

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Senate Committee on University Priorities

S.01-2

As amended
by Senate
Jan 8/01

Memorandum

TO: Senate
FROM: John Waterhouse
Vice President, Academic
RE: External Review - Gerontology
Programs and Research Centre
DATE: 14 December 2000

External Reviews of academic units are conducted under Guidelines¹ approved by Senate. The review process is intended to ensure that the quality of the department's academic programs and research is high, that members of the department participate in the administration of departments, and that the departmental environment is conducive to the department's objectives. Under these Guidelines, Senate is expected to receive advice from the Senate Committee on University Priorities and to provide feedback to the unit and the Dean.

The following materials are forwarded to Senate for consideration:

- The External Review Report
- The response to the External Review Report by the Department
- The comments of the Dean
- The comments of the Vice-President, Academic
- The recommendations from the Senate Committee on University Priorities

The Program and Research Centre Director, Dr. G. Gutman will be available at Senate as a resource person.

Motion

That Senate concurs with the recommendation^{2,3,4} from the Senate Committee on University Priorities concerning advice to the Gerontology Program and Research Centre on priority items resulting from the external review, as outlined in S.01-2, and that recommendation #1 be referred back to SCUP for further consideration"

¹ The Guidelines can be found at: <http://www.reg.sfu.ca/Senate/SenateComms/SCUP-ExReview.html>.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Senate Committee on University Priorities

Memorandum

TO: Senate

FROM: John Waterhouse
Vice President, Academic

RE: External Review - Gerontology
Programs and Research Centre

DATE: 7 December 2000

The Senate Committee on University Priorities has reviewed the External Review Report prepared on the Gerontology Programs and Gerontology Research Centre in May 2000, together with the response from the unit and comments from the Dean and the Vice President, Academic.

SCUP recommends to Senate that the Gerontology Programs and Gerontology Research Centre and Dean be advised to pursue the following as priority items:

1. The Gerontology Programs and Gerontology Research Centre should work toward a single intake of students for the Diploma Program in order to streamline planning and administration of the program.
2. The Gerontology Programs and Gerontology Research Centre should include as part of its three year academic plan and future updates the identification of opportunities for research collaboration and integrated programming with the Institute for Health Research and Education.
3. The Gerontology Program and Gerontology Research Centre should increase the proportion of publishing in peer-reviewed publications. A report on the unit's progress towards increased peer-reviewed publishing should be provided September 1 annually to the Dean and to SCUP for each of the next three years.
4. The Gerontology Program and Gerontology Research Centre should not pursue departmental status at this time.

c. G. Gutman
J. Pierce

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice-President, Academic

Memorandum

TO: Gloria Gutman
Director, Gerontology Programs
& Research Centre

FROM: John Waterhouse
Vice President, Academic

RE: Gerontology External Review

DATE: 3 November 2000

The report of the External Review Committee for the Gerontology Programs and Gerontology Research Center was submitted on May 30, 2000 following the review visit on March 23 and 24, 2000. The response of the Director and Associate Director to the report was received in September 2000 followed by the Dean's response on October 23, 2000.

My comments on this external review follow and the comments of the Director and Dean are attached:

1. The review committee is to be commended for the scope of their analysis and recommendations. However, a number of the recommendations do not seem to have been made with a full understanding of University fiscal constraints. For example, the recommendations that gerontology be provided with more space and that the programs receive more support resources are not feasible at this time. To some extent, the shortage of resources for the graduate gerontology program can be traced to the fact that the provincial government does not fund significant numbers of SFU graduate students. It should be noted that the Faculty of Arts has recently increased the gerontology faculty complement by one FTE thereby alleviating, at least to some degree the pressure on faculty.
2. The review report recommends a major strategic review of the diploma program with a view to winding down the program and directing its resources to mounting an undergraduate major. In my opinion the Director and Dean are correct in defending the program. There is both a clear student demand for the program and considerable opportunity for expansion in the international arena as outlined by the Dean. I do not therefore conclude that a major strategic review of the diploma program occur at this time.
3. The review committee also recommends that the existing masters program be split in two, resulting in one program with a research focus and the other a professional focus. I do not agree with this recommendation. It seems clear that the current structure is capable of supporting both streams. I believe that the program director should develop student information that clearly

distinguishes between the two streams and that additional faculty time be devoted to student advising so that students fully understand the different requirements of the two streams. Similarly I do not agree with the reviewers' suggestion that students without undergraduate courses in gerontology be admitted to the graduate program.

