

**REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC CONSULTING COMMITTEE  
(ALTERNATE SELF-STUDY)  
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY  
MARCH 1997**

Introduction

As part of its alternate self-study, Wake Forest University focused on three aspects of its January 1995 Plan for the Class of 2000: Final Report of the Program Planning Committee. Wake Forest chose to analyze three central themes from this plan as the focal points for its strategic self-study: 1) The First Year, 2) Information Technology, and 3) The Intellectual Climate. Since the adoption of the Plan for the Class of 2000 each of these themes has received significant attention from the faculty and staff of Wake Forest through a variety of studies, evaluations, committee deliberations, and actions.

The actual Strategic Report submitted by Wake Forest includes a summary report for each of the three strategic issues that outlines the various reports and activities that relate to the overall theme. Each of the summary reports is a helpful guide to the "state of the issue" within the life of the University; but as summaries the reports do not offer a new strategic analysis of the theme, nor do they provide goals and recommendations as possible next steps in the implementation of the plan. The various appendices that accompany each of the reports on the three strategic issues offer a full and detailed discussion of the various issues, including the steps that have been taken to date to implement various parts of the total Plan for the Class of 2000.

When assessed against the guidelines for the alternate model, Wake Forest's approach clearly has some distinctive features. The University chose to focus on an existing strategic plan, The Plan for the Class of 2000, and a large number of completed committee reports, and faculty and administrative actions relating to the plan. None of the three summary reports on the University's strategic issues represents new strategic plans, proposals and actions, which the guidelines suggest would ordinarily be a part of a self-study. The approach taken by the University also does not make explicit how the conclusions reached in the self-study will be "carried forward within the life of the institution?" (Page 6, "Alternate Model for Institutional Self-study") The guidelines also pose the question, "How will the strategic self-study be used ?" In some instances, the answer to that question is obvious because Wake Forest is in the process of implementing many of the proposals of the Plan for the Class of 2000 as part of its regular processes of decision-making. The implementation of the Technology Plan is, for example, following a clear set of steps and stages. On the other hand, issues that cross many boundaries, such as those concerning the Intellectual Climate, do not have an evident path for consideration or implementation. Undoubtedly, many aspects of a comprehensive and necessarily amorphous issue such as "intellectual climate" will fall to various administrative offices and faculty committees; yet a more self-conscious, comprehensive and integrative process for consideration and implementation would have strengthened the total self-study process.

In spite of the questions that can be raised based on the alternate self-study guidelines, Wake Forest has carefully and conscientiously focused substantial institutional time and energy on the issues that it chose for exploration. The Committee's

overall conclusion is that Wake Forest has made and will continue to make a serious investment of its resources and its collective energy as it focuses in the future on strategic issues that it chose for analysis.

I. CONSULTANTS' REPORT ON THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE  
(ALTERNATE SELF-STUDY)  
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY  
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Admissions Policies

Any attempts to change the intellectual or social climate of the Wake Forest experience are ultimately dependent on the students who accept an offer of admission and subsequently matriculate. Yet Admissions policies seem to have entered little into the debates leading to the Strategic Report or in discussions about the quality of the first year or intellectual life in general. There is a suggestion in the Strategic report that admissions efforts might conclude attracting students with particular talents in the arts and intellectual pursuits; and we applaud the President's decision to devote special Presidential Scholarships for the active recruitment and attraction of such students.

At the moment, diversity in the student body seems to mean only recruiting black students in order to meet a goal of 10% of the student body. That target will never bring to the campus the diversity of students either intellectually or geographically or ethnically for creating a really stimulating environment for intellectual growth or social diversity. We suggest that recruiting of students of color be expanded in an effort to reach greater numbers of Asian-American, Latino, and native American candidates. Consideration should also be given as to whether it is desirable to continue admitting one-third of the entering class from North Carolina and another third from the southeast and whether a larger portion

of those "quotas" could be non-majority students. A 10% population of non majority students is too small to be a viable portion of the community in any significant way. Wake Forest, if it wants to become more national and less regional, may need to increase recruiting efforts of all sorts in the northeast and west; and it may even want to give consideration to recruiting abroad.

We also suggest that the University consider whether the goal of gender balance in the student body sufficiently justifies having lower standards of admission for men than women. Such a policy would now seem anachronistic, possibly even in violation of federal law; and it would seem to protect only a social goal rather than any intellectual one.

Academic institutions are pre-set to admit a variety of constituencies, such as athletes or descendants of alumni. Wake Forest needs to remain diligent in weighing those interests against the interests of increasing the diversity in a wide sense of the student body, if the intellectual vibrancy that results from such diversity is an institutional priority.

### Orientation

Orientation at most institutions seems to be a challenging undertaking that can never seem to be fully satisfactory in all respects to all interested parties. Wake Forest is fortunate that the major planning for its orientation resides within the academic side of the College, albeit with strong support from student life and other constituencies. There seems to be no great concern about the length itself, although students commented that they feel exhausted by the end of the week.

One strong point is that some phases of orientation take place in the residence halls after classes begin.

A major student life concern for orientation is increasing freshman awareness of such issues as substance abuse, sexual abuse, increasing sensitivity to peers who are from different economic and ethnic backgrounds, and safety and security on campus. Such issues must be addressed with great sensitivity and care, and no increased amount of time is likely to accomplish all these goals. On the other hand, every year some number of students place themselves in genuine danger during the first few days following their arrival because of alcohol and sexual abuse; and we suggest that these issues be highlighted at the earliest possible moment. The program within orientation itself probably should be strengthened with continuing education on these issues.

On many other campuses, there has been concern in recent years that orientation does not sufficiently convey to students the value that the institution places on intellectual discourse. Some campuses have required their new students to prepare for orientation by reading a book or article, to be followed on campus with a lecture or small discussions or some combination of the two. While Wake Forest Orientation currently includes some readings about the institution itself which students are expected to discuss with their advisers, some faculty expressed an interest in returning to a format which required students to read a text over the summer on some broader topic. There are many models for this, and some are only replicable in very particular academic environments.

Any changes within the annual format of orientation should receive a thorough evaluation shortly after the orientation. The Dean's Office should be asked to review especially the academic content and success, and officials of residential life and student participants should provide suggestions. Input from the entering class would also be useful.

### Advising

Wake Forest College has a strong commitment to pre-major advising, and the current system seems to be working rather well. Considering advising as part of the teaching mission, as the Dean has decided, rather than as a service component makes sense, and we suggest that the reward system of the College make this emphasis clear. Rewards for advising (including training) could take more than one form, such as consideration in annual salary increases or as compensation for research expenses in a variety of forms. It is our understanding that an evaluative mechanism is currently being developed which will enable the dean to assess the quality of advising. On this topic we offer one caution: it is important to be clear about the generally recognizable signs of good advising, Measures of student "satisfaction" (as based on students' responses) may not be a useful indicator. Academic advisers sometimes have to say things to students that they would prefer not to hear; and it would be unfortunate if advisers refrained from advising students as they otherwise would for fear of "low marks." In our experience, students often confuse "advising" with "mentoring," and consequently expect to develop with the adviser the kind of close relationship that can only be

nurtured over time with the effort of both parties. While we urge Wake Forest to develop its own criteria for successful advising, certainly it should include course placements appropriate to students' level of preparation, and reasonable availability to students during regular office hours.

