

APPENDIX B.

**The Report of the  
Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Minority Issues**

**Spring 1992**

	Page
Summary	2
Preface	3
1. "Representation," "Diversity," and "Multiculturalism"	5
2. The Local Picture	6
Tables 1-4	
3. Our Findings	12
Recruitment	
Retention	
4. Recommendations	15
Reports Cited	19

Morris Eaves, Department of English, CAS, Chair  
Jules Cohen, M.D., Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, Med School  
Samson Jenekhe, Department of Chemical Engineering, CEAS  
Brenda Meehan-Waters, Department of History, CAS  
Madeline Schmitt, School of Nursing  
Jerold Warner, Simon School

---

With special thanks to Sally Ann Hart, Director, Financial Planning & Institutional Studies

## Summary

### Findings:

Demographic trends indicate that the proportion of minorities in the general population will continue to expand rapidly. The pool from which we draw students is made up increasingly of minorities. But in recent years the University of Rochester has made almost no progress in creating the more diverse faculty that will be needed to serve its more diverse student body.

We cannot appeal to the similarity between our lamentable situation and the situation at peer institutions, because in fact we rank with the hindmost in every survey that we have examined. Our record is also dismal in the recruitment of graduate students, who teach our own undergraduates and many of whom will become professors. The cycle is vicious: a shortage of minority graduate students produces a small pool of Ph.D.s and hence difficulties in recruiting minority faculty; a shortage of minority faculty hinders our ability to attract minority graduate students; and so on.

We believe that the imbalance will eventually threaten student satisfaction, which, in the largest intellectual and personal sense, will be the future foundation of healthy enrollments and healthy university finances. Enlightened self-interest, as well as social justice and broader intellectual horizons, call us to action.

Assessing the university's performance to date, we found only rare exceptions to a general pattern of failure. Reasons for our lackluster performance are numerous, but all point to the absence of sustained commitment and coherent remedies. Affirmative Action has been honored chiefly in the breach. Minority faculty members report an inhospitable professional climate in which to develop their careers. Thus far, in other words, we have given ourselves no chance of success.

### Recommendations:

We urge the Faculty Senate to recognize these problems as very serious ones that deserve immediate attention. We call for a coordinated effort by faculty and administration. Effective programs of action must be designed, departments must respond, and action well beyond the level of business-as-usual must begin.

We need to make Affirmative Action real by means of powerful, visible financial incentives and close oversight.

Comprehensive, integrated, highly visible programs are needed to replace the fragmented, shadowy ones that now (sometimes) exist.

Academic units need to question whether their so-called "signatures" hinder effective minority recruiting: to the extent that they encourage intellectual uniformity, "signatures" and "centers of excellence" that are intended to emphasize specialized expertise may discourage diversity.

To help us retain the minority faculty members whom we recruit, deans and departments should devise mentoring systems that will foster the professional development of untenured faculty.

Finally, we should help minority faculty members make a comfortable life for themselves in Rochester. To put ourselves in a position to do that, we badly need to improve our connections with the Rochester community and then use them constructively.

## Preface

Two years ago President O'Brien proposed, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate endorsed, and the Senate approved the establishment of an ad hoc faculty committee to study the recruitment and retention of faculty and graduate students from underrepresented minority populations at the University of Rochester.

Readers of this, the committee's report to the Senate, are bound to notice its severe limitations. Many of these are surely flaws resulting from the limited understandings of the committee members. But other limits were self-imposed, and those we would like to name here to ward off unnecessary confusion. First, there are the problems of nomenclature and categorization. For convenience and simplicity, and despite ambiguity and reduction, we have pegged our report to the common terms "representation," "minority," and "majority" (or, alternatively for the latter, "white"). We have relied, again at some risk, on the categories that universities use in reporting to the federal government. Thus, for our limited purposes, "minority" comprises the categories African Americans, Hispanic Americans (including Mexican Americans), and Native Americans. We have generally omitted Asian Americans, as a category that cannot be easily calibrated to fit our emphasis on "underrepresented minorities." Note, however, that Asians are included in Tables 1-4, where the nomenclature (Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian) reflects the categories mandated for reports to the federal government. We are aware of different breakdowns; ours, we think, are serviceable. The differences, in any case, would not alter our conclusions.

Another limitation was imposed by the committee's charge. The Senate called for focused attention on faculty and graduate students, while acknowledging that minority issues are much larger than those two groups alone. The committee, faced with enough thorny problems to keep it busy for some months, saw the wisdom in heeding the Senate's charge, even to the ad hoc exclusion of two other large and utterly unignorable constituencies of the university—undergraduates and staff. As expected, we found that nothing could prevent undergraduates, staff, and the larger Rochester community of city and suburbs from entering our discussions at every turn. Hence it comes as no surprise that they turn up, necessarily, at key points in our report. But we recognize that we have not given them, or even the graduate students who were indeed part of our charge, their due.

