see the effects of the recent efforts to improve Grinnell, and recommends that we pause to observe these effects before altering our (relative) price. To change tuition and financial aid at the same time is likely to confuse the issue. We suggest a wait-and-see policy.

This does not mean that there will be no changes at all in the price we charge or our offers of merit aid. The recommendation includes the following:

- Keep the ratio of Grinnell’s tuition to the average of its peers within the range it has operated in for the last five or six years.
- Continue need-blind admission and continue to meet full demonstrated need of domestic applicants.
- Continue to experiment with the impact of merit aid offers on various types of applicants (e.g., are no-need students more sensitive to such offers?).
- Continue Grinnell’s apparently successful efforts to improve its image through vigorous marketing. Our improved facilities, reputation, and academic quality may well increase the return—in terms of more and better applicants—on marketing dollars expended.
- If applications hold steady or improve over the next three to five years, reconsider policies that could raise tuition revenue as a fraction of the operating budget.

Part VI

What Would These Recommendations Cost?

The Planning Steering Committee is well aware that the initiatives recommended above could not all be feasibly implemented in the immediate future—the cost would be prohibitive. Some might be undertaken immediately, others might take years to implement, still others may never happen. Throughout the planning process the budgetary implications of various strategic elements were kept in mind by the PSC. Table 4 below gives rough estimates of what the various proposed initiatives would have on the annual operating budget.

Table 4: Estimated Annual Cost of Proposed Major Initiatives

\$=10,000-50,000; \$\$=50,000-250,000; \$\$\$ > \$250,000
 Parentheses indicate a cost savings

Re-emphasizing Liberal Arts	Improving Diversity	Improving Grinnell Experience
Expand Faculty by 7 \$\$\$	Allow more than 4 years to graduate \$\$	Independent living instead of fifth dorm (\$\$)
Review centers & concentrations \$\$	Summer preparation programs \$\$	Better on-campus medical care \$\$
Enhance internships with alumni \$\$	More opportunistic hires \$\$	Financial commitment to local development \$\$
More interdepartmental teaching \$\$	Senior diversity term position \$\$	Assistance with partner employment \$\$
Promote cross-class collaboration \$	Diversity postdoctoral positions \$\$	Better career placement services \$
Tutorial reunions \$	Expand Office of Diversity \$	Enhance wellness program \$
Student-faculty research conference \$	Diversify curriculum \$	Revitalize community relations program \$
	Diversify pedagogy \$	More all-campus events \$
		More student/faculty gatherings \$

A Number of “Free” Initiatives⁴

If a sudden endowment catastrophe made everything in the above table financially infeasible, a number of the initiatives expressed in this document could still be implemented. This has been one success of strategic planning. Merely sitting down together to discuss in depth what Grinnell is about has produced a number of ideas that can improve what we do without increasing what we spend.

Table 5: Initiatives with Negligible Budgetary Effects

Re-emphasizing Liberal Arts	Improving Diversity	Improving Grinnell Experience
Establish annual theme for convocations and symposia	Hold all-campus discussions of diversity	Publicize reports of the Alcohol Task Force
Launch tutorial program with an outside speaker each year	Regularly review definition of diversity	Encourage informal student/faculty interaction
Establish annual all-faculty discussion of pedagogy	Collect data on quality of life for Grinnell persons of color	Institute a satisfaction survey of graduating seniors
	Hold annual meeting to review diversity goals and gains	Institute faculty advisory role in endowment spending policy
	Educate chairs about diversity hiring	Establish staff relations committees
	Add diversity link to college website	Establish liaison committee with local school system
	Issue annual VP reports on diversity issues	Hold joint meeting of SGA, Executive Committee, & staff

Part VII

What did Strategic Planning Accomplish?

One of the first things our planning expert, Clint Korver '89, asked the Planning Steering Committee to do was establish a set of goals for itself. Those goals were articulated in Table 6 below. It may be useful at this point to reflect back on them in the light of the recommendations made in this report.

Table 6: Goals of the Strategic Planning Process

(October 2002)*

Why should we plan?