Students seem generally satisfied with the quality of advising and with having an advisor not necessarily close to their intended area of study; they did not seem to want the increased insularity that might come from linking an advisor to a small residential community. Although the Dean of Freshman informed us that he endeavored to cluster an advising group within a single (or neighboring) residence hall, students seemed not to be aware of this and, in fact, insisted that their advising groups were geographically dispersed. There seemed to be little enthusiasm for having First-Year Seminar instructors function as advisers to their students, partly out of students' uneasiness about seeking advice from a professor who would also be in a position to judge them in the classroom. Faculty seemed less concerned about this apparent role conflict, noting that they commonly fulfill multiple functions in the lives of individual students. On the other hand, faculty seemed slightly more uneasy than the students about advising students outside of their area of expertise. Although there was general agreement that there are ample available resources for learning or looking up any necessary information, the complexity of the science curriculum was a source of some concern to non science faculty. At the same time, faculty agreed that there was little enough choice in the first year of study anyway and that advising decisions were not often overly complex ones.

Recruitment of advisors seems to be a difficult and continuing problem, and the Dean's Office may well need to take a greater role in institutionalizing advising as a regular responsibility for a certain percentage of faculty in each department. Faculty express some concern about the amount of time required for advising during orientation, although the expectations—a group meeting with all advisees and individual appointments with each student—seem reasonable. The other important part of advising at Wake Forest, the meal at the adviser's home (or other location if necessary) seems to be too important for at least some students and some faculty members to consider abandoning it. On the other hand, there may well be faculty who are dissuaded from advising because of the burden that the Orientation dinner would place on them or their family. One way of making advising perhaps seem less onerous would be for the Dean to inform all faculty members of the importance of returning to campus by a certain date before the beginning of classes, not just for advising but for the benefit of majors and colleagues in the individual departments. The recommended date would not need to be quite so early as the beginning of advisers' duties but would serve to lessen the gap between the beginning of advisers' duties and that of other faculty members' duties.

Matching faculty advisers with student peer advisers seems to be a useful system, and the quality of training of students is evidently high. Some faculty advisers make a point of requesting peer advisers in fields other than their own in order to increase their coverage. On the other hand, training of faculty advisers seems somewhat limited in comparison to some campuses like Vanderbilt, and is

often limited to little more than issuing a comprehensive manual. We suggest annual workshops in which both new advisers and experienced advisers work together for a mutual exchange of learning or remembering the details and for working through sample student problems.

### First-Year Seminars

Of the several components of the Plan for the Class of 2000, the First-Year Seminars appear to have ignited the very highest and most unanimous expression of faculty and student approval. Faculty and students spoke to us of their excitement about the courses, the pleasure they are taking in collaborative learning, and the optimism they have for the many ways in which the Seminars will contribute to the education of Wake Forest students. Faculty related to us their expectation that the Seminars would result in students who would be better writers and thinkers, better prepared to engage in discussion and debate. Students were particularly pleased by the quality of exchange during class between students and their teachers, and especially what they have been able to learn from one another.

The Seminar program will be confronting questions in the coming years about the process of having students choose seminars. The current system leaves students with relatively little choice. Some students expressed surprised pleasure at finding themselves very substantially engaged in a Seminar on a topic about which they had no previous interest. Yet others were less appreciative of having been assigned to a Seminar that they had not chosen. To the degree that there is student dissatisfaction about Seminar assignments, it may be fueled by two factors. First is the lack of divisional credit for Seminars.

While the rationale for this decision was explained to us, it is of some concern that the introduction of the Seminar further calcified a curriculum which may leave too few opportunities for students to choose courses on purely serendipitous grounds. In combination with a trend towards minors and double majors and an apparent proliferation of departmental prerequisites and requirements for the major, it should not be surprising that students manifest a utilitarian approach to their course choices. We suggest that the faculty give serious consideration to allowing seminars (at least in some instances) to count toward divisional requirements while remaining a part of the current "basic requirements."

A second source of possible student discontent over Seminar choices is an insufficient understanding on their part of the purpose of the Seminars. In the letter that introduces students to the Seminar program over the summer, they are told that "all seminars are designed to promote rigorous intellectual exchange, both written and oral, in a setting in which all participate in critical thinking and analysis of argument." In our conversations with faculty and administrators, we were reminded that the Seminars are intended to teach students critical reading, writing and thinking skills. Yet the students with whom we spoke seemed unaware of these goals. While this understanding may be immaterial in the ultimate success of the Seminars themselves, it may well be useful for students to understand that, by some measure, the Seminars are really "interchangeable parts" and that, ideally, they all fulfill the same function within a student's education. The First-Year Seminar Committee may discover over time that they can offer students the opportunity to rank four to eight Seminar choices without unreasonable danger of assigning a large number of students to Seminars that they had not selected.

Data from our campuses—Vanderbilt, Dartmouth—about our Seminar selection processes is undoubtedly available and may assist Wake Forest in refining its own process.

Varying levels of concern were expressed about the difficulties of recruiting faculty to teach the Seminars in subsequent years. As the Strategic Report suggests, there is interest in seeing that a very broad cross-section of the faculty, from all the disciplines, participates in Seminar instruction. Some faculty see impediments that may deserve consideration. Perhaps the most frequently cited was the short-term cost to the upper-level course offerings that inevitably results from diverting teaching to the Seminars. When the full complement of additional faculty is in place, this should no longer be at issue. Meanwhile the enthusiasm for teaching energetic students in small sections during their first two semesters at Wake Forest might prove infectious. On other campuses, first year seminars have been the means by which faculty have attracted students to their disciplines as potential majors; and in some instances faculty have found that such seminars are an effective means of developing courses that later translate into the upperlevel, lecture format.

Other faculty spoke of the need for identifying incentives for the teaching of seminars; while funds are apparently available for course development in which technological innovation plays a part, some felt that it should not be necessary to inject technology into courses in which its utility may be only marginal in order to receive course development funds. Some faculty expressed concern that giving technology priority over seminar development constituted a problematic message to the campus.

The Dean of the College expressed the hope that, over time, the First-Year Seminar Committee might serve not only administrative functions, but also become an

advocate for the program. He also suggested that it might be appropriate, in time, to identify a target number of Seminars for each department. Requests for additional faculty in a given department may be partly tied to the department's willingness to contribute to the Seminar program.

Some faculty reluctance to teaching in the Seminar program may stem from a sense of being unprepared for teaching the critical reading and (particularly) writing skills that are the program's defining feature. It is especially commendable that Professor Boyle has offered workshops to Seminar instructors on the teaching of writing, and it is encouraging that these workshops have evidently been well attended by faculty. Those responsible for administering the program should be encouraged to continue to offer workshops of this kind to instructors. In subsequent years, it might be particularly helpful to create settings in which experienced Seminar instructors are joined by those less experienced so that the latter may hear about those strategies that have worked particularly well and which might be worth emulating. There is no doubt that Wake Forest possesses a faculty of such high caliber that there is no shortage of potential instructors for the Seminars; in many instances, it may only be a matter of their observing the success of their colleagues in undertaking Seminar instruction and developing the confidence to teach the critical skills that they have all practiced in their own professional lives.

The decision to eschew a common core of reading appears to have been a wise one. Whatever the advantages of having a student body that is engaged in the interpretation of a common set of texts (and there may be MANY), it is likely that a common curriculum would have made it far too difficult to attract to the program faculty

who do not feel prepared to teach the chosen texts. Additionally there are sound reasons for the faculty to have chosen NOT to make explicit requirements for the course assignments (e.g., number of papers assigned, use of library search services). However, as the faculty undertakes a review of the curriculum in the coming year, it is our suggestion that they give some special attention to writing pedagogy and the ways in which the Writing and First-Year Seminars articulate with one another.

