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FACULTY ASSOCIATION RESPONSE TO THE PAGIC REPORT

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The comments that follow provide a more detailed response to the PAGIC Report than we were able to provide in our initial response in December (reprinted in the *Faculty Association Newsletter*, December 1993). We have not, however, attempted to deal with all 58 recommendations in the PAGIC Report, preferring instead to comment on those sections that most directly affect faculty, viz. Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6.

In our initial response we laid out our objections in principle to the PAGIC Report, namely, that it is heedless of the history of McMaster University, insensitive to our traditions of collegiality, and potentially destructive of the acknowledged purposes and values of a university. We pointed out that the advisory group, in going beyond the immediate budgetary concerns it was charged with considering, made recommendations for change that should properly be considered within the customary academic bodies of the University. In our view it is not good management practice for a small group of individuals holding similar views to put forward sweeping proposals for change covering every aspect of our academic existence and endeavour, particularly when these are accompanied by deadlines for their implementation which leave the impression that there are few alternatives and hence that there is little need for debate.

Other universities are of course facing problems very much like ours. On 14 February 1994 the University of Toronto published a document that is in many respects their equivalent to the PAGIC Report: "Planning for 2000: A Provostial White Paper on University Objectives", carefully labelled not *Final Report* but "DRAFT". In the Introduction the Provost and Vice-Provost reflect upon the process of making changes and the experience at neighbouring universities:

The process of making these choices in a number of other universities has been essentially "top-down"; a committee or set of committees organized at the central level have developed overall plans to be implemented in the divisions. We are not aware of any notable successes with this approach.

The PAGIC Report, we submit, represents but another attempt at such top-down planning that offers little promise of success.

Discussions last Spring between members of the Executive of the Faculty Association and the Provost that led to the establishment of PAGIC focused, almost exclusively, on the nature of the budgeting process and the means by which reductions could be achieved in the operating costs of the University. The Faculty Association remains convinced that these issues are vitally important, the more so in view of the mounting evidence that the public funding of the universities in this Province will be further restricted in the years ahead. The Association is not persuaded, however, that the prescriptions put forward in the PAGIC Report are either adequate or appropriate ones to remedy the problems that confront us.

The precise levels of the financial cuts that will be required over the next few years are unknown. The PAGIC Report identifies "a need, on an annual basis, for \$7 million to \$9 million in reduced costs or increases to revenue," but specifies no clear time period over which these reductions may have to be made. Their target level also includes both operating and capital expenditures which typically in the past, both within this University and the Province, have been treated separately and differently. The Association accepts the argument that cuts will be required, but insists that much more detailed analysis and more critical, open discussion of the resultant projections are required before any firm targets can be established.

The obvious facts that PAGIC in its work went well beyond a review of budgetary matters, that as a body it was not formally constituted by either the Senate or the Board so as to be broadly representative of all sectors of the University community, and that its Report was heralded not just as an advisory one, but rather as a plan to reshape the University, help explain the sharp criticisms that have been voiced over many of its recommendations. In their Report, the members of PAGIC are commendably open in acknowledging the beliefs that guided their work but, in their conclusions, are insufficiently sensitive to the existence of often quite contradictory beliefs held by many other members of the University community. Nor do they acknowledge as openly as many would wish, that as principles their beliefs have not been endorsed in any earlier official policy statements of the University.

The Faculty Association is sympathetic to many of the criticisms of the Report that individuals and departments have put forward and, in the paragraphs that follow, its opposition to certain of the Report's recommendations, especially those having to do with faculty remuneration, will be made clear. But the Association readily concedes that the Report does draw attention to a number of other important issues having to do with the governance and operation of this University and in offering comments on these, the Association indicates its willingness to support, and contribute to, further discussions of these proposals in whatever forums are appropriate. The most appropriate forum for consideration of the entire Report is Senate. We are pleased, then, that the Provost in his "Status Report" of 31 January 1994 on PAGIC has indicated that he intends to send the PAGIC Report to Senate for discussion.

