

**Towards a Powerful Co-Curriculum: A Report from  
the Task Force on Campus Life**

**Willamette University**

**March 2001**

## **Introduction**

Although its focus is on the first two, this report represents an effort to give substance to four of the five priorities identified in the Long Range Plan adopted by the Board of Trustees at its October 20, 2000 meeting:

“...we must invest in people, programs and facilities that strengthen academic excellence in each of our schools and colleges.”

“...we must invest in students, programs and facilities to strengthen a residential and campus life that reinforces Willamette’s special sense of place and community and that values civility, integrity and moral and ethical awareness.”

“...we must invest in people, programs and activities to strengthen our appreciation of and commitment to diversity.”

“...we must invest in people and programs to strengthen our visibility so that we become better known by more people, especially in the West and selected regions of the country.”

In the past 18 months of study we have concluded that these goals are inextricably linked and must be achieved in a way that is mutually sustaining. In particular, we believe that we are not well-served if the various college constituencies think in terms of “academics” vs. social life. First, we must recognize that these categories are indistinct and permeable. Students discuss their academic work in a whole range of social settings. Moreover, any faculty member who has audited a colleague’s class, who has simply come to class early and listened to the conversations or who has closely observed the dynamics of seminar discussion knows that every classroom is a social venue. Furthermore, to the extent that we act as though academic and social life are distinct and even antagonistic spheres, we undercut our efforts to achieve the range of objectives

that we have set in educating our students. Note, for example, how questions involving the development of moral judgment pervade both the academic (plagiarism, the ethics of animal research, collaborative projects) and the social settings (team sports, community service, intercultural difference). Similarly, intellectual skills and competencies are regularly exercised and on display in such places as student publications, residential unit meetings, and event organization. To the extent that students aren't encouraged to see and reflect on connections between the various phases of each day as citizens of a learning institution, we miss an opportunity for powerful teaching. Students should experience the various parts of the campus, the day and the four years as connected by a set of common purposes.

The recommendations which we present are aimed at developing a better basis for those connections. These recommendations entail a major reconfiguration of some key aspects of campus life, but we are convinced that they are consistent with Willamette's best traditions and deepest commitments. Specifically, they are guided by the idea that the quality of the whole learning experience of Willamette undergraduates is at the core of the institutional identity and mission of the CLA.

There have been clear indications that the out-of-class aspects of undergraduate life require searching and demanding attention at this moment in Willamette's history. The priorities of the Long Range Plan require this review. It is also needed because of evidence of student and faculty discontent with the quality of students' extracurricular lives at Willamette (see Findings section below). Finally, it is called for by the intensified competitive marketplace within which the CLA finds itself (Appendix I).

The report is divided into four parts. We first describe the *process* through which we reached our conclusions. We then explain the *principles* which we developed to guide our recommendations. Next we describe some of the most relevant of our empirical *findings* on Willamette undergraduate life today. Finally, we present and defend our *recommendations* for change. Although our original report to the President addressed issues of diversity which were part of the

Task Force charge, it has seemed most appropriate to give separate attention to diversity and residential life at this point in the process of deliberation. Hence this report mainly deals with the residential and student organization aspects of our findings and recommendations and another report will address our diversity recommendations.

## **I. PROCESS**

In September, 1999, President Pelton established the Task Force on Campus Life, co-chaired by Bob Hawkinson, Dean of Campus Life, and Erik Van Hagen, President of ASWU, and composed of CLA students and faculty and Campus Life staff (Appendix II). The beginning of the charge to the Task Force was as follows:

I am today appointing a College of Liberal Arts Task Force on Campus Life and charging it with establishing goals and standards for the co-curriculum, reviewing current practices and making recommendations for the improvement of Willamette in this vital area of community life. In establishing this Task Force, I am following up on a promise made in my Inaugural Address to review these areas. The Task Force will give especially close attention to the development of a richly diverse and multicultural campus environment, to the structures and programs of residential life and to functions and performance of student organizations. I am also asking the Task Force specifically to consider the “residential college” model of campus living (Appendix III).

Throughout the 1999-2000 academic year the Task Force met weekly to discuss and analyze materials in three areas. Our first task was to pull together existing research on current programs, practices and attitudes in the areas of residential life, student activities and multicultural affairs. We wanted to know what we are doing and how we are doing in campus life, but we also wanted to reopen the question of what our goals should be. Finally, we wanted to know how our efforts could be improved. In the first phase of the study, Campus Life staff reviewed current programming in student activities, multicultural affairs, and residential life. Also in the fall semester, under the direction of Dean of Student Development, Deborah Loers, we completed extensive focus group research with current Willamette undergraduates on residential life, social life and diversity on campus. Over 250 students participated in these focus groups (Appendix

IV). In the spring semester, further refining our thinking on possible alternatives to current campus life programs, we conducted discussions with 23 additional panels: six with students, eight with faculty, six with alumni and two with administrators and classified staff. Finally, we commissioned a large-scale, website-based study of student satisfaction conducted by Maguire Associates. Administered in the late spring semester, this research project had an extremely high response rate (over 900 of the some 1500 students on campus completed the survey) (Appendix V).

In addition to research on our existing practices, we studied alternatives to current programming in the co-curriculum. To do this we gathered information on residential and multicultural programs on other campuses, particularly those of some highly regarded liberal arts colleges. Initially, this was a library and web-based research project undertaken by two undergraduate researchers who worked for the Task Force in the summer of 1999. The material yielded by this inquiry into “best practices” was discussed and analyzed by the Task Force and from this we identified several sites for campus visits by sub-groups of the Task Force. These took place in January and February 2000 when delegations from Willamette visited seven schools. In the later spring and summer individual members of the Task Force visited 16 additional colleges (Appendix VI). We were especially interested in the vitality, scope and impact of their multicultural programs, the design and function of student centers, their formats for residential living including relations among campus housing, Greek housing and off-campus living, the connections (or lack of connections) between academic and co-curricular life and the relationship between the co-curricular activities in the residencies and those that were centralized on campus. We particularly focused on the functions of student centers on small liberal arts college campuses (a long-time concern on the Willamette campus), and on campuses with “residential college” programs since this was part of our charge.

A third area of inquiry involved the goals of the co-curriculum. We carefully reviewed various mission and goal statements. Through extended discussions we arrived at a list of key values that we found essential to creating the kind of learning community, curricular and co-curricular that

we are seeking at Willamette. In constructing this list we paid particular attention to supporting and supplementing the list of cognitive and dispositional goals for the B.A. at Willamette developed by the CLA faculty in its reform of the curriculum in the mid-1990s (Appendices VIIa and VIIb).

## **II. PRINCIPLES**

Among the five priorities elaborated in the strategic statement of the Long Range Plan, four are directly relevant to the work of the Campus Life Task Force: strengthen academic excellence, strengthen student life, strengthen our visibility, and strengthen our commitment to diversity. While strengthening student life and our commitment to diversity were central to the president's charge to the Task Force, and constituted the subject matter to which we devoted the bulk of our time, we also believe that our recommendations are quite relevant to the issues of academic excellence and heightened visibility. But before turning to these recommendations, we need to describe and explain the specific principles which underlie our approach to achieving these goals.