The committee met some 20 times from November 1990 through January 1992. In those months we were able to interview many people, chiefly aiming to get a sense of the situation at UR by sampling a range of opinions, ideas, and experiences. We also spoke to many other people both here and on other campuses, informally in person and by telephone. We reviewed several reports on minority issues recently issued by other universities, such as Northwestern, Wisconsin, and Yale; by consortia, such as COFHE (Consortium on Financing Higher Education); and by national organizations, such as the American Council on Education. And of course we studied numerous local documents, including "A Study of Race Relations at University of Rochester" (Kelly et al., 1983), "Toward the Future of Minority Student Affairs: A Discussion Paper" (Batista et al., 1989); materials from the new President's Commission on Ethnic and Racial Diversity and Community; and all of the university's official statements on racial/sexual harassment and individual privacy, as well as its relevant personnel policies and, perhaps most important for our own work, its stated policies on Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. But we did not (and could not) exhaust the range of useful conversations or publications. Much, in any case, remains to be done.

Usually as a committee of the whole, occasionally one-on-one, we interviewed:

Dennis O'Brien, President

Brian Thompson, Provost

Frederick Jefferson, Jr., Assistant to the President

ErVin Gross, Director, Minority Student Affairs

Jesse Moore, Jr., University Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

Richard Aslin, Dean, College of Arts & Science

Robert Freeman, Director, Eastman School of Music

Judith Walk, Dean of Students, Eastman School of Music

Michele Moody-Adams, former Assistant Professor, Philosophy

Karen Fields, Director, Frederick Douglass Institute for  
African & African-American Studies

Bruce Ballard, M.D., Associate Dean, Cornell Medical School

James Scannell, Vice-President for Placement, Alumni Affairs, & Enrollment

Sally Ann Hart, Director, Financial Planning & Institutional Studies

Middle-States Reaccreditation Team

Their assistance was indispensable and their cooperation much appreciated.

## 1. “Representation,” “Diversity,” and “Multiculturalism”

No ad hoc committee such as ours can muster enough collective wisdom and pedagogical skill to explain fully to an entire major university why it should pay far more attention to what our charge calls “minority issues.” But a persuasive place to start is at the recognition that with this report we, the faculty of the university, are joining a conversation, not starting one, and arriving late at the table. Last spring at Yale, the President’s new Committee to Monitor the Recruitment and Retention of Disabled, Minority, and Women Faculty issued its first report--lamenting the underrepresentation of minorities on the Yale faculty and recommending a set of remedies. But this was, after all, the eighteenth time a Yale committee had come to such conclusions since 1968. In contrast, the present report is the first comparable effort at the University of Rochester.

Our issues, then, are national issues with potentially overwhelming local force. Some of this potential emerges dramatically in the often-cited demographic trends showing that the proportion of minorities in the general population has been growing rapidly and will continue to expand. The pool of students from which our own undergraduates are now chosen is increasingly made up of minorities. In 1985, 20% of the school-age population was minority; by 2020 that figure will have almost doubled, to 39%. Meanwhile, educational success rates are declining drastically. No one can have missed hearing about the multiple crises in American education (high-school graduation rates have dropped 19% since 1980; in our state they have dropped 34%). In most respects minority participation in higher education, after some gains in the decade from 1965 to 1975, has lagged badly in recent years. Retention is also a serious problem (whites are far more likely to graduate with a baccalaureate degree). And--perhaps the observations most relevant to this committee’s charge--minority students go on to graduate and professional schools in far smaller numbers than their majority counterparts. That dropoff point worsens an acute pipeline problem (as it is called in the literature) that will succumb to no quick fixes. Despite the shortage of doctorate-holding minorities in the workforce, however, and especially drastic shortages in science, mathematics, and engineering, the representation of minorities on the Rochester faculty is significantly smaller than the relevant percentage of minorities available in the appropriate pool of qualified candidates.

We believe that three sets of interlocking arguments oblige us to make extraordinary new efforts to increase the representation of minorities on our faculty. Paramount is the argument for greater social justice in a society highly committed in theory to lofty ideals but haunted by a history of base racism, including slavery, and infiltrated by blatant and subtle forms of discrimination in everyday social practice.

Second is a persuasive argument about the scope of our own intellectual lives. Some of the subtlest, most pervasive forms of discrimination derive from biased conceptual structures that make discrimination invisible. This year’s debates over the meaning of Columbus’s “discovery” of “America” are, among other things, debates about the narrow windows from which “our” history has been observed. The hackneyed terms “diversity” and “multiculturalism” do manage at least to represent the profound hope that multiplying and diversifying the perspectives through which the purveyors of conventional intellectual disciplines understand their subjects can improve their research. One way of improving our own disciplines, then, is by increasing the diversity of our faculty.