The "Year of . . ." program might also provide a fruitful opportunity for Seminar instructors who are teaching seminars on related topics to come together to share ideas, strategies, materials and syllabi. For faculty, this holds the possibility of crossdisciplinary cooperation and communication which can only be mutually enriching. And through the "Year of . . ." program there are obvious opportunities to capitalize on campus events to enrich seminar course offerings.

One stated component of the First-Year Seminar initiative appears to have been abandoned. According to the Plan for the Class of 2000, "many first-year seminar groups will live in a common area, creating an academic support as well as social group. Residential activities will be planned around discussions within the first-year seminar as well as events on campus." In our discussions with students, there did not appear to be much enthusiasm for such an arrangement, since they gave priority to participating in as many separate student spheres as possible; to have overlapping spheres (residential units, classes) would only narrow the scope of their relationships. On some campuses (Dartmouth being one), faculty and administrators see merit in creating opportunities to blur the boundary between academic and social activities and spaces. It is not apparent that at Wake Forest, however, residence halls are likely to be regarded as useful venues

within which students might encounter faculty. Faculty and students report that when they encounter each other in residence halls it often feels awkward and artificial; such out-of-classroom interactions between students and faculty need to occur more naturally and in places that are perhaps better suited. Nonetheless the impulse behind the original plan to teach seminars in the residence halls appears to us to be a good one, and consideration ought to be given to alternate ways of accomplishing additional integration of intellectual and student social life.

One faculty member described the Seminar program as the "unfunded step-child" of the Plan for the Class of 2000; another described it as the educational equivalent of a "factory speed-up." However these frustrations may be a symptom of a program experiencing the mild growing-pains of its earliest incarnation. As the program acquires momentum and stature, it appears likely that faculty will participate with relish. And while it is far too early to determine the effect that the Seminars have on a Wake Forest student's education and, more specifically, his/her preparedness for the rigors of upperdivision courses, there seems every reason to believe that the Seminar program will rapidly come to represent the ornament of the first-year curriculum.

#### Information Technology and the Seminars

As the Information Technology portion of this report makes altogether apparent, Wake Forest has made a bold and commendable move through its investment in information technology and the pervasive use of computers. There can be little doubt that these innovations will make significant contributions to the education of Wake Forest

students by accelerating access to electronic data and increasing the ease and rapidity of communication within the campus and beyond it.

Some First-Year Seminar instructors have made energetic use of the new technology in their classrooms. Specifically we were told of Seminars which relied entirely on electronic text; seminars that used electronic technology to submit, edit and return student papers; and seminars that used Lotus Notes to enable students to comment on one another's papers. It seemed to some of us, however, that the First-Year Seminars would have made immeasurable contributions to the Wake Forest curriculum even absent the technological advances. While undoubtedly some students and instructors found the technology useful and a significant enhancement to the seminar experience, some students commented that they perceived that their instructors had been "pressured" to adopt technological innovations in ways which seemed to be somewhat contrived. To put it bluntly, some faculty and students appeared to feel that the technological "tail" was wagging the pedagogical "dog": that is, that pedagogical choices were being driven by the availability and the privileging of the technology. It might be reasonable to suggest that, under most circumstances, pedagogical choices should be given priority and technological innovations follow from them. In this instance, the question posed in the strategic report ("Are there any suggestions for the most efficient use of our ThinkPads?") might better be preceded by questions about the goals of a given course and the consequent needs in the areas of faculty/student and student/student communication, and electronic information. One student lamented the absence of papers bearing the marks of his instructor's pencil, thumb-print, and coffee mug.

None of this is to detract in any way from the magnificent contributions that the networked laptop computing program will make to the education of Wake Forest students in the years ahead. Part of the boldness of a plan of this kind is in having the confidence to know that wonderful uses will be found for the technology, even if we do not know what they are today. E-mail has transformed most campuses to the point that a non-wired campus would be unimaginable. E-mail has allowed conversations to continue between students and faculty and among students long after a class hour has concluded.

Computers have enabled faculty to make course material rapidly available to students and (particularly in math and sciences) they have facilitated the use of innovative pedagogical software tools. We expect that, over time, faculty will discover many uses for the ThinkPads in the classroom. It would be particularly satisfying to be able to consider the various pieces of the Plan for the Class of 2000 as interlocking and mutually interdependent. But each of the pieces has decided merit on its own, and does not require additional justification.

#### Intellectual Life in the First Year

Wake Forest University necessarily partake of the prevailing American ethos which conditions them to the idea of spending the next four years acquiring the credentials necessary for the next goal in life, whether additional education or the world of work. In this environment, fostering a devotion to the intellectual life for its own intrinsic value has become increasingly difficult. It might help if advisers, indeed all faculty, encourage students (and their parents) from their arrival on campus to remember

the value of the four years of undergraduate life and of the dangers of thinking of themselves purely as pre-professional students.

Students need to be reminded again and again, during orientation and frequently in different courses, of the inherent value of the intellectual dimension of life and the importance of cultivating the discipline of the mind. Students will not understand the importance of the first-year seminars without being told. They need to know why Wake Forest is interested in educating them and why the campus intellectual climate is an important part of the mission of the College. It is critically important that the faculty and administration have the means of regularly articulating to students why it is that intellectual discourse is valued at Wake Forest, what place it has in their education, what relation it has to the University's mission and to its vision of the kind of citizenry it is preparing for the next century, and how it relates to the University's motto *pro humanitate*.

During the dialogue of the past few days, it has become clear that there may exist a magnificent opportunity for Wake Forest to increase possibilities for the exercise of collective intellectual reflection through the existence of an anachronism—the hour set aside at 11:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays for "chapel." Although various meetings now take place during that hour, the fact that a block of time is available for discussion, presentations, and dialogue might be worth consideration. How many students and faculty would take advantage of the opportunity would remain to be seen and would surely depend on the ways in which it is packaged and presented. But it holds some possibility for addressing the concern expressed at the Montreat conference for "unscheduled time for students and faculty to reflect [and] to converse."

A few administrators and faculty seem to think that developing programs in the residential halls would solve the problem in some substantial way, although the students whom we met made it clear that they were not interested in such artificial occasions. Rather than an evening presentation by a faculty member on some particular topic, they would prefer the extension of classroom discussions in the cafeterias and library, with their friends over coffee or in a lounge. Still, the Strategic Report notes with regret that "while our students enter with strong academic credentials and are highly motivated, the exchange of ideas among students, and among faculty and students, rarely continues beyond the classroom." If a priority has been placed upon the opportunity for students and faculty to exchange ideas, some thought must be given to *where* this might occur. While residence halls may be poor places for such activity, can dining halls be made more welcoming to faculty who wish to join students over meals? Or are there other venues in which such exchanges might take place easily and naturally? In an era of competing pressures upon faculty—professional/scholarly, family, community—it may be necessary to think imaginatively about creating settings in which faculty can interact with students in the company of their children and/or significant others.

Finally, faculty need to help students construe "intellectualism" in broad ways. Intellectual conversations certainly do not need to be confined to those topics that students encounter in the classroom. Rather, it is our view that intellectualism is a habit of mind that has application to (almost!) any topic that students choose to discuss with each other sports, films, relationships, current events. It is a matter of applying standards of reason and evidence, of maintaining a willingness to be persuaded by positions other than one's own, of drawing connections between apparently unrelated

phenomena, and of acquiring a sense of one's place in the world and the obligation to engage with it in constructive ways. If students learn to carry critical habits of mind from discussions in the classroom to informal discussions that intrude upon an educated human being's life, then Wake Forest has made a profound contribution to its students' intellectual development.