The principles that we discuss are based on the assumptions that we can and should design a framework for undergraduate life at Willamette which will enhance both formal study and learning outside of class, that diversity is essential to academic excellence and a rich college experience and that heightened visibility is more achievable when we have distinctive programs of excellence in both the curriculum and the co-curriculum. Moreover, just as the goals of a liberal arts education include but also go beyond the acquisition of skills and information, so the venues for learning in a residential liberal arts college go beyond those provided by the seminar room, the computer lab and the library (Appendix VIII). This focus on the whole person and on college as a comprehensive experience has long been a value at Willamette and other residential liberal arts colleges. The ideal is not simply that of a person who possesses knowledge, but also that of a person with certain qualities and character.

The achievement of this goal is not the product of chance. The full domain of students' lives

outside of their formal studies includes family and friends, work and community commitments and what are usually referred to as “extracurricular activities” (campus-based activities beyond course work). The Campus Life Task Force concentrated on only the last of these, although the other two loom large in students’ experience of Willamette today. Moreover, in place of the idea of **extra-curriculum**, we want to develop the idea of a **co-curriculum**. Whereas the extra-curriculum connotes a broad spectrum of activities “beyond the curriculum,” the co-curriculum refers to a set of goals and the means to achieve them, a designed context for student learning beyond the classroom. The co-curriculum is intentional and durable rather than random and ephemeral. It represents a commitment to answer the question “What, beyond excellent faculty, student cohort and curriculum is required for excellence in liberal arts education?” The question should be answered first in terms of support for curricular learning, and second as support for programs that complement curricular learning through opportunities for the application of knowledge, skills and values as well as in the cultivation of the other qualities that we seek to develop in CLA graduates.

In the area of support for curricular learning, the co-curriculum entails action as straightforward as the provision of quiet study spaces and as complex as appropriate scheduling of athletic practices and games. It must always remain clear that the formal course of study is the heart of the liberal arts college experience and that a positive environment for this must be sustained. Beyond curricular support, the co-curriculum must be designed to achieve such goals as nurturing an ethic of service and community responsibility, providing a range of recreational opportunities, cultivating multicultural competence and encouraging informed, engaged and refined moral and aesthetic judgments.

As was the case with curriculum design, we needed to develop some principles to guide our efforts in order to avoid a patchwork of entrepreneurial efforts and piecemeal responses to outside forces. The following are six principles which guided our review of the co-curriculum:

1. *To achieve high quality liberal arts education, the co-curriculum must be structured by a*

*rich and comprehensive design focused on supporting and complementing the curriculum and its goals.*

If we are to do justice to our students and to continue to attract and retain students, Willamette must create a campus environment that is more stimulating, more connecting and more filled with attractive options. It is important to note that this emphasis on intention and design does not mean that we should try to plan or control all aspects of a student's experience. Outside of the military service academies, such an educational ideal is neither desirable nor realistic. But it does mean that we need to be systematic about the environment for learning. We need to ask what enhances this environment and what detracts from it.

2. *In this design we need to strike an appropriate balance between three pairs of values that are at once in tension with each other and at the same time indispensable for student development in a liberal arts setting:*

1. Continuity and change
2. Support and challenge
3. Community/common experience and individual choice

The values of continuity, support and community are important in giving students the ability to locate themselves in a place and in providing them a stake in an on-going enterprise. They are also important because they foster the virtues of stewardship, civility, consensus-building, collective accountability and loyalty. The values of change, challenge and individual choice speak to the needs of students to encounter new problems, different identities and unfamiliar value systems, and to change, re-orient themselves and move on to new tasks and pleasures. Options and choice are important, in turn, in that they nurture the virtues of judgment, responsibility, appreciation of differences, self-reflection and individual responsibility.

3. *We need to have a considerable proportion of juniors and seniors living on campus.*

The presence of a large number of juniors and seniors is essential to the intellectual and social vitality of a residential liberal arts college. For this to occur, upperclassmen must have greater autonomy in the management of their lives, attractive living spaces and a strong sense that continued engagement with the life of the residencies is meaningful, challenging and rewarding. For first and second year students, in turn, the presence of upperclassmen in the residencies provides a source of community leadership, a supply of potential mentors and diverse models of the next stage in student life. Furthermore, when we maintain a corps of upperclassmen in the residencies, we provide another opportunity for students to give something back to the campus. Particularly in the case of those who have studied abroad, there is a rich prospect for substantial individual and collective learning which should be fully realized.

4. *We should cultivate the skills of self-governance and the values of participation and community service in a wide range of co-curricular settings.*

Liberal arts education has always been powerfully shaped by the ideal of preparation for leadership and responsibility for the common good. To achieve this we must first of all see that students have significant responsibility for the management of their campus lives and then see that they are held accountable. Moreover, Willamette students should acquire a commitment to citizenship through participation in community service and through reflection on its meaning. Students in a residential liberal arts college should have ample opportunities to enhance their capacity for moral and aesthetic judgment through taking substantial responsibility for the governance and appearance of their residential domains. They should also have opportunities to imagine, plan and organize projects and events, to learn effective time management, to hone skills of public persuasion and argumentation in large and small settings, and to understand group

dynamics and collective problem-solving. Much of this necessarily involves application of critical thinking, research and communication skills developed in the curriculum. Co-curricular life should also involve the reinforcement of such curricular values as creativity, disciplined work, rational inquiry, judiciousness and open-mindedness.

5. *The co-curriculum should provide numerous opportunities for spontaneity and diverse types of fun and recreation.*

Play is important in its own right and as a potential stress reliever, but it is also important as a source of creativity. While we should be mindful that there are various forms of play in the curriculum and work in the co-curriculum, it is clear that Campus Life is the primary custodian of recreation on campus. Our goal here should be encouraging student initiative and creativity while upholding the values of civility, fairness and consideration.

Student initiatives of the last few years such as the Swing Dance Club, intramural lacrosse, open mic night at the Bistro and Wulapalooza represent the kinds of activities we should seek to foster.

6. *In a variety of ways we need to strengthen students' bonds to Willamette.*

Students will get more from both the curriculum and the co-curriculum if they see their relationship to Willamette as one of members rather than merely consumers.

Membership entails a sense of responsibility to a collective entity beyond the self. One way of achieving this is to enhance the intellectual vitality of life on campus outside the classroom. Another is through campus organizations both at the central (“downtown”) level such as ASWU, student publications and varsity athletic teams, and at the residential (“neighborhood”) level. Still another connector is the nurturance of tradition and rituals which bind the community. The creation last fall of the new CLA matriculation ceremony is an excellent case in point.

### III. FINDINGS

On the basis of our various empirical studies of current practices and attitudes, we have drawn 14 conclusions concerning campus life. Although our research disclosed many positive findings, there is ample reason to be concerned about numerous aspects of campus life and we have concentrated on these.