Finally, the demographic trends mentioned above suggest strongly that we will need an ever more diverse faculty to serve an inevitably more diverse student body. Our rather homogeneous (white

male) faculty already trails well behind our undergraduate student body in its diversity. If we do not redouble our efforts now, the problem of underrepresentation will certainly become even worse (as the figures in part 2, below, indicate). In the past such striking differences between the group being taught and the group doing the teaching might have passed without comment, but no longer. We believe that the imbalance will increasingly threaten student satisfaction, and student satisfaction, in the largest intellectual and personal sense, will be the future foundation of healthy enrollments and healthy university finances. We will not be able to achieve that satisfaction with a predominantly white male faculty. If we ignore this fact, we will surely arrive at that future woefully unprepared to succeed on its terms. We must face squarely, now, the need to change. Upcoming retirements provide us with a special opportunity to create a more diverse faculty.

Furthermore, if we are to attract minority faculty, we must diversify the population of graduate students. Insofar as they teach undergraduates, graduate students contribute to student satisfaction or dissatisfaction just as we do—and they are clearly a key to easing the national shortage of doctorate-holding minorities that makes faculty recruiting more difficult. Without more minority graduate students now we limit our ability to hire more minority faculty both now, because minority faculty will be understandably reluctant to take jobs here if there are few minority graduate students, and later, because the pipeline will continue to supply too few minority candidates for faculty jobs. To reverse this vicious cycle, we must solve the two problems, the underrepresentation of minorities among graduate students and among faculty, as parts of a single problem. These considerations are equally applicable to the recruitment of medical students, residents, and fellows at the Medical Center, the constituencies from which the medical school faculties of the future will be drawn.

We find this coalition of highminded and pragmatic arguments compelling enough to call for a bold campaign to increase substantially the participation of underrepresented minorities on our faculty and among our graduate students. The campaign should rest on firm commitments at all levels from individual departments, programs, colleges, and schools into the upper reaches of the central administration and board of trustees. And finally, we should be in for the long haul. The initial campaign should not peter out after a showy burst of good intentions. It should mature into a sustainable set of programs reinforced by attractive incentives and genuine oversight.

## 2. The Local Picture

When we began, over a year ago, we decided that the first order of business should be to create a picture of minority representation in the faculty and graduate students of the university. Although (with help from Associate Provost Ruth Freeman and her secretary Audrey Clark) we did manage to assemble a considerable pile of numbers, ultimately we decided to fall back on the institutional statistics compiled by Sally Ann Hart, UR's Director of Financial Planning and Institutional Studies. These do not go back quite far enough to provide the comparisons we would like to show, and they use (government-mandated) categories that aren't always what we consider to be the most useful for our purposes, but they have fewer holes and no doubt fewer errors than our original numbers. These official statistics are the basis for Tables 1-3. Table 4 is based on a CGS/GRE survey conducted in fall 1991.

The university's overall performance in attracting minority faculty is unimpressive and has not improved. Table 1 shows current minority representation. As of September 1991 there were 27

(2.2%) Black or Hispanic tenure-track faculty. Including Asians in the definition of minorities increases the percentage to 6.9%, but even this figure does not compare favorably with leading American universities. Almost all universities in a recent Harvard survey reported a higher percentage of minority faculty. The comparisons are unfavorable to UR in both the tenure-eligible-but-untended and the tenured categories.

**Tables 2 and 3** show minority representation in various UR divisions in 1991. The picture does not change greatly from division to division, though some variation appears. Moreover, Table 3 shows that minority representation has increased only very slightly over time. For example, when Asians are included in the percentages, minorities were 5.5% of the faculty in 1985 and 6.9% in 1991. When Asians are excluded from the percentages, minorities were 1.8% of the faculty in 1985 and 2.2% in 1991.

**Table 4** shows that the representation of minorities in the graduate student population is not much better than in the faculty. For simplicity's sake we have restricted the table to Ph.D.s--and not other doctoral candidates, such as Ed.D.s or D.M.A.s--but the results would be quite similar in any case. Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, and Asians total only 6.7% of graduate students--which drops to 3.8% when Asians are excluded. The comparable figures for all U.S. Ph.D. graduates are 21.3% (vs. our 6.7%) and 7.1% (vs. our 3.8%). (Our figures do not include master's students, medical students, residents or clinical fellows at the Medical Center.)