1 Decision-making and Academic Governance

Recommendations 1.1 and 1.2

In its discussion of "financial considerations in decision-making processes", the Report addresses two major concerns that have surfaced in recent years — the lack of any involvement of Senate in the budgeting process and the absence of any coordination between the activities of academic planning on the one hand and budgeting on the other. The Association agrees that these concerns are real and demand solutions.

The proposal embodied in Recommendation 1.2, that a new Senate Finance Committee — as we would prefer such a committee be called, rather than the cumbersome Senate Resources and Accountability Committee — replace the existing President's Budget Committee (PBC) and the Board/Senate Committee on Academic Planning (BSCAP), is in several respects a bold one.

To begin with, there are some obvious jurisdictional difficulties that lie in the path of the establishment of a Senate Finance Committee, notably that of the present role that the Faculty Association has in the appointment of faculty members to the PBC. The Association would have preferred that any such proposal for a change in this arrangement had first been discussed in the Joint Committee before being made public in the manner of this Report. Nevertheless, the Association agrees that this is a negotiable issue and is prepared to engage in such discussions. The Association shares the view that the goal of establishing a broadly-based committee that would have the responsibility of determining the overall budget priorities within the University is one that should be realized.

There are a number of important details about the Committee's composition, the method of appointment of its members and its reporting relationships that are, unfortunately, glossed over in the PAGIC Report. For example, if Senate is to have a meaningful role in "considering financial matters" it hardly makes sense to have the new Senate Committee reporting first to the Board and receiving only a lagged response from the Senate, as is proposed. Again, these same criticisms have been voiced already by others and their suggestions should be heeded in further discussions of this proposal by Senate.

In proposing that BSCAP be abolished, PAGIC offers no evidence or argument for their view that academic planning "cannot be formulated effectively by a committee". We do accept that there is, probably, widespread agreement that BSCAP in its present form is not working well. But this ongoing experience does not mean that the concept of an academic planning committee is wrong. It is worth recalling in this context, that in the late 1970s when BSCAP's predecessor, the LRPC, was chaired by faculty members such as Professors R. Gillespie and C. Jago and did not include as many administrators as BSCAP does, significant planning work was accomplished.

The "academic plan" is the expression of what a university is and what it hopes to be in the future. The members of PAGIC believe that in the future, "we can do better, in fewer activities, for less money". Perhaps, but only if faculty are involved at an early stage in those decision-making processes that have to do with what we will and will not do. The Provost, and other administrators, should certainly be instrumental in developing and proposing modifications to the academic plan. But there must be faculty input at all stages and not simply when the plan is presented to Senate for approval.

A major structural change in governance as is proposed here in the Report requires detailed study and planning. The determination of the appropriate size and composition of the study group is in itself no simple matter. Senate needs to be given the primary responsibility for considering these matters. Senate ought soon to address the tasks of reviewing the role and character of BSCAP and of deciding upon the appropriate form of Senate's involvement in the budgeting process.

Recommendations 1.3 and 1.4

The observations by PAGIC that both the Undergraduate Council and the Graduate Council spend a lot of time in dealing with routine curricular matters that have already been considered extensively at the levels of departments and Faculties and that much of this review work could be better accomplished by the Associate Deans, will be readily endorsed by anyone who has served on these bodies of late.

One or two informed commentators on the Report have stressed, however, that these bodies could, and should, have far more important roles to play in policy making and programme planning and development. We agree and note further, that the setting of the agendas for these Councils is critical in determining their activities and roles and if important issues are not being placed before them, then the academic administrators must shoulder the responsibility for this neglect.

By the same token, the proposal that the two Councils be replaced by a single new body of Senate will provide no solution to the perceived malaise of the existing councils if the same disregard and lack of attention persists in regard to determining its agenda.

Again, we urge Senate to assume the responsibility for reviewing the functions and structures of the two Councils.