4. The recommendation that the University provide base funding for the Gerontology research center is not feasible. Most research centers at Simon Fraser University do not have base budget funding. To the extent possible, the Center should seek granting council funding to support its activities. In the interest of increasing the focus of program activities, I also concur with the recommendation of the Dean that the research streams in the center be decreased from five to four.
5. I concur with the review committee's recommendation that the gerontology faculty should focus their publishing efforts on refereed journals even if this means cutting down on the number of in house publications.
6. The gerontology faculty should actively seek to integrate their research and programs with those that will be developed within the structure of the Institute for Health Research and Education. Doing so has the potential to increase access to research funds for gerontology research. Complementary teaching programs in health should provide more program options for gerontology students. Integration of research and programming with the Institute may eventually provide a means to mount a doctoral program in gerontology.
7. I do not recommend that the program consider departmental status until there are significantly more faculty members with gerontological teaching and research interests at SFU.

c. J. Pierce

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts
MEMORANDUM

To: John Waterhouse
V/P Academic

From: John T. Pierce
Dean of Arts

Subject: Response to Gerontology
External Review

Date: October 23, 2000

The External Review team concluded that the "Simon Fraser Gerontology Research Centre and Program is an asset to Simon Fraser University, the community in which it is based, and to the Canadian community of researchers, educators and practitioners in the field of Gerontology." It goes on to say that much has been accomplished with limited number of people and resources. Not surprisingly, the review team identify time and resources as two critical factors imperative to the future success of the program.

I will limit my comments to the major recommendations. As Gloria Gutman and Andrew Wister note in their own response to the external review, the reviewers are recommending two significant structural changes to the Master's Program. In the one, there is a proposal to develop two programs - a professional and a research or thesis base. Gutman and Wister comment that there are already two streams (a project and a thesis) and a co-op option is being developed. To develop two MA's in my view would only aggravate the resource and time issues, and not contribute demonstrably to an improvement in the program. The other structural change relates to the admission of MA students without a gerontology background. I agree with Wister and Gutman that this would compromise the quality of the Program and most likely lengthen completion times. The other recommendations regarding the MA program are, not surprisingly, strongly endorsed by Gutman and Wister relating to more space, more funding for grads, and more publication from theses. The first of these will be difficult to achieve over the short term unless Harbour Centre is expanded. Likewise, funding for graduate students is unlikely to improve over the short term until the Dean of Graduate Studies completes his review of funding levels and proposes changes. An increase in publication from thesis work, while time consuming, is easily achievable over the short term.

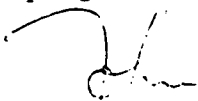
Another major recommendation is to consider eliminating the diploma program and move on to a major. This is a curious recommendation in light of the demand for, and current success of, the diploma program. As Gutman and Wister argue, there are different educational markets which the MA and diploma programs serve. And, the international diploma program, which is based upon distant education courses, promises to see continued growth over the near term.

The faculty complement situation has improved since the external review site visit, bringing its total to 4.5 CFL. Possibilities for further expansion in this complement exist through the CRC program and/or a New Investigator Award under the Health Transition Fund. Other staffing/supervisory issues remain. The external review, supported by Gutman and Wister, argue for a 0.5 practicum supervisor (with faculty status). The Faculty of Arts is not in a position to fund this immediately but is prepared, as part of a larger initiative, to redress imbalances in staff across the Faculty. Lastly, the need by current faculty to focus more on peer reviewed publications is acknowledged.

Under the heading 'Administration', a number of resource/personnel issues are identified and solutions proposed, most of which are supported by Gutman and Wister. This office has already committed more resources to support the Graduate secretary position. In accordance with the plan outlined in the previous paragraph, this office will work with Gerontology to alleviate the situation.

The Gerontology Research Centre (GRC) attracted considerable attention from the reviewers. For example, it is argued that GRC should have a base budget, contract research should be reduced and two of the five research themes should be abandoned. Ideally, all research centres should have budgets. Most in the Faculty of Arts, however, do not - they are encouraged to be self-funding. Having said this, GRC does receive secretarial support from this office. To change this situation, a very compelling argument would have to be made. Gutman and Wister agree that contract research should be decreased and that the "Older Adult Education...." stream be dropped. They do, however, disagree, and I support them, with the proposal to eliminate "Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons." There is simply too much potential and work completed to date to abandon this.