**TABLE 1**

**University of Rochester Tenure Track Minority Faculty, All Divisions,  
Except Central Administration  
as of 9/30/91**

						Minority Faculty as a Percentage of Total		Percentage Minority Faculty 18 Major Universities <sup>1</sup> Includes Asians	
	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Total Minority Faculty <sup>2</sup>	Total Faculty	Including Asians	Excluding Asians	Minimum	Maximum
Tenured	6	2	15	23	559	4.1%	1.4%	5.7%	11.0%
Tenure Eligible	13	6	43	62	676	9.2%	2.8%	8.2%	24.5%
Overall	19	8	58	85	1235	6.9%	2.2%		

<sup>1</sup> 18 schools were surveyed by Harvard. Schools included Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Pennsylvania, Princeton, Stanford, Yale, Berkeley, UCLA, Chicago, Duke, Michigan (Ann Arbor), M.I.T., Northwestern, Texas (Austin), Wisconsin (Madison). Survey cited in "First report of the President's committee to monitor the recruitment and retention of disabled, minority, and women faculty," Yale University, Spring 1991.

<sup>2</sup> No tenure track faculty are Native Americans.



Table 2

University of Rochester Tenure Track \*Minority Faculty by Division, as of 9/30/91

Division	Tenured		Tenure Eligible		Tenured & Tenure Eligible	
	Total	Minority	Total	Minority	Total	Minority
Arts and Science	212	3 (1.4%)	87	6 (6.9%)	299	9 (3.0%)
Education	13	0 (0.0%)	16	2 (12.5%)	29	2 (6.9%)
Engineering	47	1 (2.1%)	15	0 (0.0%)	62	1 (1.6%)
Eastman	59	2 (3.4%)	22	0 (0.0%)	81	2 (2.5%)
Simon	19	0 (0.0%)	23	0 (0.0%)	42	0 (0.0%)
Medical	203	2 (1.0%)	486	11 (2.3%)	689	13 (1.9%)
Nursing	6	0 (0.0%)	27	0 (0.0%)	33	0 (0.0%)
Total	559	8 (1.4%)	676	19 (2.8%)	1235	27 (2.2%)

\* Minority is defined as Black or Hispanic.

**Table 3**

**University of Rochester Tenure-Track Faculty Composition Trend from 1986 to 1991 in Various Schools**

Division	1985 (9/30/85)			1991 (9/30/91)		
	Total	Minority-1*	Minority-2*	Total	Minority-1*	Minority-2*
Arts and Science	291	7 (2.4%)	14 (4.8%)	299	9 (3.0%)	24 (8.0%)
Education	30	2 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)	29	2 (6.9%)	2 (6.9%)
Engineering	51	0 (0.0%)	3 (5.9%)	62	1 (1.6%)	6 (9.7%)
Eastman	83	1 (1.2%)	1 (1.2%)	81	2 (2.5%)	2 (2.5%)
Simon	39	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.6%)	42	0 (0.0%)	4 (9.5%)
Medical	649	11 (1.7%)	44 (6.8%)	689	13 (1.9%)	47 (6.8%)
Nursing	66	1 (1.5%)	1 (1.5%)	33	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1209</b>	<b>22 (1.8%)</b>	<b>66 (5.5%)</b>	<b>1235</b>	<b>27 (2.2%)</b>	<b>85 (6.9%)</b>

\*Minority 1 = minority consisting of blacks, hispanics and native Americans.

\*Minority 2 = minority consisting of blacks, hispanics, native Americans, and Asians.

Table 4

University of Rochester Graduate Student Minority Enrollment, Full Time Students Compared to Several Benchmarks

Source: CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment  
 All Rochester figures exclude non-resident aliens

		Fall 1991					Graduate Minority Students as a Percentage of Total		
		Black	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian	Total Minority	Total Students	Including Asians	Excluding Asians
All graduate students		71	21	7	76	175	2606	6.7%	3.8%
Full time Ph.D. students (including dissertation registrants)		11	9	1	29	50	964	5.2%	2.2%
	1988 U.S. Ph.D. Graduates <sup>1</sup>							21.3%	7.1%
	1989 U.S. College Undergraduates <sup>2</sup>							19.5%	15.6%
	1991 University of Rochester Undergraduate Population <sup>3</sup>							18.0%	9.5%

<sup>1</sup> Source: Summary Report 1988, Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities, Office of Scientific and Engineering Personnel, National Research Council, 1989, Table F.

<sup>2</sup> Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, National Center for Education Statistics, Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology.

<sup>3</sup> Source: From data provided to State Education Department.

### 3. The Committee's Findings

There is solace for the dismal news we bring: first, we have made some gains; second, these are exceedingly obstinate and intricate problems that do not yield to easy solutions, and third, the UR is not alone. As for gains, anyone familiar with the university a decade ago can testify that minorities are more visible on campus now than then. In university administration, "minority affairs" have now, as they did not a decade ago, a distinct (and growing) role in the management of the university. Among the academic disciplines, an institute of African and African-American studies was founded in the mid-1980s. In our classrooms, although most of the increases have been at the undergraduate level, the number of minority faculty and graduate students has been very gradually rising (perhaps "almost imperceptibly rising"—less than 0.5% since 1985).