In its Recommendation 1.4, PAGIC has focused on a governance issue that is, we agree, of growing concern and increasing cost. The authors of the Report focus on the subject of student appeals but would agree, we assume, that faculty appeals in all of their widening forms are of equal concern. We strongly support their recommendation that "Senate appoint an ad hoc committee to review the numerous quasi-judicial hearings and appeal committees that now exist in all areas of campus life".

Recommendations 1.5 to 1.10

Recommendation 1.5 that suggests that "the President and vice-presidents each provide a brief annual report to the university community on their efforts and accomplishments" has our support though we would add that each report should pay heed to the individual's objectives as spelled out in his or her previous year's report.

We also agree that there is a need for a review of "the structure and responsibilities of the President and vice-presidents" (Recommendation 1.6), but object to the proposal that this review be conducted by "the Human Resources Committee of the Board of Governors." These senior officers are, with one exception, faculty members and their principal duties are concerned with the academic life of the University. It was Senate that earlier decided upon the roles of many of these positions, particularly so in regard to the different vice-presidents, and it should be Senate that has the principal responsibility for conducting any new review. The Board will have, we assume, the final responsibility for approving any revised roles and responsibilities of these senior positions.

We are concerned over PAGIC's view of the role of the Provost since it differs sharply from that expressed by the University community in the recent past. The Provost's role in faculty appointments, tenure and promotion was discussed and reviewed at the time of the revision of the relevant policy in 1992 and a particular proposal at that time from the Provost that would have reduced that officer's role in such matters was not supported by the joint Senate/Faculty Association drafting committee, nor by the Faculty Association Executive, nor by the Senate Committee on Appointments. We oppose strongly, therefore, that section of Recommendation 1.7 that would assign to the Dean of Graduate Studies "those matters relating to faculty appointments currently handled by the Provost's office."

We are not attracted by the proposal (Recommendation 1.7) that the Dean of Graduate Studies be renamed Associate Provost. One former Dean of Graduate Studies has published a critique of this proposal that we find persuasive. We conclude, as we believe he does, that the long-term costs of such a change are likely to outweigh by far the rather trivial advantages suggested by PAGIC.

Recommendation 1.8 has been dealt with by the work and report of the Atkinson Committee. We point out that the Atkinson Committee "was unable to ascertain if there are any financial benefits to moving the responsibilities for graduate payroll out of the SGS," though they agree that the current practices leave something to be desired.

The proposal that the *ad hoc* position of Assistant to the Provost be formalized as a Senate appointment (Recommendation 1.9) does not have our support. In the current economic climate the emphasis should be placed upon reducing the number of administrative positions, not increasing them. Besides, we understand that this position was created originally in 1984 mainly to oversee the work of the academic programme assessments which then involved many external consultants. This is no longer the case and the administrative work associated with the periodic reviews must be lighter. In recent years many of the Provost's responsibilities concerned with undergraduate education have been delegated to the Assistant to the Provost. In our view, this delegation has not served undergraduate education at McMaster well. The Provost should participate directly in undergraduate matters. It is likely that some of the difficulties enumerated in PAGIC with regard to Undergraduate Council are due to this delegation. The Chair of Undergraduate Council appears to have a lower profile since the delegation of undergraduate matters to the Assistant to the Provost. Further, the effect of many of the other PAGIC recommendations (for example, the reassignment of the responsibility for inter-disciplinary programmes), if implemented, would seem to make this position, even in its present form, unnecessary.

In regard to Recommendation 1.10 we assume that all academic stipends at McMaster are reviewed periodically with a view to keeping them in line with those paid at other comparable universities. If those for our chairs are low by comparison, then we agree they should be increased.

2 Resource Allocation

Recommendations 2.1 to 2.6

The heavy emphasis which is given in the PAGIC Report to the use of the composite measure, "total direct costs per Basic Income Unit", as the key indicator in determining a department's or programme's effectiveness has been widely criticized and, we contend, justifiably so.

It is not that we have any quarrel with the use of quantitative indicators; on the contrary, we hope it is the case that our academic administrators are continually reviewing many sets of numbers and interpreting them wisely. But the proposed reliance which is to be placed upon this one measure is wrong for several reasons.

