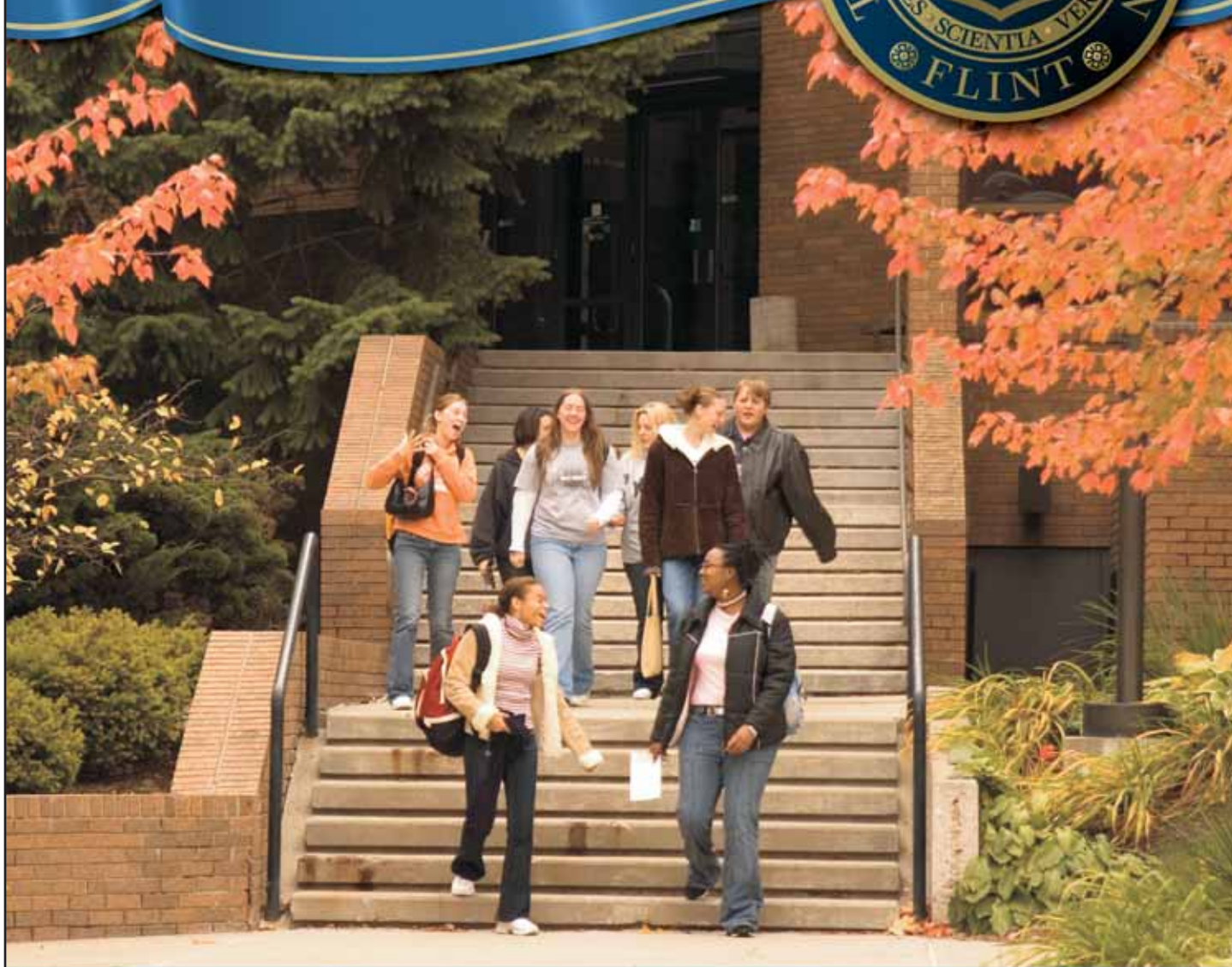


Report of the University of Michigan-Flint

BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION

April 2007



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT

The Flint campus of the University of Michigan is a community of diverse learners and scholars, where students from this region and beyond prepare for leadership, achievement, and service through interactive instruction in the arts, sciences, humanities, and professions. Our mission rests on three pillars: excellence in teaching, learning, and scholarship; student centeredness; and engaged citizenship. Our students become leaders in their fields, in their professions and in their communities.



BRC MEMBERSHIP

Charles Bailey, *Social Work*
Jamile Lawand, *Foreign Languages*
Michael Pardales, *Education*
Mark Perry, *School of Management*
Ken Schilling, *Mathematics*
Suzanne Selig, *Health Sciences and Administration (Chair)*
Joseph Sucic, *Biology*

Traki Taylor-Webb, *School of Education and Human Service*
Maureen Thum, *English*
Betty Velthouse, *School of Management*
Ted Williams, *School of Management*
Tom Wrobel, *Psychology*
Lora Kalkman, *Urban Health and Wellness Center; Staff Support*
Vahid Lotfi, *Academic Affairs*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) was appointed by Provost Jack Kay in Spring 2006 and was presented with the following charge: “Given our goal of advancing academic excellence and increasing enrollment, while pursuing our vision of engaged minds, preparing leaders, what changes/refinements need to occur in academic affairs to achieve this? Proposed areas to examine include, but are not limited to:

- New/enhanced program development, including interdisciplinary efforts;
- Structures to promote school/college intersections;
- Relationship with SSEM areas;
- Offices which provide support to achieve excellence in learning, teaching and scholarship;
- Diversity initiatives; and
- Investment in the faculty.