### Greek Life and Campus Racial Climate

The Montreat Conference Report included an eloquent discussion of the importance of a more socially diversified environment on the Wake Forest campus. Most insightfully, the Report suggested that: "if by increasing the number of ethnicities, cultures, and opinions on campus, we succeed only in creating more tensions between a majority group that views itself as threatened and a variety of beleaguered minorities, we will have worsened our current plight. If, however, we get to know one another and discover the ways in which different backgrounds can enrich us, we will succeed in building a stronger community. We must increase diversity for the purpose of fostering sympathy and relationship."

Many of our conversations came around to the ways in which the experiences of first-year students with fraternities and sororities worked at cross-purposes with this laudable ideal. While recognizing that most college students nationwide arrive on campus with limited experiences of others with significantly different social backgrounds (as defined by race, ethnicity, nationality, class, sexual orientation), it appears that residential college environments hold unique possibilities for young people to learn about those who—by some criteria—appear to be unlike themselves. Our discussions of

Greek life gave us little confidence that these organizations fostered interactions between socially differentiated groups.

Many students and faculty expressed ambivalence about the effect of Greek Life on the experiences of students. A significant number of the students with whom we spoke offered a deep, heartfelt lament for the absence of racially and culturally diverse experiences in their college lives. It is our belief that these things are integrally connected. And it is our conviction that students should be given one full year at the start of their college careers to form relationships along broader axes than are offered to them by the fraternity and sorority system. The freshman year should be a year in which students are given every incentive to cross boundaries of race, ethnicity, class, and nationality. We would regard this not only as a means of contributing to their education but also the means of preparing them for citizenship in an increasingly diversified world.

It is our very strong suggestion that Wake Forest move rapidly and forcefully to a sophomore rush. One should not anticipate that there will be any broad support for this among students and, in fact, the opposition is likely to be loud and persistent not only from students but from other constituencies as well. However there are moments in the history of an institution when, with a clear sense of what is right, unpopular decisions are made in the long-term best interest of the University, and its students.

## II. CONSULTANT'S REPORT ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### Introduction

Wake Forest University has embarked on an aggressive—and expensive—computer initiative. Nominally a "Thinkpad" Project, the initiative is much more than required laptop computers for students, as it includes a robust campus-wide network that extends into classrooms and residence halls; new laptops every two years for all standing faculty; data projection in most classrooms; advocacy and support for instructional tools including Lotus Notes; a new departmental support program and a central help desk equipped with specialized software; and upgraded central servers with a plan for a second data center to assure business continuity.

Given the scope of this project and the paucity of computing and networking resources available only a few years ago, the University is to be commended for the enormous amount of work that has been done. The network is operational; computers have been distributed to all faculty and all first-year students; students and many faculty have been trained in the use of the computers and in particular the use of Notes for structured class communication; support staff have been hired and trained; and several classes this academic year have made effective use of the new technologies. Faculty computers, provided two years ago to provide a year of preparation before the first cohort of laptop-equipped students, will be replaced this summer.

Despite this substantial progress, it is premature to "declare victory" or to critique too rigorously the educational value of the computer initiative. Some faculty members

and students report successful uses and attendant satisfaction, while others express uncertainty and skepticism. This is an expected and healthy by product of such a major innovation since there is no well-accepted model for use of networked, laptop computers in a liberal arts college, nor for assessing their impact on education, communication, and culture. Indeed, the Wake Forest community needs to recognize that it has committed to itself to years of transition, change, and uncertainty as it deploys computers to succeeding classes, encourages innovative applications by faculty and students, adapts to changes in technology, and responds to its own assessment efforts.

### General Observations and Recommendations

The data network is exemplary; this consultant is not aware of any campus in the country as well "wired" with state-of-the-art cabling to all residence rooms, all faculty offices and labs, and all classrooms—including Ethernet to individual student desks in many classrooms. There is also an innovative wireless network in place. Bandwidth to the North Carolina Internet hub is more than adequate for the foreseeable future.

Classroom technology is also exemplary, with at least one Ethernet jack in every classroom, video projection or large screen monitors in most classrooms, and the aforementioned Ethernet jacks at student seats in many classrooms. Provision for instructor use and control of media is thoughtful and well-executed, as is provision for ADA-compliance.

The selection of a Windows/Intel computer standard is, in hindsight, a source of strength, notwithstanding that many faculty would have preferred to stay with familiar

Apple Macintosh systems. Campuses with major Macintosh investments are in turmoil today, given the dismal business prospects for the Macintosh line and for Apple itself. Many institutions require or strongly recommend computers for students. A more forward-thinking approach is to require laptop computers, so that students can take advantage of their machines in libraries, classrooms, labs, other students' rooms, on trips, at home on vacation, etc. Such an approach requires a robust and pervasive network, which Wake Forest has planned and deployed. Faculty obviously need computers if they are to participate, and many faculty need a computer both in the office or laboratory and at home. A laptop is a cost-effective solution to this need, as well as to the desire among some faculty members to have a familiar system in the classroom for demonstrations. Many users object, however, to laptop keyboards and displays; some provision should be made for conventional keyboards a mouse and larger monitors for faculty who need them.

Most institutions assume that students will graduate with their first-year computer, and target faculty computer replacement on the same four year cycle. Although cost effective, this approach leaves seniors with computers three years older than freshmen, and many faculty with computers older than their students' machines. Wake Forest's program to replace computers every two years is the most aggressive this consultant has ever heard of. As such, there is a possibility that some of the capabilities of the newest computers in any year will will go unused, especially in the early years of the program when much of the educational use is text-based. By the same token, refreshing machines every two years should generate additional momentum and interest among

faculty as well as ensure that upperclassmen can participate in the latest educational advances.

Current upperclassmen, however, are effectively left out of the program unless they opt to purchase a conforming laptop computer. Given the current positive trajectory of the program, and concerns among some faculty that they cannot take good advantage of the network and laptops because upperclassmen do not have computers, the University should aggressively explore options for putting laptops into the hands of next year's juniors and seniors. Avenues to consider include communicating the educational benefits to students and their families; obtaining discounts from vendors; and creative use of the financial aid program.

A heavy emphasis has been given in the first year and previous pilot year to use of Lotus Notes, a proprietary product that provides an integrated suite of group communications capabilities. Many faculty were trained in use of a standard "template," and some took good advantage of the product's features. Others found it inappropriate for their needs or clumsy. Moreover, Notes is used by few colleges and universities compared to the overwhelming popularity of the World Wide Web.

Accordingly, the University should immediately extend training and support to use of the World Wide Web and other Internet standard tools as an alternate platform for educational innovation. In parallel, investment should be made in Internet gateways for Notes, and attempts should be made to engage the Lotus Division of IBM in providing more support for this potentially showcase site. During spring 1998, after assessing use of both platforms and the gateways between them, it may be appropriate to consider reducing or withdrawing support for Notes.

Although the IBM Thinkpads are very powerful computers, much of their functionality depends on access to network resources residing on server computers in the University data center. Such resources include Notes, WWW, Netnews, and e-mail servers as well as core administrative systems (and the Library catalog?). Should the data center be damaged by fire, smoke, water, or malicious behavior, the University would suffer a critical loss of communication and information. The University has plans for a new Information Services building with a second, redundant data center. The second center should be a high priority. In the interim, steps should be taken to maintain and test off site backups of critical programs and data. and to identify and arrange for processing at an alternate site. within the University or elsewhere. perhaps at the Medical Center.