When it comes to tackling obstinate and complex problems such as these, by now the routine is familiar. All over the country universities are appointing committees such as ours that are producing reports like ours. Groups, such as the American Council on Education and the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (of which UR is a member), are appointing their own minority-issues committees, which--we know from studying their reports--mull over the same statistics with the same sense of urgency, carry out some kind of "minority-faculty campus self-assessment," and schedule meetings on all-too-familiar topics like "Strategies for Developing Faculty Diversity." Most of these well-meant exertions (like the recent nationally publicized Yale report, and its predecessor, a 18-university report prepared under the auspices of Harvard) turn out to be as critical of past and present policies and performance as our own.

However, before we get too comfortable with our failing grade, it does need to be said that our publicly articulated policies, insofar as we have any, are particularly muddled, and our collective performance, insofar as there has been any, has been particularly poor. If we compare ourselves with Yale, for instance, whose recent report emphasizes Yale's poor standing in relation to 17 peer institutions, we come out far worse. Again, one indicator of our own special level of failure is the present committee and its report. As we pointed out earlier, Rochester can't claim even Yale's ignoble record of calls-to-action and failures-to-respond because we have never until now called ourselves to account.

These are, in very general terms, some of our findings.

**Recruitment:** With modest but genuine exceptions here and there, the record shows a lack of success—even where there has been some demonstrated commitment--in minority recruiting at every level. All but 2--out of 40--members of the board of trustees are white; all but 1 of the 8 key positions of the (all male) central administration are white; all 13 of the leading academic deans and directors are white (and all but 2 are male); and, as our figures show, all but a handful of faculty and graduate students are white.

The most important reasons for our failure are obvious. The general lack of concern and sustained commitment are reflected in a host of other lacks: a lack of clear policies, a lack of attractive, well-articulated incentives, a lack of meaningful oversight, and a lack of well-established, well-integrated administrative mechanisms. Of course, instant commitment will not produce instant success. Under present local and national circumstances, even vigorous efforts will not bring a windfall harvest of

minority faculty and graduate students to join us. But how can we hope to achieve even modest gains until we set some goals? How can we hope to get the faculty committed to these goals until the deans, directors, and central administration make their own commitments public and clear? Conversely, why should deans, directors, and the central administration have to work against the passivity, not to mention the occasional resistance, of the faculty, which should be taking the lead on these issues if the administration is not.

Affirmative Action at UR seems indicative. Although the latest revision (policy 115, June 1985) of the official Affirmative Action Plan proclaims "an obligation to redress past discrimination . . . in dealing with populations historically disadvantaged within the national community in general, or the University community in particular" and reasons that "the University strengthens its purpose by providing significant role models . . . for the variety of individuals who are served by its academic and service programs," and announces that it "intends to act positively and pro-actively in its programs of recruitment and appointment," in fact we found no evidence of an effective Affirmative Action program to carry out any of these good intentions.

Whatever there is of Affirmative Action at UR is in bits and pieces or, one might say, in shambles. The official plan states a "commitment to identify and analyze all areas of employment and to achieve compliance . . ." and claims that "Areas identified for special attention will be assigned to appropriate personnel and specific instructions . . . including specific goals and timetables, will be formulated." The plan promises the creation of an Affirmative Action Review Board, designates the Vice President for Planning and Director of Budgets as the Affirmative Action Coordinator for faculty (and the Director of Personnel for staff). The Review Board was supposed to monitor the plan, report on effectiveness, and recommend further actions to the President.

As far as we could determine, this "plan" turned out to be empty oratory. The original plans would have given the Board the power to stop an appointment prior to an official offer going out. The outcry from faculty and deans was so great that the procedures were modified and the Board's power effectively gutted. Faculty members aware of the recent history of faculty hiring in their departments report that the vestige of Affirmation Action with which they have to contend is merely an irritating form or two submitted after an appointment decision has been made. There is no Review Board, no planning before recruiting begins, and no supervision during the process. If special efforts are made, then they are usually made by the search committees in individual departments. Even in the most optimistic construction of the evidence, effective Affirmative Action seems well beyond the abilities of the present system. With no one charting a course, or with all sailors charting their own courses, all gains will be isolated at best, accidental at worst.