Lastly, the proposal to confer departmental status upon Gerontology has merit and would likely be supported within the Faculty. The timing of this depends on a number of factors, including budget availability. Much less likely to materialize, at least over the short term, is the suggestion for a PhD program. The resource implications of this are too onerous.



John T. Pierce

JTP/jm:

**RESPONSE TO THE EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE
GERONTOLOGY PROGRAMS AND THE GERONTOLOGY RESEARCH
CENTRE AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**

Submitted by

Dr. Gloria Gutman, Director

&

Dr. Andrew Wister, Associate Director

September 2000

Response to Review and Recommendations

1. Programs

1.1 Masters Program in Gerontology

We provided to the reviewers comprehensive information pertaining to the performance of our Master's Program. This program has been running since the fall of 1996. We graduated our 14th M.A. student in 2000-2. Currently, there are 21 students in the program. We admit six to seven students per year and graduate about six per year. The average time of completion is currently 2.86 years (see Table 1), and we anticipate that this will decrease with the upcoming addition of the faculty and support resources approved in 1996 with the Master's Program. Virtually all of the graduates seeking employment have been successful in securing a job in their desired field (see Table 2). After assessment of these performance indicators, the program has been given a very positive review by the external review committee.

Before addressing the specific recommendations of the external reviewers, it should be noted that the Gerontology Steering Committee, Gerontology faculty and several tiers of SFU administration spent five years (1991-1996) developing and refining the Gerontology Master's Program so that it would meet the needs of students, the needs of prospective employers, and available resources. The original proposal was extensive and included: surveys of the Diploma Program; letters from interested students; evaluation of employment needs and opportunities for graduates; rationale for all new courses; discussion of the relationship between the Gerontology Diploma and Gerontology

Master's Programs, as well as other related issues. There were many iterations of the proposal and all of the structural permutations raised in the external review were carefully considered.

The external review committee made two significant structural recommendations pertaining to the Gerontology Master's Program. The first (see section 1.1.1 of the external review) pertains to "refining the program into two types of Master's degrees": a professional Master's and a thesis Master's degree. We have several problems with this recommendation. First, the external reviewers provide no rationale for this structure. Second, the current structure of the Gerontology M.A. has two streams: a project stream and a thesis stream, which meet the needs of the same two types of students – those desiring to continue graduate study and those unlikely to do so. The external review committee recommends that only the professional stream students take a practicum (termed Internship in the SFU M.A. Program). The original proposal argues that any M.A. student not meeting the requirement of work experience in a gerontological setting complete the Internship because it provides valuable experience that assists in the securing of future employment. The experience of our graduate students bears this out, and we strongly support the continuation of the Internship for students in both streams. In addition, a Co-op option linked to the Internship is under development for our M.A. students, which should not be restricted to only project stream students. Also, we currently have a part-time option for both types of students – project and thesis. Thus, the two-tiered degree system recommended does not appear to add to the program in a meaningful manner.

The second (see section 1.1.2) recommendation is that we should allow students into the M.A. program with either no gerontology prerequisites, or a minimum of one or two courses. This recommendation would severely dilute the quality of the curriculum and hamper the functioning of the program. As stated in the original proposal, students entering any graduate program must have a minimal fundamental level of knowledge in order to complete graduate work. Admitting students with little or no gerontology background into our graduate courses would require increasing the number of required gerontology courses by at least three in order to provide the basic knowledge and skills required to successfully complete these courses. This would increase completion times for the M.A. program substantially and would likely deter many students from applying. Also, our experience with admitting qualifying students with little gerontological training into the M.A. has resulted in the only instance of a problem and subsequent withdrawal from the program. Further, at present, incoming students move through the courses as a group. If some students had to take "basic gerontology courses" at the start of their graduate coursework, all of the benefits of students moving through the program in successive cohorts would be compromised. This would result in a two-tiered system. In addition, adopting recommendation 1.1.2 would severely compromise student cohesion, intellectual exchange, and scheduling fluidity.