Provost Kay further emphasized that all BRC recommendations must be consistent with the University of Michigan-Flint Mission Statement, its three pillars, and the University of Michigan-Flint Strategic Plan. Commission’s work resulted in eleven recommendations with supporting rationale. The recommendations of the BRC are:

- **Globalization** - Create a Center for Global/International Affairs which would bring together the International Student Center and the Global Studies Program to centralize efforts to facilitate an increase in the number of international students and faculty and seek external funding to internationalize the curriculum as well as develop and implement international experience programs including study abroad for faculty, staff and students.
- **Diversity** - Academic Affairs/Office of the Provost should establish a partnership with E.O.I. and the newly established UM-Flint Diversity Council to enhance the UM-Flint culture related to diversity. This partnership will initiate curricular revisions, consistent with General Education reform that will ensure that “valuing differences” infuses our classrooms parallel to the commitment to internationalize our campus. This initiative would also seek funding for a Center of Multicultural Competency.
- **STEM Center** - Seek external funding to create a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Center. The proposed Center would be charged to develop and offer (in conjunction with academic units) new multidisciplinary STEM undergraduate and graduate programs and degrees, which build on our existing strengths.
- **Graduate and Professional Programs** - Expand graduate programs and enrollment by identifying new graduate/professional programs which build on our existing strengths through ongoing local and national market analysis as well as explore the feasibility of a UM-Flint Graduate School.
- **Research** - The Office of Research should take a proactive leadership role in partnering with Academic Affairs to further enhance the culture of research on our campus to promote and recognize undergraduate research, faculty research and grant activity, including undergraduate research, enhanced grant writing activity, and to advocate future use of Research Scientist positions at UM-Flint.
- **Communication** - Enhance internal and external communication to promote achievements of Academic Affairs by identifying a Communications Officer/Specialist for Academic Affairs to more effectively promote achievements to external and internal constituents.
- **Investment in Faculty and Staff** - The Office of the Provost should take the lead to assure that ongoing investments in faculty and staff within Academic Affairs (new and continuing; full-time and part-time) occur so that Academic Affairs personnel have the appropriate and necessary training and support to achieve and maintain the level of excellence expected from the UM-Flint academic community.
- **Joint Appointments** - Create and implement an effective process to facilitate joint faculty appointments across units and across departments within units.
- **Promotion and Tenure Criteria** - The Provost should work with the Deans to initiate a department/unit review of departmental promotion and tenure criteria to ensure they are consistently aligned with the UM-Flint Mission Statement, the UM-Flint Strategic Plan and its 3 Pillars. The Provost’s office should conduct an analysis of current UM-Flint written criteria and guidelines to inform this dialogue.
- **Academic Program Review** - Create and implement a standardized, required and meaningful Academic Program Review process. The objective of this process is to promote academic excellence and assure academic programs are consistent with UM-Flint’s mission.
- **Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs** - Create a new position, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs, to work in partnership with SSEM to address/oversee a number of areas including but not limited to General Education, inter-unit programming, developing academic policies to promote academic excellence and a recruitment/enrollment plan.



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PROCESS

The BRC began meeting in April 2006, holding six meetings during the Spring semester. Although some data gathering continued through Spring/Summer 2006, regular group meetings were not held during these months, but resumed Fall 2006 with a two-day off-campus retreat. Regular meetings continued through March 2007.

During the Spring semester, Provost Kay discussed the charge with the members and the BRC reviewed existing documents. There was considerable discussion about how to approach and organize the development of recommendations. Areas requiring further data were identified.

The two-day BRC retreat was held in Port Huron in August 2006. A UM-Ann Arbor facilitator assisted the BRC to explore and develop preliminary recommendations, based on previous discussions and a review of documents (see appendix). A modified SWOT analysis was completed, with the following “environmental” issues identified.

- Increased diversity and aging of U.S. population
- Michigan’s perilous economy
- Decrease in available jobs for graduates
- Decreased demand for our graduates
- Decreased public funding; privatization
- Increased public accountability
- Increased complexity of and accessibility to technology including educational technology
- Increased competition with other universities which have a major focus on student-centeredness, flexible scheduling, student-friendly transfer policies, experiential learning, internships/service learning, undergraduate research, and student housing

As to the current state of UM-Flint, the following items were identified:

What’s Not Working:

- Disconnect between some non-Academic Affairs units and Academic Affairs
- Administrative structure/three schools and college operating in silos
- Bureaucratic barriers
- Poor communication and marketing within and outside of University
- Under utilization of our assets
- Flat UM-Flint undergraduate enrollment

The following Challenges were identified:

- Competition with local and regional colleges and universities
- Identifying new resources while controlling tuition increases
- Academic Affairs control of budget
- Strong faculty governance structure
- Balance between centralized and decentralized control over faculty positions
- Decreased proportion of tenured faculty positions placing higher demands on faculty along with scholarship expectations

Opportunities:

- UM-Flint being located in an urban setting while drawing from Oakland and Genesee Counties
- University of Michigan name
- Increased demand for higher education
- Relatively small classes; student/faculty contact
- Excellent faculty and staff
- Online courses

The retreat culminated in an affirmation of our fundamental values and recognized assets; and, a commitment that these be strongly reflected in the recommendations which emanate from the Commission’s work. These values/assets included the primacy of our students, our strong academic programs, other substantial resources, a more unified faculty and staff, a streamlined infrastructure, our image and reputation, embracing student housing, improved buildings and the look of our campus, contributing to a vital downtown Flint.