First, the measure is obviously not relevant in the assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of some of the major cost-centres on campus. The authors of the PAGIC Report effectively concede this point in their neglect of both the administrative departments of the University and the Faculty of Health Sciences. We agree that the use of the BIU-based measure would not be appropriate in those situations, though for different reasons. But the concession in regard to Health Sciences carries with it a message that is ignored by the PAGIC authors. If it is difficult or meaningless to draw comparisons between programmes in Health Sciences and those in the arts or sciences with regard to BIU-based measures, so too is it equally difficult and at times meaningless to make the same comparisons between other "professional" programmes and those in the arts and sciences. The fact that data are available for Business and Engineering should not obscure the fact that these programmes have quite different emphases and educational objectives from the programmes in the arts and sciences and the use of a single measure to draw comparisons between them is fraught with many dangers.

Second, because it is a composite measure the "direct cost per BIU" will reflect, in different contexts and at different times, the weighting of factors that may have nothing at all to do with programme effectiveness. The age and hence salary profile of a department's teaching staff is one factor, for example, that will be significant in the calculations. A department may maintain quite buoyant enrolments over a number of years, but as its faculty members age and move up the salary profile its level of direct costs per BIU will increase.

Third, the use of the measure will surely provide the wrong incentive for any department or programme seeking to improve its effectiveness. A department need only focus upon offering popular, large enrolment service courses to improve considerably its rating in terms of cost per BIU. And in the realization of these local goals there might well be created a bias against sensible and effective global planning. It is, after all, conceivable that it may be in the best interests of a university plan for the institution to cease offering a programme or two for which the BIU counts are healthy in order that other activities, more in line with the University's strengths and opportunities, might be undertaken.

Fourth, but most important, the enshrining of this "cost per BIU" calculation represents a simplistic and mechanistic approach to academic planning and decision-making that is unsuited to the complexity of the University. The PAGIC Report notes, admittedly, that the costs have to be balanced against the quality of the contributions made to the University's goals but, with its focus upon only the cost side of the equation, the Report conveys the strong impression that this is to be the overriding consideration. Might the University wish to maintain a small high-quality programme for which the direct costs per BIU were high? We think it quite likely on academic grounds, but most unlikely if the PAGIC philosophy prevails.

A final note in regard to the use of BIU counts is a reminder of the fact that the Ontario government has established recently another committee to review the funding of the Province's universities. Whether the BIU system with all of its different programme weightings and the "corridor" mechanism will come under scrutiny remains to be seen, but it would surely be unwise to proceed now on the assumption that they will not.

Recommendations 2.7 and 2.8

These recommendations for setting aside the better part of \$3 million to pay for costs associated with implementing the PAGIC proposals and for deferred building maintenance rest upon assumptions rather than careful estimates of likely costs. In any case, recent announcements of government "infrastructure grants", for which universities are eligible, may well reduce the need to set aside such large sums for building maintenance.

Recommendation 2.9

This recommendation is an extension of the previous recommendations which ask that resources in the University be allocated on the basis of BIU measures. In this recommendation part of the funding for graduate students, the Teaching Assistant allotments, is to go preferentially to departments with high undergraduate enrolments. We would like to see a full-scale discussion of this recommendation in a representative University body such as Graduate Council. The recommendation asks for a drastic change in the way TA allotments are made and in the understanding of the purpose of TAs. PAGIC notes on p. 22 that TA allotments were formerly made on the basis of graduate programme strength and suggests that in the future they should be made in terms of undergraduate instructional needs. TAs are no longer seen as an essential part of the graduate student learning experience; they are more closely a part of the undergraduate teaching enterprise. There must be a clear discussion of the effects that this change will have on strong graduate programmes that have small undergraduate programmes. Without TAs these graduate programmes will not be in a position to attract the best graduate students. Graduate students will go elsewhere and McMaster may eventually lose some of its strongest graduate programmes.

Recommendation 2.10

Senate has recently approved major changes to the distribution of undergraduate scholarships and in the amounts awarded.