According to the Provost, he, rather than the Vice President for Planning (whose position was eliminated in reorganization) designated in the 1985 plan, is now the faculty's Affirmative Action officer. His main, and perhaps sole, tactic in that campaign seems to be the Provost's "opportunity fund," which is intended to give departments some incentive and assistance when recruiting minority faculty. The fund contributes up to 3 years' salary toward an appointment. After no more than 3 years, financial support for the appointment reverts 100% to the college or school in which the appointment was made. Though the fund is better than nothing, and though it has probably had some beneficial if marginal effect--the Provost said he draws on it once or twice a year--we cannot suppose that it measures up to the magnitude of its task. From our interviews and other conversations we concluded that the availability of the fund is not widely known, even by deans; the terms of access to it are not widely understood; its contribution is too small to provide much incentive; and the relation

of appointments made with the fund to a department's regular faculty lines is unclear. But, as far as we could determine, the Provost's fund is the only game in town.

Our discussion of Affirmative Action and the Provost's "opportunity fund" should not be taken to suggest that the central administration is to blame for our present situation. Our problems are community problems, and the entire university community is implicated. Affirmative Action has been little more than a set of statements on paper because our academic community has not demanded that it be given substance; the Provost's "opportunity fund" has sufficed because our community has not demanded more.

**Retention:** Recruiting faculty members and graduate students is always time consuming and expensive, difficult in any circumstances. Hence most of us recognize that it is foolish not to create the conditions under which those who are successfully recruited can thrive once they are here, lest the best of them exit through the nearest revolving door. The same is true, naturally, of minority faculty and graduate students--or rather truer, because the recruiting is often even harder, given the small pool to recruit from, and because the optimum conditions for life and work are even more problematical to establish. The successful retention of minority faculty can test the limits of flexibility of old, entrenched systems. What it takes to negotiate a challenging array of obstacles has recently been given a fair amount of study at other universities, especially the University of Wisconsin System, whose report on Retaining and Promoting Women and Minority Faculty Members: Problems and Possibilities (1990) has laid the groundwork for a better understanding of so-called "climate" issues. This discussion paper analyzes a range of typical unsupportive practices in the university workplace, including subtle racism and sexism but also numerous other problems that are often invisible to majority faculty, and points the way to more supportive professional environments. The Wisconsin paper also emphasizes the great importance of establishing a "critical mass" of minority faculty.

The major contentions of the Wisconsin report were documented repeatedly--in the negative--by our conversations with UR faculty. Yes, a supportive professional environment is essential to retaining the best faculty and, yes, we fall drastically short of developing such an environment. Some minority faculty contend that the culture of life and work at UR is not only unhelpful but obstructionist. Hence we came quickly to understand that there is broad and sometimes deep dissatisfaction among minority faculty members. They often feel frozen out by a frigid professional climate that, we also came to see, has a venerable history here. In the recent past it has seriously hindered efforts to foster the careers and retain the services of women and minorities, and it will unquestionably continue to do so until we take serious action to change it.

In most departments, schools, and colleges of UR, the dominant professional culture emphasizes high standards of quality in teaching and especially research, and the high standing of UR departments in relation to the quality of comparable departments in peer institutions. These emphases, which can have the force of moral standards, are often projected into a severe up-or-out tenure system in which every colleague, well in advance of any tenure or promotion decision, becomes one's judge and jury--usually perceived as scrutinizing, interrogating, and threatening rather than assisting, fostering, and rewarding. Indeed, most departments here seem to have paid little attention to creating a workable system of mentoring for tenure-track faculty.

Hence minority faculty members and graduate students are more likely than their majority counterparts to feel isolated in inhospitable departments, saddled with excessive advising and

counseling responsibilities (when perceived as compassionate role models by their students), and besieged by requests to join this or that departmental, college, and/or university committee (when perceived as representatives of their underrepresented minority group by their majority colleagues and administrators).

Discomforts on campus may be exacerbated by discomforts off campus: several of our minority colleagues, we learned, have had a hard time adjusting to the Rochester community. And people who arrive with partners frequently report that unearthing good professional jobs in the Rochester area can be daunting, even after extensive efforts over months and years.

The problems reported to us by faculty members at UR are similar to those reported in the Wisconsin System discussion paper cited above, the Yale report, a 1991 Northwestern study, and others. But, if we do not have unique problems of retention, we may well have those problems to an unusually high degree and in acutely distressing forms. They are aggravated, certainly, by the lack of a critical mass of minority faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and staff on campus.

#### **4. Recommendations**

**We urge the Faculty Senate** to acknowledge minority recruitment and retention as serious problems that deserve immediate attention, and to announce its commitment to an aggressive set of remedies.

**We urge the President and central administration** to do the same, and then to back up its commitments with systematic oversight and clearly articulated, effective incentives; and to coordinate its efforts with the faculty.

**We urge deans and directors** to contribute to an inescapable, university-wide pattern of commitment in word and deed to the goals of Affirmative Action that will powerfully reinforce the commitments of the central administration. Deans and directors must insist that departments be accountable for their record of minority recruiting and retention.