- Without a plan, you don't know where you are going or where you will end up.
 - A plan is indispensable for making resource allocation decisions.
 - Planning clarifies what we are doing, why we're doing it, and what we shouldn't be doing.
 - Occasional re-evaluation is helpful to regain perspective.
 - Planning will help us make the most of our successful endowment without putting it at risk.
 - Planning will put weight of evidence behind our "assumptions" so we aren't blindsided.
 - Planning will help us describe to alumni and students how Grinnell is unique/special.
 - Planning will help coordinate everyone's efforts and develop greater synergy.
 - Planning will help us overcome the disconnect between our excellence and the nation's awareness of Grinnell.
 - Planning will allow us to keep up with a quickly-changing, competitive world.
-

What are we going to do?

- Paint the picture of what we want to be in 15 years.
 - Examine the "assumptions" behind our education to see if they are supported by the evidence.
 - Develop guidelines to ensure that we allocate resources in a way consistent with our mission statement.
 - Assess "who we are": Are we comfortable with it? Is it consistent with our external message?
-

How will we know if we are successful?

- When we reach a point where we can agree on what we produce for the larger community.
 - Pain—indicator that we have gotten to the real issues.
 - Our constituencies think we have done what we were supposed to.
 - We identify concrete goals that advance the mission of Grinnell College and we achieve them.
 - We develop meaningful measures for achieving our goals.
 - We raise controversy & make decisions.
 - We have a happier faculty community.
-

How might we fail?

- We produce, as others have, a vapid, self-congratulatory document that contains neither tangible goals nor an honest assessment of our situation.
 - The College community does not understand what we have done.
 - The document (plan) represents the least common denominator of what we agree to.
 - We individually represent factions rather than the best interests of the College.
-

* For the purposes of this report, this list from October 2002 was edited for space and clarity but not content.

Did we do “What we [were] going to do?”

It could be argued that we had our greatest success in deciding “who we are.” The planning process, and especially the focus group analysis, forced not just the PSC but the College community as a whole to decide what attributes of the College were most important to preserve for future generations of Grinnell students. It is also fair to claim that we did examine some key “assumptions” about our education and looked at objective evidence to see if they held. And the recommendations of this document surely contain some “guideline to ensure that we allocated resources in a way that is consistent with our mission statement.”

“How will we know if we are successful?”

On the plus side, we have met the goal of developing “concrete objectives” and the PSC does generally “agree on what we produce[d] for the larger community.” Moreover, no one who attended the planning meetings, or the faculty meetings where planning was discussed, could accuse us of failing to “raise controversy.” Much of said controversy came directly from our having “made decisions.” For example, the decision not to recommend reducing the standard teaching load to 2-2 was quite controversial, and the discussing of it certainly involved some “pain.”

In some cases we have developed “meaningful measures” for achieving our goals, and in other cases those measures need to be further articulated as we enter the implementation phase of planning. That is to be expected. Do our constituents think we have done what we were supposed to do? Do we have a happier faculty community? We may not be able to answer these questions for several years yet.

“How might we fail?”

The Planning Steering Committee is confident that what you are reading is not a “vapid, self-congratulatory document that contains neither tangible goals nor an honest assessment of our situation.” Neither does it represent the “least common denominator of what we agreed to.” And by and large the members of the PSC did not “represent factions rather than the best interests of the College” while we were planning.

Having said these things, it is perhaps best left to the Grinnell Community as a whole to decide whether the strategic planning process was a success.

*We respectfully submit this report on strategic planning
to the Grinnell College Board of Trustees.*

(Footnotes)

¹ Africana Studies, East Asian Studies, Environmental Studies, Gender and Women’s Studies, Global Development Studies, Latin American Studies, Linguistics, Russian, Central, and Eastern European Studies, Technology Studies, Western European Studies

² For example, the average institutional grant and scholarship award to enrolled students of color for the 2003–04 academic year is \$19,000, and for majority students it is \$11,300. These amounts do not include any student loan or campus employment dollars.

³ Here the term “best” refers to students ranked academically in the top 10 percent of the admitted class.

⁴ The chair of the PSC teaches in a department that believes nothing is ever truly “free.” All initiatives would require time and energy.

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