1. Students have an anemic sense of community and weak sense of collective empowerment. These grow weaker over four years as a Willamette undergraduate.
2. Student dissatisfaction with a number of aspects of co-curricular life increases over four years. This is particularly true of their view of housing options on campus.
3. Few students stay in the same residence for two years in a row. Over the past five years an average of only 22% of sophomores have chosen to live in the hall in which they lived as freshmen, and this number is dropping. The least desirable residence halls are largely filled with freshmen who move elsewhere the next year when they have greater choice.
4. Juniors and seniors who are eligible to move to off-campus apartments do so in large numbers. (In fall 2000, 57% of juniors and 69% of seniors lived off-campus.) Even students affiliated with Greek organizations live out of the house in considerable numbers. (In fall 2000, 42% of Greek-affiliated juniors and 52% of Greek-affiliated seniors lived out of the house.)
5. The annual housing lottery and surveys conducted by the Office of Residence Life affirm that there is an extremely high unmet demand for apartment housing on-campus.
6. Salem gets fairly poor ratings from students in terms of social and cultural opportunities. Hence even students living off-campus look to the campus for much of their social and cultural life.
7. Students, however, perceive the campus as seriously lacking in both “big event” social spaces and more intimate, informal “hang out” space. There is strong desire for a multi-purpose student center.
8. There is a gap between generally quite positive student appraisals of faculty and academic

facilities and the lower ratings given co-curricular life and facilities. Students typically see the two spheres as quite distinct as well as differing in quality.

9. Students are particularly likely to see the administration of their non-academic lives as paternalistic and filled with unneeded regulations. There is specific unhappiness with some aspects of Residence Life and Campus Safety.
10. A number of faculty and students are concerned about a perceived lack of intellectual and cultural vitality and social variety in students' co-curricular lives. There is also some faculty worry about self-destructive and anti-social aspects of student behavior.
11. Faculty and staff have substantial concern about meeting high and multifaceted job expectations and about pressure on their time budgets. At the same time, many affirm the value of being able to engage in a wider range of work activities than they would at larger institutions where there is more job specialization.
12. Students, faculty and staff believe that the Willamette campus is too homogeneous in terms of ethnic, regional and ideological pluralism and that the climate for diversity needs improvements.
13. Willamette lacks adequate staffing and facilities to meet the needs of the level of diversity that we seek and are beginning to achieve.
14. There is extensive anecdotal evidence to the effect that students returning from study abroad find it difficult to reintegrate into the Willamette community. Large numbers of these students choose to live off-campus, and this in turn has substantial impact on the residencies and Greek houses.

#### **IV. RECOMMENDATIONS**

We recommend that over the next ten years Willamette reconfigure student co-curricular life around a system of five residential commons complexes, a grouping of free-standing Greek houses and a new student center. Residential commons are living complexes with graduated housing options with a capacity to house many members for four years. They are also characterized by having a live-in faculty member (and family), social and cultural programming

and members rather than occupants.

We envision the student center as part of the co-curricular “downtown” of the campus, while the five residential commons and the Greek houses constitute the surrounding residential “neighborhoods.” Other parts of the downtown would be such all-campus facilities as the Hatfield Library, Rogers Music Hall, Putnam University Center, Goudy Dining Commons and Sparks Recreation Center. (The spatial and the all-campus functional senses of downtown don’t perfectly match: the Hallie Ford Art Gallery is clearly a downtown institution as are the athletic fields at Bush Park.) These spaces and the activities based in them (varsity athletic teams, the Collegian, ASWU, club and organization headquarters, central dining, the Bistro, the Willamette Store, etc.) together with key college-wide rituals and annual events should support strong, inclusive Willamette identity among students. The creation of a central facility dedicated to student activities is essential not only for enhancing the quality of these pan-CLA activities, but also in sustaining a deep sense of institutional identification.

Similarly, the commons and the Greek residencies should foster rich “neighborhood” learning experiences. They should be sites of social life and personal connection; cultural programming and intellectual development; recreation and service. As distinguished from the all-campus organizations and facilities, they should build these experiences on the basis of shared living settings. We project the five commons to include the current Lausanne-Doney complex, Baxter Hall (including the spaces currently occupied by four fraternities), the Belknap-Mathews complex, Kaneko Hall and a commons to be built on the west side of campus. Further, we project the fraternities moving into the buildings currently identified as Shepherd, Lee, York and WISH and, possibly, an additional building.

The student center would include the following components:

- Stage appropriate for music, comedy and small theater performances
- Cafe serving food; preferably it would have a student manager and student employees,

but overseen by Bon Appetit (pizza, salads, etc.)

- The Bistro
- Theater-style area appropriate for viewing sporting events or movies
- Cybercafe or area for students to check e-mail and do academic work on a computer
- Lockers, study space and other amenities for connecting students
- Space for recreational activities
- Large social hall with a staff, designed for dances or other student activities such as banquets, etc.
- Student organization space shared by two or three organizations to maximize use; organizations would apply yearly to use
- Student resource room with computers, copier, and supplies to aid in planning events and running student organizations
- Campus Life offices that directly advise student organizations (Student Activities, Multicultural Affairs, Community Outreach, etc.)
- Storage for Intramural and recreational activities; students could check out camping and sports equipment (e.g., volleyball net).

Rationale: This structure is a social hub of the entire campus. Along with Sparks, the Hatfield Library and Goudy, it will be a place where students from the various commons meet their friends from across campus and participate in all-campus activities.

The residential commons system would be distinguished by six defining features:

1. *Students will have a four-year affiliation with their commons. Even though some will eventually live off-campus or in Greek houses, all students will have a two year commons experience and the commons will remain a campus “base” for them throughout their four years at Willamette.*
  - Through a process of choice and availability, beginning students would be assigned to live in one of the five residential commons.
  - We would maintain the two year residency requirement. However, as space is

available and where there is mutual agreement, students could transfer commons at the end of the year.

- The process of designating affiliation with a commons for first-year students would be governed by criteria that will ensure diversity of all kinds in each commons. Although we hope and expect each commons to develop its own traditions, programs and identity, we do not recommend designating a particular theme for each commons. We are especially clear in rejecting the idea of themes built around groupings of prospective majors.
- Transfer and Salem area commuter students may also affiliate with a commons and participate in the life of the commons.
- Socialization into the life of each commons would begin in Opening Days in conjunction with a general orientation to Willamette.

Rationale: The commons will provide a stable, bonded community -- a source of support, identity and tradition and an object of commitment. The two-year commons experience would be a signature feature of Willamette, shared by all undergraduates.

2. *Each residential commons should contain an array of living arrangements, including singles, doubles, suites (two or four bedrooms plus living room) and apartments.*

- Housing in each residential commons should be configured around the idea of graduated housing options. Freshmen will reside in doubles, sophomores in more attractive doubles and suites, juniors in suites, singles and apartments, and seniors in singles and apartments.
- While the rooms of each commons will have their own character and identity, equity in the quality of housing across all the commons will be an important element in the success of this initiative.
- With 250-300 students residing in each commons, we expect each commons to be large enough for real choice and diversity and small enough for real community.

Rationale: This array of graduated housing options recognizes the need for individual choice. It will allow us to achieve the benefits of both a common living organization and

a salutary variation of residential formats. The fact that it will unfold progressively, increasing housing options over the four years, culminating in affordable singles and apartments should attract many upperclassmen back to campus, including students returning from study abroad. The presence of a considerable number of juniors and seniors will have positive effects on residential life in a variety of ways.

3. *Although all freshmen and sophomores will reside on campus in their various commons, additional living options such as Greek houses and off-campus living would be available to upperclassmen.*

- Students wishing to pledge Greek organizations would do so during their sophomore year and have the opportunity to move into Greek houses as juniors.
- Similarly, either because they have an especially strong interest in living off-campus or because they did not get the housing they sought in their commons, some juniors and seniors will choose to live off-campus.
- When the residential commons and Greek house system is fully in place, we would expect the residential commons to accommodate 60% of juniors and seniors, the Greek houses 30% and off-campus living take the remaining 10%.
- Students living in Greek organizations or off-campus would retain their full citizenship rights as members of their commons.