As stated, full BRC meetings resumed in the fall of 2006 and continued through the winter and spring of 2007. Fifteen (15) BRC meetings were held to prepare for and discuss feedback from key campus groups/leaders, and the open sessions. Meetings held in late February and early March focused on refining the recommendations. The BRC work was completed in April 2007. The final report, which includes 11 recommendations, was presented to Provost Kay in April 2007

MATERIALS REVIEWED AND OTHER SOURCES OF DATA

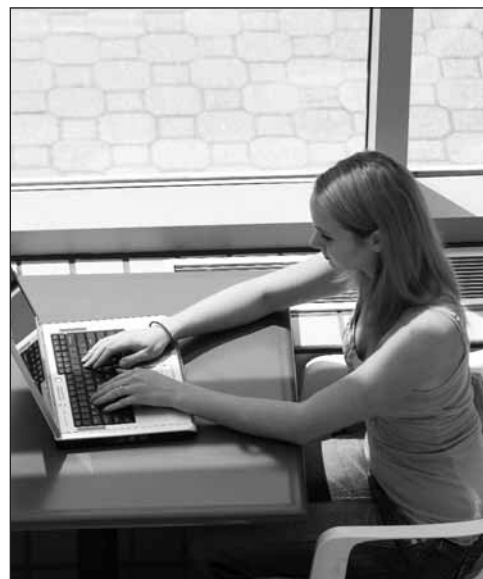
Early in the process a binder containing numerous existing resources was distributed to BRC members. Documents were discussed at various meetings and served as the foundational data base for the BRC's work (APPENDIX). The BRC benefited immensely from recent materials collected for the UM-Flint 2005-2010 Strategic Plan.

UM-FLINT CAMPUS INPUT

During the fall 2006 semester, BRC members, usually in pairs, met with key UM-Flint leaders and groups sharing the BRC charge to hear their perspectives for future directions. In addition to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors, input was sought from: Deans Council, Academic Council, AAAC, Faculty Council, CAS Council of Chairs, Academic Assessment Committee, Budget Priorities and Chancellor's Advisory Committee; Graduate Programs Committee, SSEM Directors, Student Government Council, University Relations staff, Thompson Center for Learning and Teaching staff, Educational Opportunities Initiative (EOI) staff, and SSEM staff, and the leadership from each of the schools/college. The views and comments expressed during these meetings further shaped and refined tentative recommendations.

In January 2007, five open sessions were held on campus, in locations on both the north and south sides of the river at morning, noon, and late afternoon times, to accommodate varied schedules and to maximize attendance. In sum, forty-five (45) individuals participated, offering many thoughtful comments and suggestions. These ideas were recorded and discussed at subsequent BRC meetings, and considered as recommendations were developed. In addition, numerous e-mail messages written to members were part of the discussions.

Subsequent to the open meetings, the BRC met each Friday through March 2007 to discuss and integrate input provided by the campus. Throughout the BRC discussions, questions of prioritization of recommendations, and issues related to implementation (timeline and costs), were raised. It is the understanding of the BRC that the Provost will address these issues as he presents this report and its recommendations to governing faculty groups.



BRC RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: GLOBALIZATION

Create a Center for Global/International Affairs which would bring together the International Student Center and the Global Studies Program to centralize efforts to facilitate an increase in the number of international students and faculty and seek external funding to:

- Internationalize the curriculum
- Develop and implement international experience programs including study abroad for faculty, staff and students
- Create partnerships with local and regional efforts focusing on student/faculty exchange programs to further promote an international campus



Rationale

Consistent with the UM-Flint Strategic Plan, the creation of a Center for Global/International Affairs would maximize opportunities for communication and interaction between domestic students considering or planning to study abroad and international students. This is further fueled by the advent of student housing and UM-Flint's goal to increase enrollment to 8,000. Consolidation of IGS and ISC offices, programs and services will create a much needed centralized location for internationalization efforts and activities including sharing common goals to raise the number and quality of co-hosted on-campus international events; coordination, networking and information sharing of international institution exchange partner contacts between ISC and IGS; and developing and implementing international experience programs in association with academic departments.

Internationalization of the curriculum is pedagogically critical for increasing global awareness and knowledge development and increasing domestic student interest and participation in international experiences, be they learning a foreign language, having an international roommate, participating in on-campus international activities and studying abroad for an academic year, semester or in a summer travel course.