Concern has been expressed about Internet overload, which renders Internet search and retrieval frustrating and real-time classroom presentations precarious. Two partial solutions should be explored. Use of a Web proxy server routes all WWW requests through a central node on campus which can retrieve and cache external queries, such that subsequent requests for the same remote resource can be served immediately. An additional benefit of a proxy server is data collection on sites in demand by the Wake Forest community. A second approach is to mirror remote sites that are important and popular among local users. If bandwidth bottlenecks are determined to be external to North Carolina, a joint effort among state institutions might be most appropriate.

Given the anticipated intensive use of the Thinkpads, it appears that insufficient attention has been given to furnishings and ergonomics. Many office and classroom desks are writing height, which for most people is two to four inches too high for keyboard work. In some cases, adjustable height chairs can remedy the problem; in other cases,

work surfaces should be lowered. Another problem, specific to laptops, is that the screen is typically tilted, which exposes the user to glare from overhead lights. The University should investigate installing minimum glare overhead lights or substituting task lighting.

An article with additional recommendations is available at [<http://pantheon.yale.edu/~danu/ce91.html>].

Major initiatives such as this require participation by one or more business partners, especially in small institutions lacking large technical staffs. Selection of IBM as the partner did not result in the lowest priced laptops, but did lead to a partnership with a major company able to devote substantial technical and other resources to ensure the success of the project. IBM's offerings include laptop hardware, UNIX and NT servers, software for communication (Lotus Notes) and network backup (ADSM), networking hardware, and consulting services. (The only company with comparable capabilities is Hewlett Packard, a company whose track record at Wake Forest was problematic.) Senior University management understand the benefits and costs of corporate partnering, and appear willing and able to manage the relationship such that both parties benefit while University interests remain paramount. The existence of other partnerships, in some cases with companies that compete with IBM, is prime evidence of this.

Finally, the University is to be commended for its commitment to systematic data collection and assessment of its innovative computer initiative. Such an assessment effort is essential if the University is to understand the impact on the University in the long run as well as make effective mid-course corrections. Although the faculty assessment team intends to invite external consultants from time to time, it would be prudent to ensure that external review and input be available on an ongoing basis. One possible approach is to

identify a number of institutions at various stages of computer deployment and educational use willing to participate in comparative studies.

### Questions for Consultant

1. Please comment on the compatibility of all facets of our information technology plan. See above
2. What insights do you have regarding how to make further use of the greatly expanded resources that are now available to us?

Do not assume that one-time information dissemination is adequate; continue promotion and peer information exchange efforts indefinitely. Beware of premature standardization on technologies and pedagogies; creative faculty and students will discover and create applications that cannot be predicted or even imagined. Ensure that innovation, per se, is rewarded, rather than solely those projects declared to be successful; if all the innovations succeed, the University is being too timid in its use of the state-of-the-art infrastructure that has been built. Finally, ensure that promotion, tenure, and salary increase decisions take into account effort and innovation in this domain.

3. What else could we be doing to expose faculty and students to the enhancing potentials of the new learning technology?

- Promotion and peer exchanges, as noted above.
- Travel grants
- Exchange programs with other leading-edge institutions
- On-campus Sessions to showcase applications
- Case studies series
- A semi-annual innovations fair
- Hosting a regional or national conference on these topics
- Web site

4. What, if any, unique aspects of the Wake Forest approach might serve as national models? What are the strengths and weaknesses of our approach?

- Wired classroom seats
- Laptops for faculty as well as students
- Two-year swapout for all computers, including faculty
- Use of Lotus Notes; potential for comparison of Notes and World Wide Web in instruction
- Wireless networking experiments

5. What are some of the best practices regarding the assessment and evaluation of the impact of technology upon learning?

The AAHE "Flashlight Project" has many thoughtful insights about this [<http://www.learner.org/content/ed/strat/eval/evalflash.html>].

6. In the years beyond our current planning, what are some of the major issues that we should be anticipating?

- Growing familiarity and use of computers and networks among incoming students.
- Increasing number of incoming students familiar with/expecting "alternative" pedagogies, including inquiry-based, project-based, team based, multimedia, et al.
- Increasing competition for traditional and adult learners from other educational institutions as well as businesses. Increasing demand by students for preparation for international careers.
- Increasing demand by alumni for lifelong learning.

7. How might we take fuller advantage of this opportunity to revise our curriculum in light of the new learning technology? We have placed initial emphasis upon using technology for student learning.

Early focus is appropriately on enhancing teaching and learning within the current curriculum. There are numerous approaches that can be effective, depending on the course and style of the instructor:

- Provision of course materials over the network
- Projection of computer-based materials
- Use of computers in class for real-time communication or problem solving
- Assignment of individual or team projects requiring computer-based resources
- Virtual office hours via network communication
- Extension of class hours via e-mail, conferencing, real-time chat
- Extension of classes to other locations via Internet, video conferencing.

It will take several years for Wake Forest faculty to explore and refine such approaches. Once faculty comfort levels and technical service levels have been achieved, and the effects, if any, on admissions have been studied, curriculum revision discussions might follow naturally.

10. What are the most promising areas (e.g., financial management, digital library, distance learning, student records, student recruitment) to be explored as our next priorities?

The robust network and widespread availability of student and faculty computers provide an ideal environment to reengineer the University's administrative and business

processes. Most institutions manage despite obsolescent information systems, many of which must be replaced or updated to accommodate the "Year 2000" problem. It is critical, whenever systems are replaced, to assess the underlying processes and to reconsider if replacement systems will continue to serve only central administration or if they also can serve students and faculty as direct clients. Once the community understands that academic information is "only a click away," they will wonder why administrative processes requires typing multi-part forms and standing in line!

The University's desire to increase diversity and leverage its information technology investment suggest that another fruitful area to explore is recruitment and admissions processing via the Internet. A large proportion of prospective Wake Forest families already have Internet access, so Web-based application and financial-aid forms would be an effective way to demonstrate that Wake Forest practices what it preaches. Most institutions can also improve their communication with families between acceptance and move-in; the Internet combined with early delivery of student laptops could improve this process.

Distance learning would represent a major change in the Wake Forest culture, although the campus network and, in particular, the video teleconferencing classroom, present ideal technical environments for experimenting with delivery of formal and informal learning. A possible early target for distance learning is the Wake Forest alumni The University of Pennsylvania provides one example of a traditional, residential institution that has enjoyed successes with distance learning in English, Classics, and Nursing.

9. Are there alternate training models that we should consider?

The University has put substantial effort into training and support for both faculty and students, including classroom instruction, customized documentation, on-site assistants, and a central help desk supported by specialized software. Lack of training did not surface as a major issue in the interviews, although several departmental assistants expressed concern that budgets were inadequate to provide them with ongoing training in new technologies and pedagogies.

Studies show that different individuals learn best in different ways: classroom instruction, individual tutorials, reading manuals, computer-based training, trial and error. One such difference seems especially salient: men are more comfortable with learning technical information in advance ('just in case') whereas women are more comfortable learning technical information when they see the application ('just in time'). Since the target undergraduate enrollment is evenly divided between men and women, alternate training programs should be available.

10. In what additional ways might we encourage faculty consideration of enhancing their instruction through the use of the new learning technology?

See (2) and (3) above.

11. What comments do you have about our plans for building an intranet and

using Lotus Notes as part of our internal system for communication?

An Intranet is essential, if by "Intranet" one means a repository of information and a set of communications that are restricted to the University (wfu.edu) domain. For reasons of information security, protection of University and third-party intellectual property, and individual privacy, it is essential to control access from elsewhere on the Internet.

Intranets are usually built using Internet-standard protocols and tools, such as WWW servers and clients, in order to leverage widespread availability and expertise in their use, and in order to be able to offer selected resources to community members located outside the domain (such as WFU students in residence at other campuses, and alumni).