3 Revenue Generation

Recommendation 3.1 and 3.2

Recommendation 3.1 asks that departments develop programmes that will generate money through tuition. We would like to add a word of caution: such programmes should never be seen as the primary function of the University. There is the danger that time and energy spent on these alternatives will be time and money taken away from basic teaching responsibilities. In addition, since not all departments in the University can do this with equal ease, the lack of such opportunities to generate revenue must never be taken as a negative measure and used against any department or programme.

Recommendations 3.3 and 3.4

These recommendations deal with promoting contract research. There is considerable debate about the growing emphasis in the University on contract research and the potential dangers inherent in promoting contract research. Our initial response to the PAGIC Report commented at some length on this danger if a proper balance between contract and curiosity-driven research is not maintained. Many people have expressed the fear that seeking contract research inhibits academic freedom and severely curtails independence; it allows outsiders to set our research agenda for us and could ultimately result in our not doing important research simply

because it cannot be funded by contract. Others have pointed out that the recommendations made here will have an effect contrary to that intended: increasing overhead will actually limit opportunities for contract research.

Recommendations 3.5 to 3.8

The Association has long taken the position that the Development Office (the fund-raising arm of the University) ought to be self-sustaining. As the operating budget is put under extreme pressure in the immediate future, the need to finance fund-raising on a cost-recovery basis will become ever more imperative. Faculty will willingly give "priority and support" to the work of this office when they can see that the Development Office actually adds to the operating budget instead of costing \$2.2 million as at present. While there may be good reasons for encouraging specific fund-raising activities in individual Faculties, the University should be seen as one and money raised should consequently be distributed equitably among the Faculties. "De-centralized fund-raising activities" as advocated here would over time run the risk of creating rich and poor Faculties within the University.

4 Faculty Career Development and Remuneration

Section 4 concerns "Faculty Career Development and Remuneration." The recommendations in this section appear to have two purposes: (1) to provide options for alternative career paths and part-time employment for tenured faculty, and (2) to insure that there is accountability of the faculty for their research and teaching. The first goal is already realized in this University, and has been supported by the Faculty Association. The authors of PAGIC seem unaware of the policy, agreed to by the administration and the Faculty Association, and described to faculty by President Alvin Lee in a letter dated October 29, 1982:

The University is ready to consider any proposal for any faculty member on regular appointment that would have the effect of relieving the University of part of its budgetary obligation to him or her. Any proposal for leave and/or reduced workload proposed by a faculty member and acceptable to the Chairman, the Dean, and the Vice-President, Academic, will be recommended to the President for his approval.

In addition, as indicated in the PAGIC Report, both the Humanities and Science Faculties have passed documents that describe alternative career paths for non-researching faculty.

The Faculty Association also agrees with the second goal. A full-time faculty member should certainly demonstrate that he or she is a productive, full-time member of the University community. We disagree, however, with the PAGIC recommendations for achieving this goal. These recommendations seem to provide several, redundant mechanisms to insure that nobody is abusing the system (despite the PAGIC conclusion that the number of abusers is very small). It is not clear how these various proposals are related to each other, or whether the adoption of some of these proposals will obviate the need to adopt others.

We also take exception to an assumption implicit in this section of the PAGIC Report, and explicit on page 13 of the PAGIC Background Paper: "the nature of the CP/M scheme at McMaster, which provides higher salaries for seniority, is surely premised on the notion that senior faculty are more productive, and of more value to the institution because of that." We understand our employment agreement to be one where our salary over a career reflects our output over a career. Most faculty begin their career at relatively low salaries compared with other available options. To adjust salary downward in the last half of a faculty member's career because of a failure to meet ever-increasing expectations of output would be unjust since in the first half of an academic career the salary paid rarely reflects the full value of scholarly output.