Our future graduates must be able to compete at a global level. They need experiences and skills to be able to work successfully in globally interconnected public and private organizations and institutions. University of Michigan-Flint students require an understanding and experiences of languages and cultures as their future careers will certainly necessitate such skills and knowledge. This Center will promote higher interdisciplinary efforts and addresses an emphasis of the recent UM-Flint Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Diversity

Academic Affairs/Office of the Provost should establish a partnership with E.O.I. and the newly established UM-Flint Diversity Council to enhance the UM-Flint culture related to Diversity. This partnership will:

- Oversee the implementation of UM-Ann Arbor Diversity Blueprints to provide an overall educational experience enriched by diversity.
- Initiate curricular revisions, consistent with General Education reform, that will ensure that “valuing differences” infuses our classrooms parallel to the commitment to internationalize our campus.
- Seek funding for a Center of Multicultural Competency. Such a Center would create a needed safe environment to explore diversity-related issues, foster inter-cultural dialogue (e.g. Teaching Circles on Diversity) and oversee development of innovative training and professional development.
- Initiate a dialogue that will engage the campus to examine the meaning of, and develop measurable outcomes for, “Respecting and Valuing Differences.”
- • Examine recruitment processes for students/faculty/and staff to identify opportunities for change leading to an increase in the number of people of color at UM-Flint.
- Identify and institutionalize successful student recruitment practices for Flint Community Schools including those that have been developed by EOI, to attract Flint scholars to UM-Flint.
- Create and/or expand merit-based scholarships for Flint students.

Rationale

According to the mission of the University of Michigan-Flint, ours “is a community of diverse learners, and scholars, where students from this region and beyond prepare for leadership, achievement, and service through interactive instruction in the arts, sciences, humanities and professions.” If we are to fulfill our mission, there must be policies and practices that promote and reflect our commitment to diversity. It is important to note that diversity is not a code word for quota system, separation, or bestowing unjust privilege or access. Diversity is our commitment to honor and understand difference, while embracing it and including in our practices, teaching and belief systems methods for all people to be understood, given space and freedom to express themselves and grow and learn while becoming better scholars and practitioners.

The benefits of having a diverse UM-Flint campus community have long been articulated in multiple statements, documents, and edicts from UM-Flint including the recent Campus Climate Report. The reality remains that our campus is challenged to broaden its diversity. As a campus of the University of Michigan, the imperative to move forward vigorously toward increasing diversity on campus must be a priority. Data reported by UM-Flint Institutional Analysis indicate we have yet to realize a diverse campus.

Given the recent vote on Proposition 2, the UM has an even deeper commitment to ensuring that the educational enterprise be enhanced by a diverse campus community. Several initiatives are underway with others being planned. UM-Flint will be expected to adapt these initiatives in a meaningful manner on our campus.

President Coleman has declared that she will not allow the university to “go down the path of mediocrity.” She continued “That is not Michigan. Diversity makes us strong, and it is too critical to our mission, too critical to our excellence, and too critical to our future to simply abandon.” Resting on the University of Michigan-Flint’s three pillars of “excellence in teaching, learning and scholarship; student centeredness; and engaged citizenship” if our student are to truly become “leaders in their fields, in their professions and in their communities, we must honor, value and promote diversity. This is a core component in developing well- rounded scholars who value individual differences while working toward the common good.

This recommendation lists specific methods of moving our diversity initiative forward. By partnering Academic Affairs with the Office of Educational Opportunity Initiatives and the University’s Diversity Council, some of those who know this area best will be able to collaborate and develop best practices to examine, initiate and implement inclusive ways of working together that will fully benefit our campus and surrounding community.

RECOMMENDATION 3: STEM Center

Seek external funding to create a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Center. The proposed Center would be charged to:

- Increase the number of UM-Flint students pursuing STEM fields by recruiting new freshmen and transfer students to pursue STEM fields, and planning and undertaking STEM-related programs and activities.
- Develop and offer (in conjunction with academic units) new multidisciplinary STEM undergraduate and graduate programs and degrees, which build on our existing strengths.
- Conduct research in the theory and practice of classroom instruction and student achievement in science, and develop innovative, standards-based curriculum materials and technologies in science and mathematics for secondary and post-secondary classrooms



Rationale

A May 2006 report by the Congressional Research Service found major discrepancies between the U.S. as the leading nation in scientific discovery and innovation, and the ranking of our high school students in math and science literacy (28th and 24th respectively.) The U.S. ranks 20th among all nations in the proportion of 24-year-olds who earn degrees in natural science or engineering. The report states:

There is growing concern that the United States is not preparing a sufficient number of students, teachers and practitioners in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). A large majority of secondary school students fail to reach proficiency in math and science, and many are taught by teachers lacking adequate subject matter knowledge.

The Proposed Center would work in conjunction with existing UM-Flint academic (e.g., schools and the College) and non-academic units (e.g., Office of Research, TCTL, University Outreach, etc.) to support science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education & research. It would consolidate some recent initiatives and assist in recruiting students for STEM fields.

The proposed Center would provide high quality professional development programs and activities for teachers and other professionals interested in STEM; offer innovative curricula; conduct research in teaching and learning; establish partnerships with K-12 schools, higher education, government organizations, and business; and assist in recruiting students into STEM fields.

Increasing UM-Flint's focus on STEM areas is consistent with the UM-Flint Strategic Plan, our commitment to academic excellence, and our need to increase enrollment.

RECOMMENDATION 4: GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

Expand graduate programs and enrollment by:

- Identifying new graduate/professional programs which build on our existing strengths through ongoing local and national market analysis.
- Increase recruitment of competitive graduate students by expanding the number and types of educational opportunity enhancements for graduate students (e.g. GSRA).
- Increase efforts to enroll graduate students from underrepresented populations
- Initiate a dialogue on the feasibility of a UM-Flint Graduate School

Rationale

This recommendation is consistent with the UM-Flint Strategic Plan and our goal to increase enrollment. The need for graduate programs in Genesee County, the region and the State is validated by information that attributes long-term value to students in post-baccalaureate programs. The need is also evident by the number of people applying to graduate school because of continuing education requirements in their careers. Obtaining a master's or doctoral degree often results in increased salary, increased career opportunities, fulfilled continuing education requirements, and intellectual enrichment.