Furthermore, we currently evaluate each Master's program candidate individually with regard to course requirements. Exceptional students, or those with considerable work experience, may be admitted with fewer than the 5-6 courses required as prerequisites. In

our opinion, relaxing the current entry requirements may create more problems than it solves.

The remaining recommendations in sections 1.1.3 – 1.1.6 of the external review are consistent with the views of the Gerontology Steering Committee and faculty. There is an urgent need for office space for graduate students (1.1.3). There is very little space for them to work in the open area of the Gerontology Research Centre and none within an enclosed office. As noted in section 1.1.4, funding for graduate students needs to be increased. Table 3 shows all awards received by our graduate students to date. We are in process of creating a co-op Internship available for all Master's students, not just the ones in the project stream. In response to 1.1.5, efforts are being made to encourage publications of theses and projects in peer-reviewed journals and we will examine a co-authorship policy. A significant proportion of our 14 graduates are involved in publishing in peer-reviewed journals either from their thesis or course papers. Since the review, one of our M.A. graduates (Y. Cvitkovich) has a publication based on his thesis (co-authored with Dr. Wister) in press in a peer reviewed journal; five completed/current gerontology M.A. graduates (Chittenden, McCoy, Wilson, Allen & Wong) have co-authored a paper with Dr. Wister that was accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal last month; another graduate (Romeder) has one under review; and another graduate currently enrolled at USC in a gerontology Ph.D. program (Wong) has a solo peer reviewed article in progress. Finally, (see 1.1.6), we intend to include a course on Administration and Management, as recommended, but only after we have in place the full compliment of faculty that was approved in the Master's proposal. In fact, the original Master's proposal

included an Administration of Services stream, which was eliminated due to resource limitations.

1.2 The Diploma Program

The external review committee has recommended major programmatic changes to the Diploma Program. These appear to be largely based on the model of gerontology program development the review committee has had personal experience with at the University of Toronto and McMaster University rather than on deficiencies in the SFU program. Specifically, they recommend (section 1.2.1) that the Gerontology Steering Committee and administration engage in strategic planning, with the clearly stated aim of replacing the Gerontology Diploma Program with a major in Gerontology at the undergraduate level. While we will revisit this issue with the Steering Committee and in the context of the next three-year planning cycle, there are several reasons why such a structural change to the gerontology program should be considered with caution.

First, there is no evidence whatsoever that students obtaining a B.A. in Gerontology, as compared with an undergraduate degree in a traditional discipline plus a post-baccalaureate Diploma in Gerontology, have a superior experience with respect to entry into the job market. Secondly, there is mounting evidence that a Diploma in Gerontology is attractive to international as well as domestic students. We have already graduated a number of students from outside the country (Germany, Japan, Taiwan, USA); there are several from off shore (Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, USA) currently enrolled; increasing numbers each year apply for admission. It should also be noted that we are currently in

negotiation with the Inter-America Development Bank to assist in filling the professional education needs of several Latin American countries vis a vis gerontology, using the distance education version of the SFU Diploma program as a starting point. The Catholic University of America's International Center on Global Aging is a potential American partner. This center's recent market research has identified a clear preference for a post-baccalaureate program among potential international students, the bulk of whom already have a degree and would not consider a second bachelor's degree.

With reference to the review committee's suggestion of replacing the diploma training with graduate training, it should be noted that only a small proportion of Diploma students have the academic requirements and desire to enter the Master's Program. The courses associated with the two programs differ in level of sophistication, organization, and orientation. Graduates of these two programs are different not only in ability, but also in their learning needs. Diploma students desire more practice-oriented course work; graduate students have greater interest in theory, research methodology, and policy and program development and evaluation skills trainings.

It is our experience that the Diploma in Gerontology is commensurate with the current needs of students and employers. There are two main types of Diploma student. One type are individuals working in full-time positions who desire specialized training in gerontology to blend with their job experience. Another type are students who add the Diploma immediately upon receiving an undergraduate degree. We have found that many of the former type greatly appreciate the accessibility of the SFU Diploma program – all

but one of our required courses can be obtained by distance; most in-person courses are offered in the late afternoon or evening; and the practicum may be waived for students with experience in working with seniors.