Recommendation 4.1

"A scheme of periodic post-tenure review" (to be in place by this July) is advocated. The section starts by noting that "The institution of academic tenure ... is under siege" (p. 30). Indeed it is. There have been criticisms of tenure as long as there has been tenure. This is not the place to recite the abuses of academics that have taken place when they are not protected by tenure, and the advantages that have accrued to the community by having tenured faculty speak their minds. If we believe tenure is an important aspect of our job (and an asset to the community), the very brief Recommendation 4.1 is particularly invidious: "That a scheme of periodic post-tenure review be introduced for all tenured and tenure-track [sic] faculty, to be in place by July 1, 1994." What this means is not clear. All faculty now must complete annual activity reports. Do such reports, perhaps expanded to include a longer "memory," a "progress report of progress reports" (p. 30), constitute the "post-tenure review." The "progress report of progress reports" (p. 30) can be incorporated in the annual performance review. That is, there could be a section in which the individual indicates how the current research is related to that which has been completed in the past.

Is this really a proposal for an expanded annual activity report, or something else? Is it intended as a regular re-review of the tenure status of tenured faculty, with procedures very much like those in place that awarded tenure in the first place, and with the possibility of revocation of tenure? If this is the case, the "post-tenure review ... for all tenured faculty" is a contradiction in terms.

Recommendation 4.2

This is the recommendation that non-researching faculty be given greater teaching loads. We do not understand how this recommendation (4.2) is related to 4.3 (the "5/6" recommendation). Recommendation 4.3 (p. 35) proposes that faculty not receiving the research supplement undertake additional teaching to obtain the supplement. That is, under the provisions of 4.2, the faculty member who is not deemed a researcher will undertake additional teaching ("six to 12 units"). Under the next recommendation, the non-researcher will undertake to do twice normal teaching to obtain the final 1/6 of salary. We are not sure of the computational procedures used by PAGIC, but it would seem that the effect of the two recommendations would produce an impossible situation. As indicated in our preliminary position paper, a non-researcher might assume a teaching load of 54 units as a combined result of Recommendations 4.2 and 4.3. Despite the fact that this teaching would be spread over the calendar year for the non-researcher, the load would be excessive.

The PAGIC Report asserts that "no permission is required" to implement this change: "This is something that is in the power of the chairs" (p. 34). In fact, post-PAGIC discussions in several departments indicate that the terms of reference for Chairs are ambiguous on this matter. Thus, contrary to the routing information in PAGIC, this recommendation would need discussion in Senate to clarify the terms of reference for Chairs.

Recommendation 4.3

This is the "5/6" proposal. There are several problems with this. (1) As indicated in PAGIC, there are not many research underachievers that would be affected by this rule. The proposed solution does not deal with this problem efficiently. It makes no sense to set up a competition for an award which will be won by at least 90% of the applicants. (2) if this recommendation is implemented for non-researchers, the teaching load becomes unrealistic. (3) Again, the various recommendations seem to be inadequately related to each other. This recommendation seems one way of implementing 4.5 [modification of CP/M scheme], but it seems inappropriate to present it as a separate proposal. It may be important to modify the CP/M scheme, but why *this* way? (4) How is the application for the 1/6 top-up to be judged? What is the appeal procedure? The PAGIC Report suggests in recommendation 1.4 that there are already too many hearings and appeal committees. Yet this proposal will add one more. (5) The

1/6 of salary obtained for research accomplishment could easily become a flexible item as budgets get more strained, becoming a true competition with winners and losers. It is very easy to adjust the criteria for such a top-up and thus save money in hard times. (6) This recommendation will put us at disadvantage in recruiting new faculty if our competition does not have similar contract provisions. (7) Since the "Progressive Discipline" policy (now under discussion) will provide a mechanism for dealing with non-productive faculty, what is the value of this 5/6 mechanism? Is it an alternative to invoking the progressive discipline procedure? Is the faculty member performing at threshold subject to threats from both the 5/6 policy and the progressive discipline policy?