Rationale: In addition to study abroad opportunities, Greek and off-campus living will constitute for many students attractive alternatives to the residential commons during the final two years. Like the graduated housing options, these alternatives speak to the need for individual choice and change, a need which is particularly strongly felt by the junior year. Two years of commons living and an ongoing connection to one's commons will be a signature experience of the Willamette co-curriculum just as World Views is the signature program of the Willamette curriculum. But it must be recognized that four years in the same complex, no matter how attractive and vital, will not provide the kinds of challenge and change sought by some students. We especially look to Greek life to offer the elan, programming and selectivity that will attract many of these individuals.

4. *Each commons should have a high degree of self-governance and collective rule adjudication.*

- Key programming, space and budget choices would be made by elected student officers, including a commons president.
- A basic campus-wide code of conduct will remain, but it will be largely administered by the commons which will each have appropriate judicial structures.
- Commons officers will have control of a portion of student fees from students in their commons to use for programming.
- Each commons would have a Campus Safety officer who would have that commons as his/her “beat.” Similar arrangements should be explored in the case of other classified staff from areas such as physical plant.

Rationale: Paternalism is at odds with the goals of liberal arts education, which emphasizes autonomy and accountability. It also stifles growth and makes students unhappy. While fulfilling its security and legal obligations, Willamette should encourage high levels of self-governance to facilitate student development and responsibility.

5. *All commons will feature a substantial faculty presence.*

- Each commons has a faculty member who will serve as an intellectual and administrative leader of the commons for a term of four or five years. Selection and appointment would be the joint responsibility of the students of the commons, the faculty member, the Dean of the CLA and the President of the University.
- This faculty member, designated as the commons mentor, will reside together with his or her family in a house or apartment which will be part of the commons complex, adjacent to but not contiguous with student housing. He or she would be an active presence in the lives of students, taking a special interest in cultural and intellectual life outside the classroom. It should be clear, however, that the mentor would not have rule enforcement responsibility.

- The commons mentor would share commons governance with the student president, a commons council and a commons coordinator (a seasoned student affairs professional), who would focus on the day-to-day aspects of commons administration.
- Additional faculty members could also be part of the life of the commons by serving, on the invitation of the commons membership, as “faculty fellows” who would participate in some activities such as small group discussions following various programs and periodic commons dinners. Students might also consider designating administrative staff and members of the Salem community.

Rationale: Faculty presence makes maximum use of the distinctive advantage of the small liberal arts college: its scale. Faculty presence can model life-long learning and the life of the mind beyond the classroom. Even more important, faculty can (especially faculty with families) humanize their vocation by giving students more of a sense of themselves as whole persons. And in a variety of situations they can enrich the tone of undergraduate residential life.

6. *Each residential commons will serve as a local administrative, social and cultural focal point for its students.*

- Significant programming of social events, speakers, performances and other activities would take place at the commons level. The programming budget would be administered by the commons leadership team consisting of the president, the mentor and the coordinator.
- Some functions such as mail delivery could be decentralized to the commons.
- Each commons would provide physical facilities designed to promote community and learning. These would include multi-purpose social spaces for large and small gatherings, an office suite for the commons leadership team, attractive and comfortable study space, a seminar/meeting room and one or two offices for faculty fellows.
- Each commons would have periodic “commons night” dinner served either in a

section of Goudy or in the commons. These could also sometimes be the occasion for social and cultural programming. We would also expect other special events and traditions to develop which would help to cement a sense of common identity and connection.

Rationale: Having a broad range of functions carried out at the “neighborhood” level will, again, take full advantage of the benefits of small scale. It will allow student, faculty and staff conversation to flourish in a permanent and intimate setting. It will permit and foster annual social events, regular competitions, ongoing service commitments, and other distinctive traditions, all of which will help bond students to Willamette and to one another.

## **V. Conclusion**

Our aspirations for excellence and the competition we face mean that Willamette can no longer afford the luxury of a laissez-faire extra-curriculum. Willamette at this moment has the opportunity to begin to craft a co-curriculum that will achieve both distinction and distinctiveness for the CLA. Not since the comprehensive reconstruction and reform of campus life under President G. Herbert Smith in the late 1940s and early 1950s have we faced a challenge and an opportunity such as we confront today. We need to act with comparable boldness to design a campus life program for the twenty-first century. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that if we follow the recommendations suggested above, Willamette can create a unique co-curricular program. Although we have borrowed ideas from a number of other institutions, our synthesis of “downtown” and “neighborhoods,” pluralism and community, residential commons and Greek houses is altogether distinctive and tailored to Willamette’s history, culture and goals. If we do this, we expect the result to be a campus life that is more active and less passive, more coherent and less fragmented, more challenging and less routine, more intense and varied and less diffuse and conformist, more engaged and empowering and less paternalistic and debilitating. It is to this sense of intellectual vitality and social and cultural possibility that we must dedicate ourselves.

## Appendix I “Why Review Campus Life?”

The commitment of the recent Long Range Plan to the ideals of excellence and distinction is the first reason for timely attention to the co-curriculum. It is not only the goal of strengthening residential and campus life, but also the goal of academic excellence that requires our attention to the co-curriculum. We take it as a given that the collective achievement of excellence in formal learning is unlikely to take place in the absence of a campus environment and culture that fails to encourage and sustain intellectual life. Willamette’s performance in terms of sustaining a lively, challenging and culturally rich setting for learning is, therefore, of great interest.

The second reason to look at campus life is a substantial anecdotal history of complaint about facilities and programming. Periodically since the 1940s, Willamette students have expressed their desire to have a student center. Although the Montag Recreational Center (to be completed in the summer of 2001) will be a major asset and help to meet many of our recreational needs, a full-scale center for student organization offices and productions remains on the agenda of many. In recent years there has developed considerable resentment about what is seen as over-regulation and centralized adjudication of rules. Despite a substantial amount of social programming, there is a considerable amount of unhappiness with the quality of many activities. Finally, both current students and prospective students comment on the age and limited housing options in the residencies.

A third set of reasons for re-examining our current campus life programs center on the competitive marketplace in which the Willamette CLA is located. This requires some extended discussions. One part of our challenge concerns the relative attractiveness of liberal arts (as opposed to vocational) education at either private liberal arts colleges or the arts, letters and sciences colleges of public or private research universities. This is not a new challenge. Indeed, private liberal arts colleges have faced it for over 100 years, since the vocational bachelor’s degree programs of the public land grant colleges became prominent.<sup>1</sup> The alternative to liberal arts education became, however, even more serious in the second half of the twentieth century. Noting the impact of this phenomenon, Paul Neely, a trustee of Williams College, has written:

There is another side of student consumerism. Call it vocationalism, credentialism, or

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<sup>1</sup>Frederick Rudolph, The American College and University: A History (New York: Random House, 1962), chapter 16; Laurence R. Veysey, The Emergence of the American University (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), chapter II.

even dollarizing — students and their families have defined undergraduate education in starkly utilitarian terms. Young people do not go to college to become fuller persons,

better citizens, or more lively intellects. In post-war American college education is justified by the additional lifetime income it will produce.<sup>2</sup>

Writing in the same volume, economists Michael McPherson and Morton Shapiro cited somewhat more recent trends and are worth quoting at length:

Over the last twenty-five years, America's liberal arts colleges have endured a steady shrinkage of their traditional market. The number of high-school graduates declined by 21 percent, from 3.2 million in 1976 to 2.5 million in 1993, promoting a ferocious competition for applicants. More recently, a rising tide of competition from alternative providers of education services — beginning with the vigorous expansion of public colleges and universities in the 1960s and continuing now with the abrupt entry of venture capitalists into the world of for-profit education — has put a squeeze on the market for private liberal arts colleges. Schools that once subsisted on a combination of genteel poverty among faculty, tweedy relationships between admissions deans and prep school headmasters, and “old school” ties with the alumni now depend on four-color brochures, marketing directors, meticulously planned capital campaigns, and elaborate pricing and discount policies that make airline pricing look straightforward by comparison.