Although there have been strong enrollment increases in graduate programs in recent years, the Flint campus still ranks among the lowest when compared with other Michigan public universities' graduate program offerings and enrollment. In fall 2005 UM-Flint ranked third lowest (excluding LSSU) among all fifteen Michigan public universities with respect to graduate student enrollment (headcount as a percentage of total enrollment.) UM-Flint currently offers eleven graduate degree programs - Oakland University by comparison offers 14 doctoral degrees, 40 master's degrees, 14 graduate certificates, and 19 post-master's certificate programs. Further, the graduate enrollment will face certain challenges in the next few years if one relies on the current number and mix of UM-Flint graduate programs due to maturation of some of UM-Flint's fastest growing programs and their eventual leveling off (and possible decline).

Expanding graduate programs makes strategic sense. Unlike high school graduates, adults are more place-bound because of job, family, and home-ownership commitments - they cannot easily relocate to attend another university. Therefore, there is a captive market. Graduate programs do not require general education. Hence, they are relatively easier to administer. Graduate programs are easier to develop - there are fewer transfer credit issues. Other local institutions cannot easily compete with UM-Flint at the graduate level because of our: brand name; facilities, including instructional, research, technology, etc.; and much higher percentage of terminally qualified faculty. Graduate programs contribute to research and creative endeavors and hold greater promise of student involvement in research. Lastly, graduate programs have much greater net income potential due to higher tuition rates and faster student turn-over (time to graduation), resulting in greater utilization of facilities (i.e., relatively lower overhead).

The Office of Graduate Programs has implemented several major initiatives to streamline processes for the various services it provides, and improve and enhance relationships with students, faculty, staff, and the public that it serves. These efforts have resulted in increased enrollment and interest in graduate education across the campus. Consequently, the campus is currently well-positioned to significantly expand its graduate program offerings, further contributing to the overall mission of the University in achieving excellence in scholarship, promoting student-centeredness, and meeting its enrollment goals.



RECOMMENDATION 5: RESEARCH

The Office of Research should take a proactive leadership role in partnering with Academic Affairs to further enhance the culture of research on our campus to promote and recognize undergraduate research, faculty research and grant activity, including:

- Continue to support UROP and other efforts to promote undergraduate research
- Enhance successful grant writing activity on campus, including hiring a grant writer with generic grant writing skills; increase use of grants.gov
- Draft a proposed policy for release time, in consultation with the Deans, to enable UM-Flint faculty to more fully engage in significant research activities
- Advocate future use of Research Scientist positions at UM-Flint.
- Create faculty award(s) for successful grant funded activity

Rationale

A) Undergraduate Student Research

Undergraduate research is recognized throughout the United States as a cutting edge area of pedagogy in an effective student-centered learning environment and is noted in the UM-Flint Strategic Plan. It enriches the curriculum, invigorates the students' undergraduate experience, and enhances student outcomes in the wider arena of graduate, professional, and job prospects. It sets UM-Flint apart from many other undergraduate institutions. A Council for Undergraduate Research (CUR) workshop held in 2003 in Trenton, New Jersey recommends the following:

- Fostering participation in undergraduate research conferences, local and national as well as international internships, research opportunities
- On Campus research projects, forum for research presentations
- Independent Study Projects

They also stressed the numerous benefits for student deriving from these activities, including:

1. enrichment of curriculum of individual students across the disciplines. Students' individual testimonials indicate that undergraduate research activities have been a key in their success both before and after graduation.
2. enhancement of learning by providing a different kind of education, and a new relationship with knowledge. Learning becomes a dialogue and an exchange resulting in increased personal satisfaction.
3. increased sense of involvement and enthusiasm on the part of faculty because of built-in forms of recognition for faculty mentorship activities. Faculty members find satisfaction in seeing students develop their projects, and grow beyond the usual expectations of undergraduate course-based education.
4. enhancement of the quality and reputation of the institution because of the quality of the work produced.
5. improving recruitment through the sponsoring of undergraduate research as an important attraction, not just in honors programs, but as an activity encouraged throughout the disciplines. Colleges who make undergraduate research a key theme have benefited in numerous ways, including state and national recognition for their activities.
6. development of significant courses dedicated to undergraduate research activities, which fit in well with teaching and assessment goals.
7. increase in number of grants to provide external support for undergraduate research activities. These include National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Education, as well as support by the state and private foundations.
8. development of convincing evidence to present to potential donors and to the legislature in our bid for funding.