Recommendation 4.4

This is the recommendation that the tuition waiver be replaced by a capped bursary. We do not understand why there is a focus on the tuition benefit (rather than other fringe benefits of employment)? According to the Report, "in recent months, McMaster has been criticized for its policy of providing tuition waivers to the dependents of faculty and staff" (p. 36). Surely we should not simply adjust a benefit because of "criticism." An argument needs to be presented to justify such criticism. The waiver is not a gift. Faculty and staff have this benefit as a result of a negotiated agreement (much as we have dental and vision benefits). That is, it was proposed and agreed upon as an alternative to salary increases. It was implemented for faculty in April, 1986 as part of our Joint Committee agreement. Both sides to the agreement believed that there were financial benefits to the University from the waiver. The 1986 report of the Joint Committee Agreement to the Board of Governors (at their July meeting) pointed out that "many Ontario Universities waive tuition fees for the dependents of faculty members. ***The cost of this to the University is more readily absorbed than a further pay increase***" (emphasis added).

Recommendation 4.5

This is the recommendation that "the university explore with the Faculty Association ways of modifying the career progress/merit (CP/M) scheme." The Faculty Association agrees that such discussions are important. However, it is not clear how Recommendation 4.5 is related to 4.3 (5/6 recommendation).

Recommendation 4.6

This recommendation has to do with released time. We agree that rules regulating released time need to be clarified. As the preamble to this section points out, people receive released time for many reasons. It is not clear why only the released time of directors of research institutes should be clarified. Why not all released time?

Summary of Section 4

There are problems with the way in which non-researching faculty are to be treated (as described in Section 4), but the idea of alternate career paths and the option of part-time employment for senior faculty is good. Much of this section, however, appears to be a witch hunt for faculty who may be receiving full-time pay for less-than-full-time work. A member of the Faculty Association has commented that "this section is a sort of manual for the punishment of offending faculty." Non-productive faculty may be punished in too many ways: (a) given only 5/6 salary; (b) be affected by CP/M potential scheme modification (e.g., negative merit); (c) be disciplined (either as a result of a new, "progressive discipline" policy, or by implementation of existing faculty performance evaluations). Here PAGIC has strained after a gnat and swallowed a camel. It would seem that a single, coherent, progressive discipline policy is all that is needed.

6 Academic Structures and the Provision of Instruction

Recommendation 6.1

This recommendation has offended, threatened, or infuriated a large number of individuals in every department singled out for realignment or amalgamation. The history behind, and the factors that seemingly drove, the proposed regroupings differ in each case. What is shared is an absence of any indication that a true consideration of academic factors, quality of programme, importance in the University, graduate programme strength and scholarship, was taken into account. The primary decision must be made on academic grounds.

Realignments and amalgamations can only be productive if they are truly accepted, and preferably initiated, by the departments involved. Contrary to the rhetoric of the PAGIC Report, none of those suggested apparently had grass-roots support and in several cases the recommendations were made in the knowledge that departments were opposed for what they believe to be cogent academic reasons. At least for the Departments of Art & Art History, Music and Drama the effect of the PAGIC Report has been destructive and demoralizing and has created unnecessary divisiveness and antagonism among faculty within these departments.

If amalgamations or realignments are to be imposed, decisions must come from an appropriate academic decision-making body of the University where there is confidence that academic factors were appropriately considered. In fact, recommendation 6.1 appeared to pre-empt the proposed new Senate Finance Committee which PAGIC recommends "should have the authority to recommend the closure (or amalgamation) of programmes, units or departments."

We see this recommendation as mischievous to the point of irresponsibility. Of course, academic structures will change over time, but we are not at the stage where such actions are required. This recommendation has made our support staff very apprehensive about their positions and has demoralized staff and faculty alike. It is not at all clear how much money would be saved by the implementation of this recommendation. Even on the cost side it appears that many of the savings proposed by merging departments could be achieved by such steps as cutting duplication of existing courses across departments, cooperation in PhD supervision and so forth, without forcing formal amalgamations. Further, if there were more flexible organization of office staff, as proposed in Section 8 of PAGIC, departments would not have to be amalgamated in order to cut down on staff positions. This is another example of the tail wagging the dog.