It is not surprising that during this period of dramatic change the number of schools that could by any plausible measure be called “liberal arts colleges” dropped sharply (although the number that found it useful to hang onto that sobriquet held steady). The two hundred or so such institutions that remain (of a total of more than three thousand colleges and universities in the United States) can look forward to some promising opportunities, including the reversal of the decline in the population of young people; a continued strong market demand for educated workers; and a higher-education marketplace in which their commitment to residential education and personal attention to students makes their offerings increasingly distinctive. Yet in realizing those opportunities, the liberal arts colleges continue to struggle on several fronts. They face a public that is skeptical about rising college costs and pricing policies that are seen as unfairly “redistributive”; an

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<sup>2</sup>Paul Neely, “The Threats to Liberal Arts Colleges,” *Daedalus* “Distinctively American: The Residential Liberal Arts Colleges,” 128 (Winter 1999): 36-37.

education economy in which new information technologies are transforming how and why people need schooling; and a competitive environment that favors resource-wasting maneuvers for tactical advantage over strategic investments in quality.<sup>3</sup>

Beyond the generic challenge to liberal arts education is the competition offered by other private liberal arts colleges within the Pacific Northwest and, more broadly, the West. This competition takes many forms, from faculty salaries, to endowment building, to athletic success. One key area has to do with the culture of the campus and, particularly, the ways in which co-curricular programs and facilities contribute to this. The Campus Life Task Force looked at three areas of new student facilities construction (student centers, apartments and suites) at eight Pacific Northwest private liberal arts colleges (including Willamette) and concluded that extensive construction in each of the three types of facilities had been recently completed or was planned or underway (Appendix Ia). It must also be made clear that none of these efforts seemed to be part of a comprehensive approach to the learning environment on campus. Nevertheless, the age and design of our housing stock and our lack of a full campus-wide student center may increasingly pose recruitment problems for Willamette (Appendix Ib).

A final area of challenge for the Willamette CLA is represented by the recruitment efforts of the honors colleges at several of the state universities of the region. The nature of their web page advertising makes it plain that they are projecting the idea that the advantages of a first-rate residential liberal arts college can be had on their campuses and for a much lower price than at schools such as Willamette (see the web pages at the honors colleges at University of Oregon, Oregon State University and the University of Western Washington).

We conclude that Willamette must move toward generating the resources necessary to achieve its long range goals of excellence. We also conclude that we must take seriously the sources of student dissatisfaction. With regard to our competitive situation, we must adopt a dual strategy. On the one hand, we must join with the other liberal arts colleges and their friends to defend the value of liberal arts education. This will represent an increasing challenge in an era of consumer-focused programs, distance learning and hyper-instrumental attitudes towards the value of higher education. But the case is there to be made and it must be made anew for every generation. To attract the best faculty, students and staff, liberal arts colleges must take full advantage of the benefits of small scale: multiple opportunities for direct faculty contact, the possibility of a variety of co-curricular experiences on a campus where athletes, musicians, journalists and actors are not proto-professionals, and the potential for intense community involvement at both the sub-group and at the campus-wide levels.

On the other hand, we must compete effectively regionally and (increasingly) nationally with

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<sup>3</sup>Michael McPherson and Morton Shapiro, "The Future Economic Challenges for the Liberal Arts College," *Daedalus*, *op. cit.*: 47-48.

other liberal arts colleges. Here we must achieve distinction in terms of national standards. To do this there is no substitute for continued investment in curricular excellence. We must secure our position among Tier I liberal arts colleges and remain active in organizations such as the Annapolis Group. But we also need distinctiveness; prospective students must find specific reasons for choosing Willamette over other strong liberal arts programs. Competitive salaries, facilities and financial aid are clearly part of the answer as is astute marketing and fundraising. However, we believe that Willamette has an opportunity at this moment to reshape the campus environment in a unique fashion which will at once substantially enhance learning and help secure our market position. We need to find ways to configure the life of the campus so as to better combine better intellectual energy and social life, discovery and creativity, disciplined effort and play, accomplishment and spontaneity.

Appendix Ia  
**Pacific Northwest College New Building Survey (updated 2/01)**

School	New Residence	New Apartment	University Commons	Master Plan Completed	In Planning	Other
<b>Lewis &amp; Clark College</b>	None	Building - 168 beds - 2 & 4 bedroom residential townhouses - cost of \$21 Million	None	Campus Master Plan completed 1996. Residential Master Plan 1999	New Student Center is in planning.	Increase students living on campus to 75%. Debt financing entire residence project.
<b>Linfield College</b>	None	230 Beds - Individual bedroom apartments in construction at cost of \$8.9 Million	Renovated in 1995 and new central dining facility renovation in 2000	Completed 2000	New Library and New Music Performance Center	Adjusting locations of programs and people because of Hewlett Packard.
<b>Reed College</b>	Completed in 1998 - 220 beds - Cost of \$11 Million. Configuration - Single bedroom lock-offs.	None	\$12 Million Renovation in 1997	Completed 1999 and in progress.	New Technology Center	62% On-campus occupancy - no plans to increase.
<b>Seattle University</b>	330 lock-off rooms and parking. \$15 Million plus \$13 Million for adjacent parking.	None	Construction just began on 77,000 sq ft Student Commons - Cost of \$33 Million	Completed 1999	Planning for new Performing Arts Facility & Apartment Residences.	High on-campus housing demand.
<b>University of Portland</b>	Residence Hall 160 beds - Cost of \$6.2 Million, lock-off design.	240 New single person bedroom includes parking, \$15 Million	None	Approved by Board in 2000	New University Commons and Sports & Intramural Indoor Facility.	Goal to move towards 75% of all students on campus.
<b>University of Puget Sound</b>	Residence Hall 184 beds - Cost of \$12.9 Million, lockoff design.	None	None, but renovation of a new central dining facility.	Completed 1999	New Apartments	Goal to move towards 75% of all students on campus. Currently at 55%.
<b>Whitman College</b>	None	None	51,000 sq ft facility in construction - Cost of \$13 Million	Framework Plan 2000, New Science Building.	Needs assessment of Residence Facilities	Goal to move towards 75% of all students on campus. Currently at 64%.
<b>Willamette University</b>	None	98 Beds in UAP - 1995	None	To be completed 2001	None	Montag Center \$2.5 Million Student Recreation Center.