Further, the Gerontology Diploma Program has experienced 17 years of successful course delivery (as reflected in responses on the university's standard course evaluation forms) and student recruitment (at any point in time over the last 17 years, and currently, the Program have approximately 100 active students). These indicators do not support the elimination of the Diploma program. In fact, the only complaints registered by Diploma students were with respect to the need for a Practicum Supervisor and more Program Assistant contact. Both of these problems would be eliminated if the resources requested at the time the Master's Program was approved had been granted

Recommendation 1.2.3 is to reduce the number of Diploma-level gerontology courses, and to add them back as undergraduate courses for a major. If the Diploma Program were, in future, to be converted into an undergraduate major, it should be done with the current full compliment of courses. These courses were developed based on the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education guidelines, which guide gerontological curriculum development in North America. All are needed in order to provide students with the necessary breadth, and/or to cover pre-requisite requirements of students going on to the Master's, as well as to offer some choice in selecting courses that match students' interests. Further, it should be noted that any temporary or permanent reduction in the number of undergraduate course offerings would be problematic for our faculty.

We are currently filling two tenure-stream positions – a replacement for Yves Carriere (Assistant Professor), who left in July, 2000 to take a position with Statistics Canada in Ottawa; and a new position in the Built Environment area that was approved in 1996 as part of the M.A. Program but which up to now has been authorized only as a Limited Term appointment. New junior faculty should not be expected to teach at the graduate level only.

Recommendation 1.2.2 suggests replacing our proposed International Diploma with a Certificate in Gerontology based on courses from the minor and the Masters Program. As indicated above, our intention was to base the International Diploma on distance education courses. All distance courses developed to date are at the Diploma level; we have no plans to make the MA program available by distance. Additionally, a certificate as defined at SFU is comprised mainly of lower division courses - we have no plans to develop lower division courses.

2. Faculty

Subsequent to the external review we have received approval to fill the CFL position in the Built Environment area, and are currently in the search process. This fulfills the first part of recommendation 2.1 and brings our CFL compliment to 4.5 (Gloria Gutman; Andrew Wister; Barbara Mitchell (.5FTE); replacement for Yves Carriere; and the new Built Environment CFL). The second part of recommendation 2.1 – for a .5FTE Practicum/Internship Supervisor position has not as yet been approved, and is urgently needed. Currently the Gerontology faculty and Norah Holtby (our Departmental

Assistant) are burdened with this responsibility. We fully agree with the external reviewers' recommendation that this should be a faculty position.

With respect to recommendation 2.2, greater attention has been placed on peer reviewed journal publication for the last several years. Peer reviewed articles are given the highest priority, followed by books and chapters published by established publishing houses.

Since the review, Gerontology faculty have received acceptances on five peer-reviewed articles, and several others have been submitted for review. The most recently published book (*The Overselling of Population Aging*, E. Gee & G. Gutman, Eds - January, 2000) was published by Oxford University Press. While this book contains chapters by Drs. Carriere and Mitchell it should be clearly understood that there has never been any expectation or requirement that faculty (junior or otherwise) must contribute to in-house publications (recommendation 2.3). As has been our practice in the past, a supportive professional environment will be created for the new CFLs, including mentoring and professional development (recommendation 2.4).

3. Administration

We are very much in agreement with recommendation 3.1 that additional administrative support for the programs is needed. We have very recently been granted additional support in the form of a .5FT Graduate Secretary for the period October, 2000 – March 31, 2001. This position needs to be made permanent. We also strongly agree with recommendations 3.2-3.4 -- more space and equipment are required for Research

Assistants, faculty, the Practicum Supervisor and Graduate Secretary; laboratory space is needed; and equipment allowances are inadequate.

Recommendations 3.5 – 3.7 deal with organization of library activities and expansion of resources at Harbour Centre. First, the reviewers recommend that the GRC Information Officer should not continue creating bibliographies, except in response to specific requests (3.5). Since the last review, bibliographies have in fact only been produced in response to specific requests. However, once produced, we list these in our Annual Report as Centre products. We also make them available free of charge to Information Centre users. They serve the important function of assisting students and the community in the acquisition of resources. Second, it is suggested that all journals that are paid for by Gerontology be housed at Belzberg (3.6), and that support for book acquisitions be increased (3.7). The small journal collection in the GRC (partly comprised of journals received by faculty as part of membership in organizations) is regularly used by our faculty and staff (17 individuals) and by students. This non-circulating collection provides quick and easy access to a selection of the most regularly read journals. These overlap those in the SFU library system and therefore it makes sense to leave them in the GRC library. With respect to book acquisition support, funds for books maintained in the GRC Information Centre come from the GRC's endowment fund interest and from donations. We plan another request for donations to be included with our next Newsletter mail out. As regards Belzberg library, we have strong and cordial relations with Nina Smart and her staff and feel that they are providing as much support as possible to the Gerontology programs and Centre.