Lotus Notes is used by numerous corporations but comparatively few colleges and universities, owing to its cost in license fees and machine (both client and server) resources, its proprietary architecture, and the widespread availability of Internet-standard products at minimal or no cost that perform many of the same functions. Lotus' development of the Domino server indicates that the company, now a division of IBM, recognizes the importance of inter-operation with Internet browser software. It remains to be seen if Domino will be a successful offering in the marketplace.

Given these concerns, the University would be unwise to restrict its Intranet platform to Notes, but should provide advice, training, and support on native Internet/WWW approaches. It is premature to abandon Notes after a comparatively short trial-and after substantial investments on the part of some faculty members. Rather the

University should deploy the Domino server, and assess the relative merits of Notes/Domino and native Web approaches over the next year or so.

12. What effects of our plan do you foresee on the character of our student body, and do you see ways that we might take advantage of technology to increase the diversity of our student body?

It is difficult to predict. Some students and parents could see the computer initiative as targeted career preparation, potentially reinforcing a narrow, "work hard, play hard" culture; whereas others could view the wired University as the ideal environment for intellectual exploration, discussion and collaboration with local and remote colleagues, and multimedia creation and publication. Of course some seeking the former could discover the latter, and the latter are, after all, adaptable skills in numerous careers.

Arguably, anything that puts Wake Forest on the (worldwide) map should increase diversity of inquiries, which can result in more diverse applications and matriculants. Surely Carnegie Mellon, for example, is more diverse than it was before it became one of the "hot computer schools" over a decade ago. Moreover, via the World Wide Web, it is possible to demonstrate in compelling ways how the University is embracing technology, educational innovation—and diversity.

13. What future technological developments should we be anticipating?

- Continued development of the communications and multimedia capabilities of the Web.
- Internet II
- Network computers, lighter and cheaper than today's laptops
- Wireless networking at higher data rates
- High-speed Internet access to homes via cable television, telephone, electric utility, or satellite.

14. What future challenges should we be anticipating with regard to our library system and its support for users of the new learning technology?

- Copyright and intellectual property issues and constraints Costs of digitizing materials
- Lack of tools and standards for multimedia databases
- Costs of maintaining both digital and hard-copy repositories for the foreseeable future
- Changing standards and impermanent media for digital storage
- Growing demand for training on use of new research and learning technologies by both faculty and students.

- Current lack of tools for integrating WFU library resources– bibliographic, full text, multimedia–remote library resources, and "the World Wide Web."

### III. CONSULTANTS' REPORT ON INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE

#### Overview

The recognition that Wake Forest University and its graduates receive indicates that the University is doing most things well. Wake Forest's development since its relocation to Winston-Salem in 1956 is the product of careful and thoughtful planning that has been attentive to both the splendid heritage that the college brought with it to Winston-Salem as well as to the new opportunities and new initiatives that have marked its history over the past forty years.

The University's focus upon the campus intellectual climate is a familiar theme in American higher education. The anti-intellectualism that has always pervaded American culture and the pragmatic mind-set that characterizes Americans are inevitable components of the intellectual environment of even the most renowned citadels of learning. Writing almost a century ago, Henry Adams confessed, in The Education of Henry Adams, that the work he did in four years at Harvard College could have been accomplished in four months of serious effort. Still, Wake Forest today faces not only those cultural currents that run counter to its purposes; it also confronts the career anxieties and aspirations of its students, as well as tuition and fees that many students and their parents find burdensome. Today's students are understandably preoccupied with the economic return on their investment in education. Goals that are seen as peripheral to preparation for a rewarding career are often regarded as marginal and even irrelevant. Activities designed to deepen and broaden intellectual life count for little among many students if they do not see those activities as serving their career goals.

It is paradoxical that the very factors that make Wake Forest students serious about their education keep them from envisioning a broader set of educational goals that would define a truly intellectual life. The challenge that Wake Forest has set for itself is to build upon the foundation of its students' purposefulness and seriousness an intellectual experience that will serve their lifelong needs as citizens and family members as well as successful practitioners of their chosen professions.

All of us acknowledge that "intellectual climate" is an amorphous term. On the other hand, we understand the range of educational goals and purposes that the University serves in its educational programs for undergraduates to include the following:

1. The satisfaction of intellectual curiosity through research and investigation.
2. The clarification of ideas and values through debate, discussion, reading, and writing.
3. The creation of original work in the form of research papers, musical compositions, plays, literature, and the like.
4. Preparation for advanced study in the professions and the various fields of scholarship.
5. Growth in civic skills and the capacity to be effective both as leader and follower in the political commonwealth.
6. Growth in the capacity to understand and enjoy ideas.
7. Delight in discovering new knowledge.
8. Understanding of and appreciation for cultures and peoples that are

unrepresentative of one's own heritage.

9. The ability to defend one's own beliefs and opinions, and the willingness to change one's beliefs and opinions in response to new evidence.

10. Delight in testing one's skills—intellectual, aesthetic, athletic—against demanding standards and stern competition.

It is obvious that the variety of activities and opportunities Wake Forest provides for its undergraduates, and the residential experience that is blended with the classroom experience, are designed to serve the educational goals set forth above—goals that are articulated in many ways by those who oversee the educational experience of Wake Forest students. Still, some of these goals and purposes constitute a "tough sell," particularly to an audience of students—and parents—who, in many instances, are preoccupied with getting a good first job or entry into the "right" advanced degree program. The goals of liberal education—including the capacity to function effectively in a pluralistic world of ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural difference—can seem remote relative to a goal that lies no more than four years distant.

Wake Forest now provides the opportunities and activities to serve admirably the goals spoken of above, and many students take advantage of those circumstances. During the past several years there have been numerous initiatives designed to identify the weaknesses of Wake Forest's overall undergraduate program and to specify—and in some instances? implement—ways of improving the overall intellectual climate and the experience of first-year students. The Plan for the Class of 2000, the Kuh report, the

Montreat Conference Report, the Lilly Workshop Report all represent impressive efforts to make Wake Forest a more vital environment for undergraduates.

Despite this admirable record, there remain unresolved issues and unanswered questions. The student population at Wake Forest is still relatively homogeneous, despite the commendable progress in attracting a more diverse student body. Moreover, the diversity that the University embraces does not contribute to the intellectual experience of students particularly effectively. Like many another institution, Wake Forest is balkanized. Most of the fraternities and sororities are virtually mono-racial. Few male athletes are fraternity members. Neither the racial nor socioeconomic diversity of the Wake Forest student body is well exploited in its educational potential. Furthermore, diversity itself is seen as largely a matter of attracting more African-American students- a commendable goal that requires unremitting effort. But diversity that will serve well the intellectual purposes of Wake Forest will include great variety in talents and temperaments, including some students who are not "well rounded" but who could make unusually rich contributions in particular areas.

As at most other colleges and universities, alcohol-and especially binge drinking-militates against the purposes of Wake Forest in its undergraduate program. Others question is the role of Greek organizations, with special focus upon the disruptions and distractions of rushing in the first year.

Those three topics-Diversity, Alcohol, and Greek life-provided primary foci for our many helpful conversations with faculty, staff, and students about the intellectual climate at Wake Forest.

### Perspective of Students

Students at Wake Forest University represent a highly selected group, bright, motivated, considerate, and energetic, who are drawn primarily from the southeastern and mid-Atlantic United States. As such, they bring with them not only their own expectations but those of their families and of the southern culture that has nurtured them to this point. They come to the University primarily for its academic reputation as well as for its commitment to personal education of the whole student. The *Pro Humanitates* ideal is a clear touchstone for much that students see both before coming and once admitted. In some ways, however, the meaning of that motto is not clearly understood.