**We urge department chairs and individual faculty members** to give these problems the highest priority in their departments. Allowing them to be handled from the top down will only generate the timewasting mechanisms of bureaucracy. At every level there must be powerful, persistent commitment expressed in concrete actions. The key level at UR is the department, where the primary decisions about faculty and graduate student recruiting and retention are made.

Though we don't want to specify precisely the ingredients in a recipe that should be devised by people directly responsible for managing the problem, we recommend actions such as these for consideration:

**Offering strong financial incentives:** A dean suggested that departments be allowed to "mortgage" appointments by hiring minority candidates in advance for positions known to be coming vacant in some specified period of time, perhaps 3-7 years. (Let's say a faculty member has announced that he/she will retire in 1995. The department would be authorized to fill the position now with a minority candidate.) Such a policy would create incentive without increasing the total number of lines in a department. Another powerful incentive is the guarantee of "incremental" positions. At Yale,

the president has certified that, for the 5-year period beginning this year, at any time a department identifies an outstanding minority scholar who would make a contribution to Yale, it will be provided the resources for that appointment and permitted to undertake a targeted search procedure to recommend that candidate to the appropriate appointments committee. In such searches, the field and budgetary barriers that normally constrain appointments at Yale will be set aside . . . . When such an individual is appointed and for so long as he or she is at Yale, the department will not be asked to surrender any other faculty positions in order to provide the resources necessary for that special appointment.

Our administration should take equally bold action.

**Emphasizing early recruitment and development:** The conventional (and often uncritical) emphasis on “quality” and “high standards” often moves search committees toward late identification of “the best” candidates (to get the reassurance of “proven” candidates, often with Ph.D.s and publications) when the development of early promise is no longer much of an issue. Add the reassuring elements of an old-boy network of elite universities all speaking the same language about the same issues in tried-and-true fields of expertise, and the combination can block even the most enthusiastic effort to diversify a faculty. To the contrary: one of the best ways of recruiting good candidates from a small pool is to start early and give more personal, professional, and financial assistance in the early stages of a promising career. To recruit effectively, we are going to have to come up with new ideas and take new chances. We have to begin by **looking in the right place:** developing links with the historically black colleges, for example, as both the Medical School and the office of the University Dean of Graduate Studies are beginning to do. We also have to **look at the right time:** An administrator suggested that **pre-doctoral fellowships** would allow us to help develop the careers of promising minority candidates and at the same time get a headstart in recruiting them for tenure-track positions here. **Post-doctoral fellowships** are more familiar to us. Recent cutbacks will hurt our efforts at early identification and recruiting. **Strong mentoring programs** should be a standard part of a department’s repertory for giving its newer members a good start in their careers. Deans, directors, provosts, and presidents should know what mentoring programs are in place and how they are working. (The Medical School, for example, is looking into a development program that would begin in a potential faculty member’s senior year of medical school.)

**Revising departmental self-definitions:** Though its medium size has sometimes made the UR seem ideal for interdisciplinary programs, in most respects we are a severely departmentalized place. Departmental boundaries are made even stronger by their so-called “signatures,” sub-specializations through which some departments define their areas of special expertise--a department’s “take” on a discipline. However that strategy might benefit departments of limited size and resources, its exclusivity frequently has the negative effect of decreasing opportunities for minority faculty and graduate students whose research falls within a discipline but outside a department’s conventional notion of its place within the discipline. As a general principle, the more narrowly a department defines itself, the harder it will be to attract minority faculty and graduate students. One of the committee’s most interesting sessions was spent with Dr. Bruce Ballard, from the Cornell Medical School. He emphasized the need to include minority issues in the very mission of an institution. His medical school, for instance, has arrived at an explicit understanding that minority health needs mandate a minority student body trained to meet those needs, and a research agenda shaped accordingly. Diversity is an advantage in medical training because doctors work in diverse cultures. He similarly underscored how ostensibly objective medical research had been distorted by gender- and



race-biases in its sampling techniques.

We urge departments (schools, colleges) to consider the ways in which they might expand their horizons to include the research interests of minority candidates. We believe that this might in fact be one of the most valuable of all the measures available to us. It would be least effective if carried out unsystematically among whatever departments happened to be inclined to self-study and self-alteration, and most effective if carried out systematically across the board with the aim of discovering, for the improvement of the university as a whole, new intellectual openings.