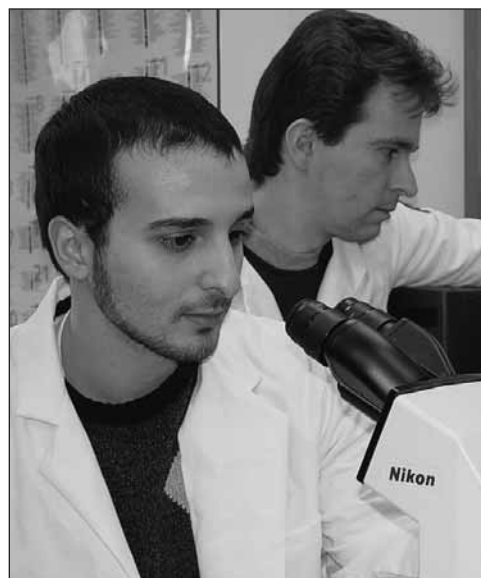
B) Faculty Research

Dynamic teaching, the fostering of undergraduate research, and the development of faculty to their full potential depends on the ability to have the time and the funding to undertake research. The current teaching load at the University of Michigan-Flint is heavy compared to research-oriented institutions. However, since research feeds into our teaching oriented, student-centered missions, the encouragement of such research is essential, and it must be rewarded, not just demanded in addition to an already heavy schedule. Research has the following benefits:

- Enrichment of faculty knowledge, expertise, and teaching scope
- Increased possibility of grants for research
- Enhancement of the reputation of the institution in general, and the schools and departments in particular through the publications, conference papers, and reputation of its scholars
- Possibility for students to work as assistants and therefore to participate in undergraduate research with the researcher
- Attracting better students to an enriched teaching and research environment

C) Grant writing

Funding conditions for state institutions make the acquisition of external funding imperative for the vigor and growth of the institution. Therefore grant writing should be actively fostered. Even small rewards and other recognition to authors of successful grant proposals have proven to increase grant writing activities on campuses. One university set aside \$10,000 and offered \$500 for each grant proposal, along with special additional funds for successful proposals, and help to improve those which were not successful. Grant funding increased dramatically, far more than the modest amount expended to encourage the grant writing. Having a grant writing expert on campus to coordinate/support grant writing would foster such activities. Such a position could conceivably pay for itself through indirect cost recovery from external grants. Increased grant activity promotes faculty and student research.



RECOMMENDATION 6: COMMUNICATION

Enhance internal and external communication to promote achievements of Academic Affairs by identifying a Communications Officer/Specialist for Academic Affairs to more effectively promote:

- Academic Affairs' achievements to external constituents
- Communication within Academic Affairs and with the broader campus.



Rationale

Academic Affairs is at the heart of the university's academic mission. Its activities and initiatives are an integral part of not only our vision of "engaging minds, preparing leaders", but also of our mission to "prepare [students] for leadership, achievement and service through interactive instruction". Yet, these educational experiences are not widely known and do not receive the attention they merit as foundational components of our institution's mission as a "community of diverse learners and scholars".

A Communications Officer/Specialist is needed to ensure that the various activities of Academic Affairs are given the appropriate and necessary attention both within the institution and with external constituents. A Communications Officer/Specialist would have needed skills and experience in communications and media and an intimate understanding of the academic environment. Such an individual could address the following changes:

- Publicize the many good initiatives that are unreported to the campus community and the community at large. One person who is in contact with the different constituents within Academic Affairs can have a better understanding of what's going on, and coordinate and highlight those initiatives more effectively with one voice.
- Ensure Academic Affairs' input on campus initiatives outside of Academic Affairs. A Communications Officer will serve as a liaison in these efforts to make sure that the "academic voice" is heard and informs these initiatives. [For example, in the design of the new UM-Flint web-site, Academic Affairs needs to have an important role, as this website is our "letter of presentation" to many constituents: Current & Prospective Students, Alumni, Faculty & Staff, Families & Friends, the Community. This web-site needs to have Academic Affairs involvement in such basic decisions as what gets put in the "popular sites" drop-down box (for example, "the Library" should be there, regardless).]
- Ensure that the many activities occurring on campus are covered not only by our internal communication means, but by outside media such as the local newspaper, news and the Ann Arbor campus (University Record). A Communications Officer with an intimate understanding of Academic Affairs' activities and its important impact on our institution's academic mission will be better prepared to ensure that these activities are accordingly advertised/covered. [For example, last year's Writing Conference organized by the English Dept. with guest speaker Dr. Ralph Williams (the English professor at UM-Ann Arbor) getting coverage in the University Record.]
- Ensure appropriate consultation when required with certain faculty, administrators or staff in response to inquiries to Academic Affairs. A Communications Officer who knows Academic Affairs and its activities will be able to make an initial response to these inquiries and then "channel" them to the best expert or available person for follow-up.

Another important aspect of a Communications Officer/Specialist within Academic Affairs is the goal of improving communication and coordination between the various VC areas. This will improve use of resources and encourage future joint efforts in common goals, such as advertising programs (Academic Affairs/Admissions), community outreach efforts (Academic Affairs/Center for Civic Engagement), campus conservation initiatives (Academic Affairs/ Administration), etc

RECOMMENDATION 7: INVESTMENT IN FACULTY AND STAFF

The Office of the Provost should take the lead to assure that ongoing investments in faculty and staff within Academic Affairs (new and continuing; full-time and part-time) occur so that Academic Affairs personnel have the appropriate and necessary training and support to achieve and maintain the level of excellence expected from the UM-Flint academic community.