We spoke with student members of the Committee on Student Life, both in a group assembled for us as part of the consulting visit, and informally in various ad hoc contexts. Not surprisingly for students in late adolescence, Wake Forest students find college life to be a key source of social as well as intellectual engagement.

Their expectations are shaped by the admissions literature and by information received before matriculation. Recently those expectations have included emphasis on exploration and communication with others, both face-to-face and through the new computer networks, an innovation that cannot help but influence the intellectual climate.

Once here, students experience an intensive orientation to both academic and residence life, one that occupies the better part of a week. One student noted that at the end of that period, they were basically turned loose; there is little formal transition to the independent thinking and activity that will characterize the rest of their University career.

The system of First-Year Seminars together with the choice of a theme to orient activities each year goes a long way to bridge this gap. Though some students found the seminars unrelated to their primary interests (chiefly because of the difficulty in exerting significant influence over which they will be assigned to), others reported them to be stimulating and dynamic introductions to critical thinking, reading, writing, and discussion. Two issues related to the seminars include their apparent variability in difficulty and work-load and their not being recognized as satisfying distribution requirements, a factor perceived by students as inappropriately restricting their ability to design a satisfying curriculum. On the whole, however, the seminars strike us as a useful way to generate student interest in the kinds of intellectual engagement that define an appropriate climate.

In the first semester, first-year students are preoccupied with establishing themselves as students living away from home; they build close ties with their dormitory neighbors and with students with whom they share interests. Both students and faculty report that this changes dramatically with the advent of the rush season for the Greek organizations. In their understandable eagerness not to be excluded from what is the most significant organized form of socialization, students retreat from intellectual engagement, defined as other than minimum reference to course requirements. This has been commented on in connection with class activities by faculty, with involvement in non-Greek extracurricular activities by students, and with dormitory friendships by resident assistants. Unfortunately, the end of rush is not always a time to resume the intellectual engagement, since Greek activities now represent a priority claim on the students' time.

To our great interest, we learned from a number of sources that keen intellectual engagement reemerges most frequently when students are separated from the social constraints of the Wake Forest campus, in experiences such as Study Abroad semesters, internships, independent study opportunities, or volunteer activities. Characterized as places where there is no choice but to work with people you might not have chosen as your friends, and where there is no social risk to trying new forms of behavior, these experiences often represent a sea change in a student's intellectual attitudes. Unfortunately, when they return to campus or the formal experience otherwise ends, there seems to be little long-term impact on the campus life as a whole or on the subsequent experience of that student. This is an area deserving of attention, as these students are a resource to promote change in and to enrich the intellectual life.

Another important dimension of the dominance of the social life by the Greek organizations is its necessary exclusivity. Students not electing to rush miss out on a major campus activity, and those who rush but are not chosen are even more seriously disadvantaged. This contributes to tension despite the willingness of Greek organizations to include non-Greek students in their activities. It also contributes to an unwillingness on the part of the students to express their individuality and the diversity of their experience, a diversity that transcends racial and ethnic difference and that immeasurably enriches the intellectual climate. First-year men are particularly disadvantaged in this process, even more than their female counterparts, and we would urge that mechanisms be identified to address the needs of these students. We also strongly urge that rush be deferred until later in the students' lives.

### Perspective of Faculty

Faculty members at Wake Forest University impressed us as energetic, devoted to the education of the students and to the advancement of their disciplines, and willing to engage in wide-ranging discussion that could improve the climate for these activities. These impressions arise from discussions with a group of faculty, with the faculty members of the Committee on Student Life, and with the authors of the Lilly Report.

They, like us, consider evidence of intellectual engagement on the part of a student to be reflected in willingness to question assumptions, to be fascinated by complexity, to take intellectual risks and hold potentially unpopular opinions, to take the initiative in pursuing answers to questions of their own devising, and to welcome a diversity of approaches to those answers. Faculty are troubled that unplanned activities that occur in loose connection with class activities are not recognized as a category of interaction contributing to the intellectual climate. They do not distinguish as formally between the in-class and out-of-class environment as do some members of other constituencies; rather they recognize the intellectual growth of the student pursuing questions during office hours, engaging in an independent study project (especially one of their own devising), initiating a discussion with one professor based on material prepared for a course with another, or applying habits of mind learned in formal course work to decision-making in even social contexts. By these criteria, they find the students to be remarkably engaged intellectually. -Faculty are in many cases actively pursuing efforts to establish interdisciplinary contexts for their teaching, to promote undergraduate research across the curriculum, to foster student organizations such as the Euzelians and

Philomathesians, and to enhance interest in the manifold opportunities for engagement in the co-curriculum. They recognize that faculty enthusiasm is generally reciprocated in student enthusiasm, the first prerequisite to intellectual engagement.

There was considerable disagreement as to the extent that the pre-professional orientation of the students was a detriment to developing an appropriate intellectual climate: some felt that it required students to be so grade-oriented that they deliberately avoided potentially enriching experiences that might distract them from their goal, while others found that the post-graduate goals provided a focus and motivation for students to avail themselves of intellectually enriching opportunities. There was also disagreement as to the extent that the social life of the students interfered with their development of an intellectual life. Some found no conflict, but many reported that, particularly during the period of fraternity/sorority rush, students were—far less willing to engage in more than meeting the minimum course requirements.

Faculty tended to discount the usefulness of artificially-conceived structures to introduce a faculty presence into the residence-life dimension, deeming the goal not fraternization as much as engagement. Nevertheless it seems clear that Wake Forest faculty are unusually available to their students, and that that availability is an important dimension of their faculty identity.

The consultants suggest that if still further influence of faculty on the intellectual -climate is desired, it will require some additional changes, some of them in attitude, some in infrastructure. In recruiting new faculty to Wake Forest, it is crucial that they understand that the expected (and rewarded) behavior will include an openness to students well beyond the classroom and laboratory. New faculty orientation can reinforce

this expectation while providing suggestions for mechanisms achievable by a newcomer to the community without jeopardizing his/her progress toward tenure in the areas of teaching and scholarship. Another issue affecting faculty participation that needs to be addressed in campus-wide discussion is the varying expectations of different departments, ranging from enthusiastic support of service-oriented faculty to active discouragement of their participation. Unless there is agreement as to the appropriate level of activity and how it shall be weighed in subsequent decisions affecting the faculty member's career, there will be little enthusiasm for junior faculty to risk the time it takes to attempt new initiatives.

We have the impression that there is some difference in attitude between faculty who have long experience at Wake Forest and those who have more recently arrived. With reason, the former are convinced that the current system is working quite well; with reason, many of the latter have ideas for innovation both in and out of the classroom and would like to have support for that innovation. There is probably a continuum between these poles as well, but it is critical that each end attempt to understand the valid arguments of the other in attempting to reach consensus. The computer initiative is an interesting opportunity to gauge faculty resilience and adaptability to new demands and constraints. It is also an opportunity to develop new means to engage students in ongoing dialogue and as a practical matter to provide more coherent publicity to the wide variety of events that might be of interest.

One area affecting faculty that is of some concern is the process by which decisions are made that affect faculty lives. To the extent that these are perceived as arbitrary or insufficiently consultative, they contribute to disengagement of the faculty

and reinforce their tendency to identify themselves first as professionals of their disciplines and only secondarily as Wake Forest faculty.