Recommendation 6.2

The problem of the overlapping of disciplines in the Faculties of Science and Health Science has a long and complex history behind it. The difficulties need to be ironed out carefully and over a period of time long enough to produce a workable solution agreeable to all parties. PAGIC's notion that everything can be settled in time for implementation in the 1994-95 academic year, like its proposal to merge groups of departments, is glib.

Recommendation 6.3

The recommendation about the reporting structure for research institutes is premature: this decision is greatly dependent on the outcome of the review of the position of the Vice-President (Research).

Recommendation 6.4

While the situation varies from one programme to another, it is not clear that assigning them all to a Faculty dean is the best solution. Some programmes, with good reason, fear that this change would threaten their interdisciplinary status — placing them in a Faculty may threaten

their very existence as deans grapple with their own budgets under devolution and are forced to make cuts. There is real concern that programmes such as Women's Studies, Peace Studies, newly placed in a Faculty, will have the weakest lobby in that Faculty. They will put pressure on already strained budgets and can be expected to have difficulty meeting their financial needs.

There are those who fear that the cancellation of some programmes is the "hidden agenda" behind this proposal. Again, this is not an acceptable way of forcing any such decisions, which must be made primarily on academic grounds. Why do Arts and Science and the Theme Schools remain with a reporting structure to the Provost unless a decision has already been made to provide them with special protection?

The University needs to assess carefully what level of support it is willing to provide to interdisciplinary programmes and to new initiatives and then to devise a structure for these programmes that will best meet those goals. Each programme should be considered separately. Further study is needed and this should be carried out by a Senate committee.

Recommendations 6.5 and 6.6

These recommendations about monitoring undergraduate curriculum are further evidence of the unevenness of this Report. These recommendations deal with very specific and detailed issues which are the business of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committees or the Undergraduate Council.

Recommendations 6.7 to 6.9

These recommendations about academic links with neighbouring universities and with modes of course delivery in departments seem out of place and unnecessary as such activities should be on-going.

Recommendation 6.10

While review of course offerings with particular attention to duplication across departments is something that we support and believe should be done on a continuous basis by Undergraduate Council (or perhaps by some version of the Senate Finance Committee), we question the wisdom of singling out low enrolment courses for consideration for cutting. If a programme has a small undergraduate enrolment, it will follow that some of the senior level courses will have a small enrolment — but are nonetheless essential to provide the necessary specialized preparation for graduate school.

PAGIC asks "to what extent do the course offerings reflect the increasing specialization of the faculty rather than the knowledge and skills required by the graduates? This is a loaded question. Of course the upper level undergraduate courses will reflect the particular interest and specialization of faculty. What students receive from such courses are not just knowledge and skills. Through such courses they experience first hand the excitement the researcher/scholar feels about imparting new knowledge in his or her area. There is an inspirational element and these learning opportunities often provide the role modelling experience that leads students to opt for an academic career. How does one measure their value and cost? Further, we could not keep our best faculty if there were no opportunity for them to teach their area of specialization.

Recommendation 6.11

There is some merit to this recommendation to utilize fully the electronic classroom, but it is important that this new approach be carefully evaluated. It is not at all clear that it is equal academically, nor is it clear that it is cost effective.



The foregoing comments are responses to specific proposals in the PAGIC Report. In closing we would like once more to draw attention to one of the most regrettable *omissions* of the PAGIC Report, namely, its failure to deal with two major areas of the University's operations — Health Sciences and the administrative units. Together these two areas make up more than half the University's operating budget, yet they are scarcely mentioned in the Report. As a plan to reshape the University, the PAGIC Report is not only unacceptable to large sections of the McMaster community in many of its recommendations, but is seriously flawed in its failure to take a more balanced view of the University as a whole.

[The members of the Faculty Association PAGIC Assessment Group (FAPAG) are Lorraine Allan, David Blewett (Chair), Phyllis Granoff, Marianne Kristofferson, Wayne Lewchuk, Shepard Siegel, and Susan Watt. Les King and Daphne Maurer serve as consultants.]

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