- Investments will take many forms; e.g. orientations and re-orientations, workshops, continuing education activities, conference attendance, etc.
- Topical areas identified by the BRC include, but are not be limited to: importance of UM-Flint faculty governance; guidance for junior faculty members relative to tenure; fundamental importance of teaching, scholarship and service; importance of assessment; meaning of student-centeredness; exposure to diverse educational methods and technologies; the benefits of a diverse campus and the imperative of respecting differences; function of faculty committees, etc.
- Ongoing, campus-wide input should be sought for identification of content of additional topics and formats.
- Implementation and presentation of activities should involve representatives from appropriate units outside Academic Affairs; e.g. SSEM; and other areas to improve communication of updated information on student advising, faculty mentoring, instructional support, etc

Rationale

The University of Michigan has a long and distinguished history of commitment to excellence for its students and its faculty, cutting-edge research, pedagogical innovation and faculty governance. Maintenance of this standard cannot be taken for granted. In the dynamic environment of higher education (move to on-line learning, demands to increase enrollment), we must make deliberate efforts to insure that the academic community has the necessary training and support to maintain this trademark standard of the University of Michigan.

In recent years, the UM-F has engaged in rapid expansion of on-line education; we have entered into more formalized (more permanent) relationships with non-tenure track faculty; and made a greater commitment to (student outcome) assessment. The initial orientation of new faculty members introduces them to the people, the structure, the processes, and the benefits of being a member of the UM-F faculty. In recent years, the orientation has emphasized the importance of research and introduces the new faculty to research support opportunities. This emphasis should continue, but it is incomplete and does not address the needs of continuing faculty and staff.

More school/college-specific orientation is needed regarding the requirements for promotion and tenure, the rules for pre-requisites and waiving them, the fit of the different courses together to create and deliver an excellent and coherent/cogent course of study (concentration), the expectations regarding committee membership, etc.

In addition, there is a need for all UM-F faculty and staff to expand their understanding of the ramifications of faculty governance, to continue to grow in understanding and skill in delivery of on-line courses, to engage in continuous improvement in tweaking the concentrations (academic program reviews and enhancements).

Further, to fulfill our commitment to effectively increase our attention to respecting individual differences, to value and increase awareness of the positive impacts of diversity, and to internationalize our campus and our curriculum, requires investment of both time and personnel.

Finally, in our commitment to student-centeredness, it is important that the faculty members are aware of and have relationships with the personnel of all of the VC areas so that, in our coaching and counseling, we will be more aware of all of the services available to students.

RECOMMENDATION 8: JOINT APPOINTMENTS

Create and implement an effective process to facilitate joint faculty appointments across units and across departments within units.



Rationale

One of the goals addressed in the recently adopted UM-Flint Strategic Plan is to increase UM-Flint's enrollment to 8,000 students. This goal was re-iterated in the Charge to the Blue Ribbon Commission. We were specifically requested to consider new opportunities for interdisciplinary programs, and inter-unit programs. As we identified academic programs nationally and within the State of Michigan which are attracting new students, one of the common characteristics was their interdisciplinary nature. These programs were often a re-packaging of existing programs with a new name, or programs which bring together areas which have traditionally been housed in separate departments; e.g. biochemistry. If implemented, recommendations to internationalize the campus and create a STEM Center will require faculty from across disciplines and across units to work closely together. To facilitate these across discipline efforts, as well as new general education courses, UM-Flint must have an effective infrastructure to manage joint appointments across disciplines. Fortunately, CAS has recently engaged in a thorough effort to develop principles and practices to guide such appointments. In keeping with the feedback received by the BRC, we are recommending that the CAS document be considered as a starting point to be reviewed and /or modified by the other three academic units to generate interest and enable such arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION 9: PROMOTION AND TENURE CRITERIA

The Provost should work with the Deans to initiate a department/unit review of departmental promotion and tenure criteria to ensure they are consistently aligned with the UM-Flint Mission Statement, the UM-Flint Strategic Plan and its 3 Pillars. The Provost's office should conduct an analysis of current UM-Flint written criteria and guidelines to inform this dialogue.



Rationale

The University of Michigan-Flint adopted a new Mission Statement (with its three pillars: excellence in teaching, learning, and scholarship; student-centeredness; and engaged citizenship), and completed a Strategic Plan in 2005. All aspects and entities of UM-Flint require alignment with these documents. To promote such alignment, there needs to be a dialogue about what changes might be needed (including promotion and tenure criteria). This dialogue will provide an opportunity to review these pillars and enable faculty to reflect on other practices in terms of the pillars. As we consider the values expressed in these documents, which have been agreed to by the governing faculty of the university, it is fitting that criteria which guide faculty through their scholarly lives at the university complement and encourage these stated values in meaningful ways.

RECOMMENDATION 10: ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Create and implement a standardized, required and meaningful Academic Program Review process. The objective of this process is to promote academic excellence and assure academic programs are consistent with UM-Flint's mission. This process should:

- Be tied to an ongoing market analysis of existing and proposed new programs
- Identify distinguished (halo) UM-Flint programs for enhancement
- Identify areas requiring new/additional information resources, classroom, lab, technology, and/or furnishings enhancements to ensure excellence
- Maximize the use of collected data mandated by external accreditation bodies
- Use existing student outcome assessment data
- Identify programs with decreasing enrollment for possible adjustments

Rationale 10

A standardized required academic program review process can support and enhance continuous improvement of UM-Flint academic programs. Although the new budget model and process will inevitably and naturally foster continuing review of academic programs within each unit, consistency, equity, and overall university effectiveness all argue for a reasonably standardized required campus-wide process.