We fully concur with recommendation 3.8 that a full-time receptionist be hired with the cost shared between the Centre and the Program. Since the establishment of the Centre, reception services for the Centre and the Programs have been paid for solely by the Centre. Financial exigencies in the form of low interest rates and the need for interest recapitalization have necessitated the Centre cutting the receptionist position to half-time. Given the volume of needed reception services generated by three teaching programs as well as the Centre's clientele, this is a highly unsatisfactory situation. The expectation that the Centre should cover the full costs of the position is also unfair.

4. Connections of the Faculty Within and Outside the University

It is recommended that systemic efforts be made to nourish alumni relationships. We agree with this recommendation and will attempt to revitalize the alumni organization which, in the past, was more active than it currently is.

5. Gerontology Research Centre

5.1 Base budget funding

The external reviewers expressed surprise that the GRC does not receive base budget funding from the University and recommend that operating support be provided. We strongly agree with this recommendation (5.1).

5.2 Contract research

Recommendation 5.2 states that contract research should be de-emphasized. Again, we are in agreement. However, it must be recognized that in several of the applied research areas that the GRC specializes in (e.g. Built Environment; Technology and Aging), grant opportunities are extremely limited and small scale. Every attempt will be made, however, to emphasize peer-reviewed publication of findings regardless of funding source the fostering of which, we expect, is as the underlying reason for this recommendation.

5.3 Research theme areas

In recommendation 5.3 the external reviewers endorse the three-year plans for three of the GRC's five research theme areas: "Health Promotion/Population Aging", "Built Environment" and "Changing Demography and Life Styles". They go on to recommend that "Older Adult Education" be dropped as a theme area unless additional faculty strength can be added to sustain it and that the "Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons" theme area also be dropped or grouped with the Demography and Life Styles area. We concur with the recommendation relating to Older Adult Education. More than 12 years of work has gone into the development of a research and teaching program in Educational Gerontology as one of five areas of expertise at the Gerontology Research Centre. The course "Teaching the Older Adult" was first offered as a special topics course, funded by the Faculty of Education, in 1987.

Subsequently, it has been offered by the Faculty of Education as a regular course, Education 351 on a sessional stipend basis. Recently, a distance version was developed. The first time it was offered the enrollment was 38; the second time it was 57. During 1998-99, a full-time position was created within the Faculty of Education that was funded on a 50% basis by Education, 35% by the Gerontology Research Centre and the remainder by Continuing Studies. This arrangement built on a cost sharing arrangement undertaken previously on several occasions. Unfortunately, it was not possible to sustain the funding arrangement in 1999-2000. Changes within the Faculty of Education, specifically the departure from the University of Dr. Michael Manley-Casimir, a founding member of the Gerontology Steering Committee, has further weakened this theme area. As the reviewers correctly observed, Older Adult Education is currently essentially a one-person enterprise. It should be noted however, that this theme area is connected with other areas -- most especially Health Promotion, Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of Older Adults and Changing Demography and Life Styles. If it is not possible to re-establish a strong relationship with the Faculty of Education (ideally with a joint tenure-stream appointment) then this theme area is probably best subsumed within one of the other GRC theme areas.

While there are some similarities in the case of the Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons theme area (the review committee only met with one researcher from the area; a key faculty member, Dr. Ezzat Fattah, has recently retired), the overall situation is quite different. Unlike the Older Adult Education area which was only added as a theme area in recent years, the Prevention of Victimization and

Exploitation of Older Persons area was one of the original three identified in the proposal, funded by SSHRC, to establish the Centre. Its inclusion was based on on-going teaching and research within the School of Criminology. Over the years, the GRC has had a very strong relationship with the School of Criminology. For example, Dr. Fattah was a founding member of the Steering Committee. Together with Dr. Vince Sacco, he developed and taught campus and distance versions of Crim 411- Crime and Victimization of the Elderly. He also published in this theme area. When he retired, he was replaced on the Gerontology Steering Committee by the current School of Criminology Chair, Dr. Robert Gordon. Dr. Gordon has a personal long-standing association with Gerontology as the developer and instructor for a cross-listed Criminology/Gerontology course on Adult Guardianship Law, his area of research specialization. He has served on various Gerontology committees, and has worked conjointly with the team leader of this research area, Charmaine Spencer.