**Appointing new committees:** We reluctantly and perhaps vulnerably suggest that the most effective approach to some of the problems we have described might be through yet other committees, even new ones. Sometimes committees really are the best or only way to get certain things done. Departmental committees might be specifically charged with identifying minority candidates in the discipline. College committees might recommend special initiatives to deans and departments. Another Faculty Senate committee might follow up on some of the many issues we have inadequately addressed. Certainly something needs to be done about the Affirmative Action Review Board. A joint university-community committee might help ease the problems of adjustment to Rochester that we have heard about. We leave it to departments, administrators, and representative bodies like the Faculty Council and Faculty Senate to determine what of this business should be put in the hands of committees.

**Applying pressure creatively:** "Spousal hiring" or "couples hiring" has become an almost standard problem in the recruiting of professionals, academic and otherwise. The failure to find good jobs for partners sends many an otherwise outstanding appointment down to defeat. We heard of at least two notable cases involving minority faculty at UR during the past year. We call on the administration to use its influence more directly than it has in the past to open the requisite doors. As a principal employer in the area, UR's influence may not be limitless, but it is considerable.

**Using local resources better:** Xerox has been touted nationally for its efforts to identify, hire, and retain minority employees. Recently, Corning, alarmed at the high turnover rate of black employees, appointed a "director of cultural diversity" and attacked the problem vigorously both inside company ranks and in the community of Corning. Despite the differences between academic and corporate environments, we suspect that local corporate experience, especially when it comes to "climate" issues that affect retention, might be worth knowing a lot more about. It seems obvious, too, that UR has as much to offer as it has to gain. We should initiate a program of consultation and cooperation with concrete, specific goals. This should not be just another group of goodwill ambassadors.

**Improving the administration of minority affairs:** In administrative terms, "minority affairs" on campus has evolved piecemeal, without much attention to the field of operations as a whole. We saw evidence of fractured initiatives. Although we do not understand the complex picture well enough to recommend complete integration (under a single administrative roof and/or officer, for instance), and we are aware of the possible risk of ghettoizing minority affairs, something clearly needs to be done to counter the present fragmentation and improve lines of communication and action.

**Energizing Affirmative Action:** anyone familiar with the routine of academic hiring knows how much momentum it gains on its own, and how strongly that momentum can resist outside forces. In such a setting, Affirmative Action at its worst becomes merely a bureaucratic nuisance. At its best,

however, it can provide strong support as well as much-needed oversight outside what is sometimes a too-cozy circuit of department and college/school decision-making. We recommend a complete overhaul of the present Affirmative Action system and a return to the letter and spirit of the Affirmative Action Plan.

**Getting more information out:** UR collects a lot of data on the representation of minorities on the faculty. That data should be published annually for internal consumption by the UR community, with the explicit purpose of tracking our performance in minority recruiting and retention from year to year. It should be possible to represent the statistics in some easily digested comparative forms and yet in sufficient detail to make important distinctions. In addition, we need to publish information on minority graduate students. The general summary circulated in January (and used in Table 4, above) by the office of the University Dean of Graduate Studies is a commendable first effort.

A reformed Affirmative Action committee could be responsible for the annual publication and interpretation of information on faculty and graduate students.

**Looking to the near future:** Our proposals do not deal adequately with graduate student recruiting and retention, which were major elements of our charge from the Senate and President. These deserve special consideration. Provost Brian Thompson recently created a new position, University Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, with primary responsibility for the recruitment of minority graduate students, and appointed Professor Jesse Moore to the position. Similarly, David Beach, University Dean of Graduate Studies, has appointed the members of a new committee that will coordinate its work with Dean Moore's.

We began this report by agreeing that the "minority issues" that affect faculty and graduate students cannot easily be extracted from the matrix of people at the university. We're well aware that little more than a change in syntax could have accurately widened many and perhaps most of our concerns to include other groups: women, the undergraduate student body, staff. Saying so is more than a benign ecumenical gesture. Even if we were shortsighted enough to care only about our faculty, we could not solve their problems without simultaneously solving the problems of many others. The "climate" issues that affect our personal and professional well- or ill-being arise in an academic ecology such that tampering with one factor is bound to affect other factors. Today the human climate at the University of Rochester is not as liveable as it should and could be because the contributing factors are out of equilibrium. This report is a call for us all to begin paying serious attention immediately.

## **Reports Cited (Omitting UR Documents)**

American Council on Education: Minorities on Campus: A Handbook for Enhancing Diversity. Washington, DC: ACE, n.d.

Northwestern University: "Report to the University Community on Efforts to Increase Minority Faculty at Northwestern University [by the Committee on Faculty Diversity, November 1990]." Special supplement to the Northwestern Observer, 7 January 1991.

University of Wisconsin System: Retaining and Promoting Women and Minority Faculty Members: Problems and Possibilities. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, 1990.

Yale University: "First Report of the President's Committee to Monitor the Recruitment and Retention of Disabled, Minority, and Women Faculty [the Jaynes Committee]." "The President's Response to the Jaynes Committee Report." Spring 1991.