## Appendix Ib

### WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY RESIDENCIES

<b>Early Residential History</b>	<u>Lausanne Hall</u> - 1920, cosmetically renovated in 1996, 147 residents <u>Haseldorf Apartments</u> - 1928 (purchased by WU in 1985), 31 residents
<b>Post-War Construction</b>	<u>Baxter Hall</u> - 1948, 115 residents <u>Beta Theta Pi</u> - national fraternity established 1947, 32 residents <u>Phi Delta Theta</u> - national fraternity established 1947, 32 residents <u>Sigma Alpha Epsilon</u> - national fraternity established 1949, 32 residents <u>Sigma Chi</u> - national fraternity established 1947, 32 residents <u>Doney Hall</u> - 1955, with addition in 1967, 110 residents
<b>Baby Boomer City</b>	<u>Lee House</u> - 1959, 32 residents <u>York House</u> - 1959, 29 residents <u>Belknap Hall</u> - 1961, 75 residents <u>Matthews Hall</u> - 1961, 95 residents <u>Terra House</u> (formerly Delta Tau Delta) - 1961, 32 residents <u>Kappa Sigma</u> - national fraternity, established 1961, 32 residents <u>Pi Beta Phi</u> - national sorority, 1963, 47 residents <u>Shepard House</u> (formerly Alpha Phi) - 1963, renovated in 1994, 52 residents <u>WISH</u> (formerly Chi Omega) - 1965, 37 residents <u>Alpha Chi Omega</u> - national sorority, 1967, 48 residents <u>Delta Gamma</u> - national sorority, 1967, 48 residents
<b>TIUA</b>	Tokyo International University of America - 1989 - branch campus of Tokyo International University in Japan; <u>Kaneko Hall</u> residence for TIUA and Willamette students, 200 residents
<b>Apartment Living</b>	<u>The University Apartments</u> - 1995, 70 residents

## Appendix II

### **CAMPUS LIFE TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP**

#### Students

Greg Amorelli, 2000

Remy Choi, 2001

Erin Dougherty, 2000

Courtney Gregoire, 2001

Mona Luqman, 2001

Dave Rigsby, 2000

Erik Van Hagen, 2000

Tommy Ziemer, 2002

#### Faculty

Russ Beaton, Economics

Meredy Edelson, Psychology

Don Negri, Associate Dean

Ken Nolley, English

#### Staff

Jim Bauer, Residence Life and Auxiliary Services

Bob Hawkinson, Campus Life and Politics

Lisa Jones, Student Activities

Deborah Loers, Bishop Wellness Center

Masaki Shimada, TIUA

Rich Shintaku, Multicultural Affairs

**CAMPUS LIFE TASK FORCE CHARGE**  
**October, 1999**

I am today appointing a College of Liberal Arts Task Force on Campus Life and charging it with establishing goals and standards for the co-curriculum, reviewing current practices and making recommendations for the improvement of Willamette in this vital area of community life.

In establishing this Task Force, I am following up on a promise made in my Inaugural Address to review these areas. The Task Force will give especially close attention to the development of a richly diverse and multicultural campus environment, to the structures and programs of residential life and to functions and performance of student organizations. I am also asking the Task Force specifically to consider the “residential college” model of campus living.

It is a commonplace observation, but nonetheless true, that much of what is learned in college takes place outside the classroom and the curriculum. It is also true that the culture of the campus can powerfully affect the way in which students approach learning within their course work. A recognition of these facts leads me to urge the members of the Task Force to think deeply about the values and goals of the co-curriculum. In a manner parallel to the CLA curricular reform effort several years ago, and with aims complementary to that endeavor, I hope that the Task Force will identify the basic values and goals that Willamette should strive to achieve in the co-curriculum.

Willamette has changed considerably in the years since we last undertook such a comprehensive review of the co-curriculum and for this reason alone it is time to take stock. As was the case with the general education reform, this effort must examine present activities and alternatives, asking how well we are achieving the goals of liberal learning and multicultural conversancy outside the classroom. It should also indicate what steps we should take to enhance our performance.

An additional reason for review is the need to address the combination of opportunity and challenge which confronts us at this time. On the one hand, a decade of growth in faculty, student quality and diversity and facilities, as well as recent curricular reforms and incremental improvements in co-curricular programs, have given us considerable overall strength and put us in a position to aspire to achieve more. On the other hand, residential liberal arts colleges such as Willamette now face a highly competitive market environment and are increasingly asked to justify their relatively high tuitions with evidence of “value added.” While we recognize that it is neither desirable nor possible to plan every student experience in college, either in the co-curriculum or the academic program, we need to be highly intentional about what we offer and highly explicit and vocal about why it is of value. Along with a well-designed curriculum and strong teaching replete with multiple contact points between students and faculty, we must offer a co-curricular environment supportive of the academic program and rich in opportunities for high impact learning experiences. The Task Force will serve Willamette best if it provides guidelines for achieving a distinctive program in the co-curriculum.

## Appendix IV

### **In Their Own Words... Highlights of Student Focus Groups 1999**

#### **Affirmations**

- Students value the close relationships they form in the residence halls.
- They value the opportunity to make friends and learn about expectations of university life during Opening Days.
- They value close associations with faculty and believe, on the whole, that faculty are dedicated to student development.
- They value study abroad. They are interested in greater diversity among the student body.
- They value the contributions TIUA students make to campus life.

#### **Challenges**

- Students from Greek houses believe the residential policies are too strict and enforced differently. Greeks felt that the alcohol rules were especially oppressive and were unfairly enforced against them. Non-Greek students agreed that some residential policies were too restrictive, but did not focus on alcohol policy and enforcement and, in fact, thought that Greek houses often were treated as exempt.
- Students do not readily articulate what is unique or special about Willamette. They like, but do not love, their residential experience.
- They believe the academic excellence and closeness of the Willamette community is typical of any small private college.
- They are concerned that our tolerance for diversity has not been tested and they are looking for specific ways to engage socially and intellectually with students different from themselves.
- Students desire a greater number of all campus social events and improved facilities for socializing.

## Appendix V

### **Maguire Associates Survey**

#### Observations and Comments

The purpose of this section is to set forth the research findings within the context of what Maguire Associates has observed at other institutions, and to share with those at Willamette our insights into the data. These observations are prompted by discussions we have had with Bob Hawkinson during the course of this project. He has indicated some of the priority areas that Willamette will focus on in the immediate future, and data from those areas have been included among the research highlights outlined in the preceding summary presentation.

We were very pleased with the response rate to this survey among Willamette students, and are grateful for the extraordinary efforts of the administration in encouraging participation. There is good distribution of opinions from all four classes; oftentimes we find the responses skewed towards students in the first two years.

Overall, the mean satisfaction rating for Willamette for all survey participants compares quite favorably with ratings from other studies we have conducted. While this reference group reflects a limited number of institutions (11), it does include liberal arts and selective schools that are comparable in many ways to Willamette. The University's satisfaction rating ranks in the top half. Women at Willamette are significantly more satisfied with their overall experience than men are, a finding that is true in every study of this kind we have conducted thus far.

While we were initially surprised to see that 33% of the students surveyed said they would "choose another college instead of Willamette if making the decision again," this response is in line with findings from two other studies in which this same question was posed. Maguire Associates anticipates that studies in the future will indicate that about one-third of the students in most schools, with hindsight, would decide to go elsewhere.

Three areas emerge in the research as critically important in students' assessments of their satisfaction with the University:

- Pride — "I am proud to be at Willamette;"
- Value — "My college education has been worth the money;" and
- Academic Growth — "This institution is helping me reach my academic potential."