Also in contrast to the Older Adult Education area, it should be noted that the Centre Research Associate position held by Ms. Spencer has been financially self-sustaining since it was originally established with a grant from Justice Canada. Funding sources include grants and contracts from SSHRC, Health Canada, The Law Foundation of BC, the Law Commission of Canada, the Notary Foundation, etc.

Most importantly, it should be noted that this is a nascent area in which the SFU GRC has played a sustaining and a leadership role. Specifically -- Elder abuse was identified as a significant problem in the mid-1980s, and the first Canadian national study was

conducted in 1989. From 1989 to 1995, the federal government provided considerable funding via its family violence initiative. In 1995 the initiative ended. Almost every social science researcher who had been working in the area moved on to other areas, with the notable exception of the GRC's staff. Some centres have been the administrative home for some "elder abuse" funding since then, but have not actually conducted any research in the area themselves. It is important to recognize the GRC's contribution -- much of the work has focussed on applied research and model building, cross-disciplinary research, and deconstructing misconceptions. Some of the GRC firsts include:

- 1992-94 – first Canadian study of **financial abuse of seniors**. This in-depth qualitative and quantitative study looked at financial abuse within a normative context of financial dealings within families. The study became the foundation for public education materials and for bank staff training on financial abuse.
- 1994-95 - the first overview of the problem of **abuse of seniors in institutions** in Canada, looking not only at the extent and types, but important legal and labour issues in the area.
- 1998-99 - the first Canadian research to specifically identify **alcohol as an abuse related factor among** perpetrators and victims. This work examined the problem using a cross-disciplinary approach, and identified specific ways in which community practitioners could deal with both problems.
- 1998 and 2000 - The first consideration of **social and economic costs** of abuse and neglect. In Phase 1, the potential cost areas were identified, a model was developed for considering tangible and intangible costs, and the strengths and

limitations of economic analysis were identified. The editors of the *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect* have asked Charmaine Spencer, the team leader in this theme area, to submit a journal article on this work, and that article is near completion. Currently, Ms. Spencer is engaged in Phase 2, a feasibility study for Health Canada, which looks at existing databases, and provincial and national government information. It also identifies the steps needed to improve the data in this area, sets out ways of valuing unpaid contributions, and explores ways of reducing age-bias in determining the value for loss of an older person's life (alternatives to human capital approach). This work has implications not only for cost studies in this area, but also for health costs studies involving older adults generally.

- The first Canadian description of **abuse of older members in Native Communities**. This information is being used by more than one aboriginal community in Ontario (1996).
- The first exploration of the **health consequences of abuse against older women**. This has resulted in a preliminary model for looking at the interactions between health, abuse, and "normal aging"; and at abuse as a significant health stressor in old age (1998-2000).
- The first comprehensive look at the **ethical aspects of abuse** (1996, & 2000). We have been developing and refining a framework for ethical decision making in this area that moves the approach from the narrow confines of health care ethics to a model that takes into account the dynamics of abuse and the way an abusive

situation can undermine the “free choice” that we normally associate with “autonomy”.

- The first Canadian description of factors related to **abuse of older people in rural communities** (1999) The first in-depth exploration of what would be needed to **train senior counselors** (peer counselors, senior citizen counselors, information and referral counselors) to assist abused peers. An examination of the major **justice barriers** for dealing with abuse and neglect (1999), and an exploration of the strengths and limitations of alternative approaches (“restorative justice”, “alternative dispute resolution”, “family mediation”)

Since the external review, the Centre has received funding for three new elder abuse related projects. These are:

- Senior Abuse in Rental Housing (Justice Canada)
- Residents Bill of Rights (Law Foundation of B.C.)
- Phase II of the Social and Economic Costs Study (Health Canada)

In addition, we have recently submitted a proposal to the Law Foundation to examine the level of legal literacy among seniors in B.C. The level of legal literacy may be an important factor in financial abuse (it may affect the extent to which they need to rely on family or others; the extent to which they understand the information currently being provided to them by community and legal organizations)

From the above it should be clear that this is an active research area that conceptually and otherwise is worthy of distinct and separate status.