A theme that pervades all these suggestions is that faculty efforts toward enrichment of the intellectual climate must be authentic. They must represent important connections revealed through real interdisciplinary cooperation, not make-work or artificial juxtaposition for the sake of generating discussion. We agree with this perspective.

### Perspective of Student Life Staff

As is customary at residential universities, those responsible for the life of the students in the classroom spend 90% of their time on the 5% of the most motivated and engaged students, while those responsible for the life in the residence halls spend 90% of their time on the 5% who are least engaged. From this dichotomy stems many of the differences in perception between the two groups.

The staff of the division of student life are understandably troubled that attendance is so low at the remarkably interesting and varied co-curricular events that they have gone to great trouble and expense to plan. Somewhat lost in the shuffle is the failure of present communication systems to schedule and publicize such events in an optimally attractive way, given the competition from curricular demands on one hand and social activities on the other. Here is an area where the network could be effectively used.

The University has a clear policy regarding consumption of alcohol, but enforcement seems notably lacking, and there is a defeatist attitude that suggests

lipservice is the only available remedy. Peer advisors among the students represent an appropriate first step, but it must be recognized that binge drinking represents a significant deleterious influence on the intellectual life of the campus. We urge that resources and administrative clout be brought to bear to put teeth into the enforcement of the law in this area.

Structurally the design of the institution makes change difficult. The answerability of the Student Life Committee only to the Board of Trustees together with historical customs placing Greek life at the center of the campus, both physically and socially, make it hard to coordinate conversations that would lead to different outcomes. Nevertheless, such conversations are of key necessity. It is important to emphasize that \ the value of the conversation is not necessarily that it will lead to agreement, but rather that differences can be brought into the open and areas of agreement within those differences identified. We found all constituencies to be reluctant to raise issues that would lead to disagreement, an attitude sure to ossify the status quo.

Student life staff yearn for more support and involvement from faculty, whom they perceive as distant and engaged only in the concerns of their disciplines and in the narrowly defined teaching role. In part this results from their envisioning the ideal faculty as playing pro-active roles in the residence life of the students, as advisors of organizations and speakers in the dormitories. A faculty presence in the dormitories is seen as valuable, and has led to offering First-Year Seminars in some dormitory lounges. We are not as convinced that this is a useful or even appropriate way to spend faculty time, particularly if the diverse ways in which they already interact with students in and

out of class as fully appreciated. This might represent a good topic for a focused discussion.

The administrative entities to whom the residence life staff answer must also play a more active role in setting policy, facilitating discussion, and (of paramount importance) facilitating communication among the staff and between the staff and the faculty and students. The ThinkPad culture that is evolving should lend itself naturally to such conversations.

### Suggestions Regarding Specific Questions Raised in the Strategic Report

1. What is there in the culture of other campuses that promotes a vibrant learning environment outside the classroom?
  - a. An admissions process informed by a sophisticated understanding of diversity that embraces but moves beyond race and ethnicity and focuses upon temperaments, talents and special gifts.
  - b. A residential house system that provides the primary identification of students.
  - c. Separate residences for first-year students.
  - d. Rewards, recognition, and support for creative initiatives by individual students and groups of students.
  - e. Classroom group assignments that entail collaborative work outside class.

2. How can we increase student participation in extracurricular activities that foster cultural and intellectual development?

Wake Forest students indicate that they are strongly encouraged to "get involved," and they do; many clubs and activities, both social and other, already make a strong claim on their time. Increase focus on the kinds of activities that are most compatible with what is going on in the classroom – lectures and concerts. Be careful about encouraging participation in activities that are more related to social enjoyment rather than to intellectually challenge and growth. Pay more attention to scheduling so as to avoid conflicts and to enhance coordination with related classroom activities.

3. How can we further increase the connections between the curriculum and extracurricular activities?

Perhaps a better question is, "What can we do to protect the priority and primacy of classroom activity?" The data suggest that Wake Forest students, on average, spend too little time on class assignments. Focusing more attention on fostering attitudes that transcend the categories of curriculum and extracurricular would be useful.

4. How can we increase student interest in curricular activities (i.e., spending more time on course work)?

Rather than assigning more work, focus on making course-related projects more engaging: interactive, discussion oriented, project oriented, active learning, collaborative, with each student having a stake in the outcome.

5. How can we effectively support students who are trying to build a strong intellectual climate?

Provide ways for them to find each other: the Euzelians, and the Philomathesians represent a good start in this respect. Encourage honors involvement or independent study in as many contexts as possible. Provide academic recognition through awards and other financial support from discretionary funds. Continue the use of themes for the academic year should be a good catalyst for encouraging related student activity. Make use of students who have returned from studying abroad, enabling them to translate the intellectual and personal growth of their international experience into continued enrichment once home.

6. How can we make students more responsible for building a stimulating campus climate?

To what extent is this the students' responsibility? Might the question be how to prevent students from interfering with the development of this attitude on the part of other students? Reward and recognize the desired kind of activity and initiative.

Encourage and permit students to do projects that link two or more courses they are taking. Orient social activities away from alcohol.

7. Can we provide attractive opportunities in addition to rules and expectations?

Attain this goal by including students in decision-making, permitting linkages between courses in different disciplines, and encouraging faculty to look beyond departmental limits for opportunities.

8. What role do curriculum, class size, and opportunities for independent study have on the intellectual climate at Wake Forest?

Small class size positively influences opportunities for discussion in class, as well as the likelihood of individual attention. More independent study would almost certainly stimulate more intellectual activity and excitement.

9. How can we effectively increase the diversity of our student body without losing our traditional constituency?

Certainly this depends on how you define both "traditional constituency" and "diversity." We believe that the meaning of diversity needs to be expanded to recognize that Wake Forest has numerous constituencies. In many ways, the most important constituency is its students and potential students. The best students in the land will not

be attracted to a university that is too homogeneous. The great majority of alumni we believe, will appreciate and support the University's efforts to have a population of students that is reflective of the national population and reflective of the world in which Wake Forest graduates will be functioning as citizens and in the work world.

10. How can we improve our upper and lower division advising systems to make them more effective?

In the context of our knowledge of advising systems elsewhere, it is not clear to us that the system at Wake Forest is ineffective. The system as we understand it should work, with only 8-10 students per advisor. If increased dedication or attention is desired in some instances, there will have to be considerations of how to reward advisors through salary increases or otherwise.

11. How do we get faculty to buy into being more involved with student life outside the classroom?

It is not clear that this is what is needed. We question whether faculty should be expected to be advisers to student organizations in cases in which the organization's activities do not contribute significantly to the intellectual life of the campus. "Outside the classroom" activities already apparent include extra discussion and consultation which often takes place in the faculty office or classroom building.

12. How can we generate a discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of delaying Greek rush until the sophomore year?

The testimony of students, staff, and faculty concerning the disruptive and distracting impact of Greek rush on the first year is compelling. Students speak of pledges dropping out of other activities. Faculty speak of diminished attention to academic work. We see a need not so much for discussion as for executive or trustee decision-making. There clearly is a reluctance to tamper with the system and a reticence even to discuss it. We believe there should be an inquiry about other campuses that have delayed rush, and about the impact on the campuses. As we see the issue, it is a matter of educational policy, but the faculty—which is normally responsible for educational policy—seems to be left out of the loop on this issue and is not particularly eager to claim it. Governance has ceded responsibility for the Greek system to the Committee on Student Life, which answers only to the Trustees. Surely Wake Forest students would have a better first year if they were free of the distractions of rush. And they would face rush in their sophomore year with greater knowledge of Wake Forest and with a more confident sense of whether or not they wish to join a Greek organization.