An effective program review process explicitly recognizes the realities of regional market conditions, monitoring both current and emerging market demand to identify new opportunities, and to detect early signals of mature areas possibly entering declining phases of the program life cycle. Of course, market conditions alone cannot serve to justify academic programs. Sufficient market demand is a necessary, but not sufficient justification. The university's ideal portfolio should include only those academic programs that meet reasonable market tests and are consistent with the university's basic mission and core competencies. An effective academic program review process can assist in moving the inventory of UM-Flint academic programs toward this overarching goal.

In addition to providing mechanisms and incentives for performing what should be normal and routine activities – e.g. monitoring, measuring, and continuously improving courses and curricula – a standardized university-wide academic program review process offers opportunities to identify emerging needs for facilities and support systems requisite to program excellence. Arguably, a campus-wide review process offers higher likelihood of identifying enhancements beneficial to multiple areas and programs than would be offered by parallel independent review processes internal to individual academic units.

Many UM-Flint areas and programs have achieved accreditation by recognized national or international accrediting associations. Since recognized external accreditation is typically based on external peer review against current and evolving national or international standards, accreditation can and should be a major factor in an effective internal program review process. Arguably, recognized external accreditation should largely, if not entirely, stand in stead of normal internal review processes. Failing that ideal, at a minimum the documents, data, and processes integral to external accreditation reviews must be seamlessly integrated and fully utilized in any effective, credible campus-wide academic review process.

To achieve a campus-wide process, it is recommended that AAAC, along with the individual Deans, play a key role in the review and discussion of self-study documents likely to emerge from a standardized process, and make appropriate recommendations based on this review.

RECOMMENDATION 11: ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Create a new position, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs, to work in partnership with SSEM to address/oversee:

- First year experience.
- General Education
- Issues of student-centeredness
- Inter-unit programming
- Development and oversight of academic policies to promote academic excellence; e.g. admission and transfer policies, merit-based/need-based scholarships
- A Writing Across the Curriculum program which supports faculty efforts to integrate writing in courses beyond English 111 and 112.
- The TCLT, with a full-time director
- The development of a UM-Flint Academic Affairs recruitment/enrollment plan to be implemented in partnership with SSEM and all affected areas.



Rationale

The University of Michigan-Flint is first and foremost an institution that prides itself on excellent undergraduate education. As demands on the faculty increase as a result of a variety of factors, including changing technologies, increased requests for on-line instruction, the need to become more involved in enrollment management, greater diversity in composition of our student body, the need for more targeted student services, greater use of experiential and service learning, revised general education, and innovative assessment and accountability standards, the Office of the Provost will increasingly be called upon to secure, coordinate, and allocate resources to support undergraduate education. BRC talked extensively about the need for such activities as a coherent first year experience for our students, a Writing (Communication) Across the Curriculum program, and a new general education program. These along with the proposed development of multidisciplinary Centers which, by definition, must cut across academic units, necessitates a change in the structure of Academic Affairs, specifically in the Provost's office. A position at a level above that of a Dean is required to advance and coordinate these initiatives.

The BRC listened carefully to input received from a broad sampling of the faculty and staff and heard voiced frustration as to the need to improve co-ordination between Academic Affairs and selected SSEM areas to enable us to fulfill our mission, increase enrollment, and promote student success. The model used in graduate programming, the Office of Graduate Programs with an Associate Provost responsible for graduate studies, was widely voiced as one to emulate. The BRC therefore recommends creation of an Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

The BRC is cognizant of a resource-constrained environment and the size of the non-instructional budget within Academic Affairs. However, if implemented, the recommendations in this report should yield increases in enrollment of excellent students seeking an excellent education. An Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education is needed to oversee the development and implementation of these initiatives, which would, in turn, generate new tuition revenue.

APPENDIX

Documents and Resources reviewed by the Blue Ribbon Commission

- *Strategic Plan for the University of Michigan-Flint 2005-2010*
- *Academic Plan for the University of Michigan-Flint 1995*
- *Report of a Focused Visit to the University of Michigan-Flint – October, 2003*
- *Report of a Visit to University of Michigan-Flint – November, 1999*
(for the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools)
- Accreditation Standards including:
 - North Central
 - AACSB (*Business Accreditation*)
 - American Chemical Society (*Chemistry*)
 - Michigan Department of Education
 - American Association of Colleges of Nursing
 - Accreditation of Education Programs for the Preparation of Physical Therapists
 - CSWE (Council of Social Work Education) Education Policy and Accreditation Standards
 - ASRT (American Society of Radiologic Technologists)
 - National Association of Schools of Music
- Faculty Code and Standing Rules for the University of Michigan-Flint
 - CAS Faculty Code and Standing Rules
 - SEHS Faculty Code
 - SHPS Faculty Code
 - SOM Faculty Code
- Articulation Agreement Log
- *Final Proposals for a New General Education Curriculum* (Gold color)
Enrollment 101 Handouts (includes Program Listing, Completions, Fall Majors, etc.)
- Quick Facts (Fall 2005)
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Data Feedback Report 2005
- Survey of Select UM-Flint Consulting Reports – Academic Years 2000-2005
- 2005 CIRP Freshman Survey Highlights – Standard Breakouts for All Respondents
- *Report on the University of Michigan-Flint Student Satisfaction Inventory Results – March 2006*
- *Report from International Students Housing Ad Hoc Committee – March 2006*
- Undergraduate Program Enhancement Proposals
- Campus Climate, Diversity Initiatives and Culturally Competent Practices Report

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