These themes will guide our overall observations about the Willamette findings.

#### **Pride in Willamette**

This concept is perhaps the most difficult to interpret and provide advice about. What contributes to pride in a school? Certainly a strong academic program and good relationships

with faculty. These are areas in which Willamette shines. The Dean of Campus Life has also focused on residential arrangements, multicultural experiences, athletics, community outreach, traditions and rituals, and a re-vitalization of co-curricular activities as areas that can contribute to the overall atmosphere or spirit of a school. Insights into many of these dimensions of college life can be found in this research. Maguire Associates' experience has indicated, however, that there will typically be mixed reviews from students as a whole on the importance of athletics, Greek life, religion, the arts, multicultural experiences, and community outreach — reflecting the fact that these are passions for some but of little interest to others. Decisions to embrace any of these areas must be based on institutional values and beliefs, and then promoted to students as a “total package” — the combination of experiences offered to students at Willamette.

The research does uncover very strong support for a student center at Willamette, with students believing that this would improve the quality of student life. There is a frustration that grows from freshman to senior year with the lack of places to “hang out” on campus. A similar pattern exists in students' mediocre agreement ratings with the statement “there are traditions and events that have created a solid sense of belonging for me at Willamette.” Agreement ratings for the University having a “strong sense of community” are lackluster, and students indicate some degree of being bothered by the “low level of school spirit.” This is particularly true for those involved in Greek life.

ASWU, as a “reasonably strong advocate of students' interests” is most strongly criticized by men on campus and by those in the junior class. Men (and Greeks) also voice the loudest complaints about the University “not being responsive to student needs” and students “not being powerful, having ‘no voice’ in what goes on at Willamette.” Interestingly, students in general seem to feel that “opportunities for leadership at Willamette” are good, so perhaps this leadership potential could be channeled in such a way as to address these prevailing issues of advocacy, power, school spirit, etc. Students should certainly be challenged to create solutions to their concerns, and not expect that the administration holds all the answers.

### **The Value of a Willamette Education**

Value is another concept that emerges as critically important in determining current student satisfaction, as it did in the inquiry study conducted by Maguire Associates for Willamette in determining interest in a college, and yet its definition is elusive. We can intuit that perceptions of the University's value are tied to the highest rated agreement statements, indicating approachable, caring and knowledgeable faculty, good facilities, small classes, and specific opportunities to pursue areas of interest. Seniors at Willamette assign the highest agreement to the overall value statement “Thus far, my college education has been worth the money.” Sophomores assign a significantly lower level of agreement with this statement than their senior counterparts, also give the lowest overall satisfaction rating to Willamette (although not significantly different from others), and are the class that indicates the lowest degree of pride in being at the University. Students at this point in their Willamette careers express a vulnerability that warrants attention.

It is very possible that an impression of an institution's value is determined early on. Students for whom Willamette was a first-choice school are significantly more satisfied with their overall experience on campus than are those for whom this was not true. A disproportionate number of students who would choose to go to another college, if given the choice again, are students who did not select Willamette as a first-choice school. These students rate the University lower on all value-related variables, and yet they remain at Willamette. In the freshman advising process, it would be wise to establish whether or not Willamette was the student's top-choice school. Advisors should be alerted to the fact that students who come to the University as a second or lower choice are at significantly higher risk for leaving and therefore may benefit from more extensive attention. If someone took an interest in the desires and goals of these students, they could perhaps be directed as to how these aspirations can be fulfilled at Willamette, hopefully converting the University to a "top choice" by the end of the freshman year.

There are some very pragmatic issues that enter into the perception of value at Willamette and other institutions — specifically, food. While students agree that Goudy Commons is well run and maintained, they are neutral on the quality of food there, and disagree that "the meal plan gives good value for the cost." Food may seem trivial, but it can be a daily irritant to students if they feel that they are paying more than the food is worth. In some institutions, the food service adds some additional auxiliary revenue. If this revenue comes at the cost of students feeling "ripped off," it may not be a good business decision. This is not to suggest that this is the case at Willamette, but the issue should be explored.

### **Academic Growth**

Ratings on a full range of academic variables indicate that the academic enterprise is the core strength of Willamette, as it should be. The faculty are reviewed quite favorably, and even advising — the Achilles' heel of the academic arena — survives scrutiny fairly well, although it is perceived as better by upperclassmen than by younger students. By and large, students agree that Willamette is "helping them reach their academic potential," that the level of challenge in classes is about right, and that they are learning to think critically. Survey participants "like the fact that students at Willamette work hard on their studies," generally support the two year language requirement, "understand and value MOI's," and yet strongly disagree that "my writing portfolio and the process of putting it together have been valuable." In fact, freshmen, who still disagree strongly, save this statement from utterly disastrous agreement ratings. What's going on here? This is clearly one of the few academic areas that does not enjoy student support.

### **Other Areas of Institutional Interest**

At the University's encouragement, we explored the data for insights into dimensions of the Willamette experience that are of particular interest to the administration, including multiculturalism, Greek life, athletics, gender and year differences, and campus services. What follows is a series of comments about data points that speak to these areas of interest:

1. There are many differences that emerge in this data between male and female students at Willamette. Overall, as indicated earlier, women are more satisfied with their experience at the University and give it higher value ratings. Where there are differences in

educational goals between the genders, women in every case rate goals more enthusiastically than men, with two exceptions. Men give significantly higher ratings than women to the goals of “participating in an intercollegiate sport” and “developing a long-term intimate relationship.” This last finding would be an interesting one to explore with discussion groups on campus.

2. Educational goals change over the four years of college. The following goals are significantly more important to the freshmen surveyed than to the seniors:
  - To acquire credentials and skills necessary to secure a well-paying job;
  - To network (make career contacts);
  - To participate in an intercollegiate sport;
  - To obtain employment in the field of my choice; and
  - To develop a long-term intimate relationship.
3. The data establish fairly predictable differences on Greek-related issues between students who are involved in Greek life at Willamette and those who are not involved. The statement “The fraternity/sorority system conveys a positive image of Willamette” elicits enormously higher agreement ratings from Greeks than from non-Greeks, who do agree that they “would be happy to see the Greek system have a diminished role at Willamette.” Overall, however, students involved in Greek life are more satisfied with their social life at Willamette, find the students friendlier, and are more bothered by the low level of school spirit than are non-Greeks. The University is currently developing plans to change, yet maintain, the Greek system on campus. This compromise solution, rather than a more radical change regarding Greek life, seems appropriate.
4. Campus Safety gets the lowest of the satisfaction ratings for services at Willamette. This was an issue that was also raised by the current students who participated in the Image Study conducted by Maguire Associates. Clearly, the students have little faith in this operation. We do not typically see this as the case in general on other college campuses.
5. When asked about the “climate for diversity at Willamette,” students indicate increased dissatisfaction with age, yet the feelings remain somewhat moderate, rather than vehement. Willamette students lean towards being dissatisfied with the ethnic diversity of the faculty — a sentiment that also grows from freshman to senior year. In their educational goals, however, students assign fairly high ratings to “developing an understanding of an appreciation for other cultures” and “making contact with individuals of different backgrounds.” There are seeds to be sown here and value beyond what is often recognized by students in attracting a multicultural student body and faculty. We rarely see concepts related to diversity embraced wholeheartedly by students in general, but the Willamette response is more positive than is often the case. As is typically true, women are more drawn to diversity than men are.

### **Action Items**

Many of the findings presented in this study are complex, and do not suggest easy solutions to the challenges and opportunities Willamette faces. Hopefully the data will be used to inform campus discussions about important decisions. There are a number of findings, however, that should be given immediate and considerable attention on campus. Briefly, they include:

- Students in their sophomore year: indications in this study are that they are less content than others and may warrant special intervention.
- Students for whom Willamette was not a first-choice school should be identified for special attention.
- Willamette should seriously consider building a student center.
- Work needs to be done on developing rituals and traditions on campus that create a sense of community and belonging.
- The value for cost of food at Willamette needs review.
- The writing portfolio deserves some examination to ascertain its worth.
- Student concerns about Campus Safety should be addressed.

### **Communicating the Results of the Study**

Willamette students were notably cooperative in providing data for this project before they left school last spring. It would be wise to create a plan regarding the communication of the results of the survey to them. This can be done in a variety of ways, from one major information event, to a series of sessions by topic. The format could be “town meetings,” where information can be presented and then feedback encouraged, or articles in the student newspaper. Faculty and staff should also be informed of these findings.

Following the final report of the image study Maguire Associates conducted for Willamette, a committee was appointed and assigned the task of reviewing recommendations and planning for their implementation. Perhaps a small group could be formed that would devise a plan for the dissemination of this information and for following up on the implications of the findings. A natural question that will flow from this study will be, “Now that Willamette knows how students feel about these issues, what does the University plan to do?” Responses to this question can legitimately include everything from “nothing” to outlining a comprehensive plan for addressing student life issues. The advisory group can be charged with carefully considering responses.

## **Conclusion**

This summary has just touched on some of what we consider to be the main findings in Willamette's Student Satisfaction Study. We encourage the administration to return to the data and review it from a variety of angles as the need emerges. A data disk containing all information will be sent to Willamette to allow for further analysis on campus.

Appendix VI

**CAMPUS LIFE TASK FORCE  
CAMPUS VISITS, 2000**

**Task Force Delegation Visits**

Bowdoin College  
Middlebury College  
Rice University  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
University of California, San Diego  
University of Southern California  
Whittier College

**Individual Visits**

Brown University  
Bucknell University  
Colorado College  
Dickinson College  
Franklin and Marshall College  
Gettysberg College  
Lafayette College  
Lewis and Clark College  
Reed College  
Seattle University  
Swarthmore College  
University of Miami  
University of Portland  
University of Puget Sound  
Wellesley College  
Whitman College

Appendix VIIa

**The CLA and the Willamette Student**

Cognitive and Dispositional Goals Derived From a Review of  
Mission and Goals Statements, Faculty Questionnaires  
and Faculty Retreat Data (1995)

**Cognitive**

Communication skills: written and oral

Quantitative reasoning skills

Information and research literacy

Critical thinking and problem-solving  
capabilities

Breadth of conversancy with disciplinary  
and interdisciplinary modes of analysis and  
knowledge structures

In-depth knowledge of a field of study

Capacity for judgment: aesthetic and moral

Ability to engage in both independent and  
collaborative inquiry

**Dispositional**

Commitment to life-long learning

Passion for intellectual endeavor

Self-reflectiveness

Intellectual honesty and integrity

Understanding and valuing social/cultural  
difference

Self-expression/artistic creativity

Responsibility to community: local and  
global

Intellectual curiosity and openness to new  
ideas

Balance between intellectual humility and  
intellectual self-confidence

Commitment to high standards of  
intellectual work for the self and for others

Appendix VIIb

**CAMPUS LIFE TASK FORCE**  
**Goals of the Willamette Learning Community**

1. Support for academic excellence as expressed in the cognitive and dispositional goals of the CLA curriculum.
2. Active learning and strong learning relationships.
3. Civility.
4. Pluralism and inclusiveness.
5. Responsibility and participation.
6. Service and an ethic of care.
7. Individual choice and freedom of expression.
8. Play and recreation.
9. Loyalty to Willamette generated by the quality of intellectual and social experiences which are symbolized and celebrated through distinctive events and rituals.

## Appendix VIII

### **The CLA and the Division of Campus Life**

The relationship between the College of Liberal Arts and the Division of Campus Life needs clarification. The recommendations of this report imply a closer partnership between the two units, so we think that it is appropriate to note their recent histories.

The College of Liberal Arts is, in many ways, a quite different place than it was 10 or 20 years ago. Over that period the CLA has set for itself increasingly high standards of performance and has moved in a variety of ways to realize the goal of excellence in liberal arts education. In the process it has moved from a regional to a national orientation. These changes include but are not limited to the following:

- Improvement or construction of numerous high quality academic facilities (Smullin Hall, Hatfield Library, Rogers Performance Center, Olin Science Center)
- Significant enhancement of faculty compensation and support services
- Substantial expansion in the size of the CLA faculty, and in the range of subject matters addressed in our teaching and research while the overall teacher-student ratio has been reduced
- Reform of promotion and tenure procedures and standards to upgrade quality of teaching, research and service coupled with additional support for research and for teaching development
- Advances in quality of entering undergraduates as measured by GPA and SATs
- Markedly higher tuition combined with a vast increase in student financial aid, particularly merit- based aid
- Reform of degree requirements (BA only) and reform of general education system with the objective of making the curriculum more rigorous and engaging
- Distinct increase in the number of students competing for national fellowships (Truman, Goldwater, etc.) and summer research grants, along with institutional support for these efforts
- Enormous expansion in the number of students and considerable increase in the number of venues involved in off-campus study

In their various ways all of these can be seen as answers to the question, “What does curricular excellence in liberal arts education require?” At the core of this commitment to excellence is a vision of the CLA as a place where students and faculty are joined in the pursuit of learning which is ever more profound, comprehensive and lasting. But these changes have also had important implications for students’ lives outside the classroom. Students today study more, are

employed more and in a variety of ways place more demands on the college than they did 15 years ago. An effective co-curriculum must systematically address these changes as well as orient itself to the goal of academic excellence. We need a co-curriculum that is appropriate for the changed nature of undergraduate life in the early twenty-first century.

Like the CLA during the same period, the Division of Campus Life has also expanded services and personnel (multicultural affairs, learning and disabilities, campus safety, health and counseling, residence life, etc.), initiated new programs (crew team, honors and awards, community outreach) and constructed or reconstructed some facilities (Goudy Commons, softball field, University Apartments, Bishop Health Center). These developments have substantially increased the range and quality of services and programs offered to students at Willamette. They have, however, taken place incrementally and in a manner lacking an overall vision or plan. Moreover, there has been little effort to link these systematically to the changes in the CLA curriculum. But there is a role for the Campus Life Division that is larger than the sum of its parts and that is the role of chief-steward of the co-curriculum, both as support and as complement to the curriculum. Campus Life cannot be effective as a residual collection of discrete enterprises which are left over when one subtracts the maintenance, the income-generating and the academic programs of the university. It must engage in a partnership with students and faculty in constructing a range of learning venues across the campus and across the four undergraduate years. It must design the co-curricular structure that is necessary to achieve distinction in liberal arts education and a clear sense of Willamette's distinctiveness in the residential liberal arts college marketplace.