5.4 and 5.5 Scholarly Publication

Recommendation 5.4 states that the emphasis on in-house publishing should be decreased, but that our two regular newsletters, the *GRC News* and *Seniors' Housing Update*, should continue to be published. Recommendation 5.5 explicitly states that publication in refereed journals should be increased. It is agreed that peer reviewed journals are an important way of disseminating information and building the level of knowledge among academics. However, it is our perception that the external review committee significantly underestimated the volume, quality, and national and international impact of work that the GRC has undertaken, particularly in the Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons area, because they focused their attention almost exclusively on peer reviewed publications. In this area, it has been important to take a different approach. Practitioners who work with abused seniors seldom have the opportunity or the inclination to read journal articles. They may read short articles in association magazines, or peer-reviewed materials on provincial or professional association websites. They will read more extensive material published by the federal government. These vehicles, together with articles in our in-house Newsletters, has been where we have focused our information dissemination activities most frequently to date in order to impact on needed policy and practice changes. We also have prepared briefs to official bodies such as the Québec Human Rights

Commission as a means of influencing policy and, we regularly present papers at the annual meetings of the Canadian Association on Gerontology, the Gerontological Society of America and other key conferences. However, recognizing the need to achieve a balance between community and government publications and conference presentations on the one hand, and journal publications on the other, since the external review, two journal articles have been written. One has been accepted by the *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, and the second (mentioned earlier as invited by the editors of the *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*) is almost ready for submission.

Finally, it is important to note that although the Centre only has one researcher working almost exclusively in the Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of the Elderly area, it is inaccurate to suggest that she is "working alone." Ms. Spencer works with a variety of research partners in and outside the university including staff of FREDA (the Feminist Research, Education, Development and Action Centre), BC CEAS (The BC Consortium to Eliminate Elder Abuse) and the BC Law Institute. She also works collaboratively with researchers in other parts of the country, such as Prof. Marie Beaulieu from the University of Québec at Rimouski. Dr. Beaulieu spent her sabbatical at the Centre in 1998-9 specifically to facilitate close collaboration with Ms. Spencer. They recently wrote a journal article together. Further, the three-year plan for this theme area includes establishing a joint tenure stream appointment with the School of Criminology.

5.6-5.7 Ties and Visibility within SFU

The reviewers note that the GRC has extensive ties with community agencies, including the network of practicum supervisors, and they comment favourably on the fact that program graduates form ties back to the program when they become practicum supervisors. They also commend the GRC on having some strong relationships within the university, notably with Sociology/Anthropology, Criminology, Education, Geography and Kinesiology. Recommendation 5.6 is to build relationships with colleagues in units that are not currently represented. Psychology is specifically mentioned in this regard. Again, the review committee was biased in assuming that because a representative from a particular unit was not available to meet with them, a relationship did not exist. Quite to the contrary, historically Psychology has had dual representation on the Steering Committee (E. Ames and M. Kimball). Individuals from Psychology (Kimball, Cox) regularly serve on thesis committees, as external examiners and as collaborators in research submissions. The GRC also has a relationship with faculty in the School of Engineering Science with whom we interact on Living Laboratory-related projects (again not represented during the external review meetings). We will follow-up with respect to the suggestion that liaison be explored with the Law and Public Policy Institute. As regards recommended involvement with the new Institute for Health Research, both Drs. Gutman and Wister are founding members. Although clearly a Harbour Centre Program, which has many advantages given that many of our students and clients find us more accessible than when we were located on the Burnaby campus, we will heed the

recommendation that we raise our visibility on the Burnaby campus. An initial step in this direction has been to schedule one of our four fall colloquia there.

5.8 Research Assistant Opportunities for M.A. students

Every effort will be made to employ M.A. students as Research Assistants on GRC projects. The mutual benefits of the juxtaposition of the Centre and MA Program were noted in the proposal to establish the Master's. As the first cohort has moved through the program, increasing numbers of graduate students have been employed on Centre projects.

6. Future Directions

We strongly agree with the recommendation (6.1.1) that the Gerontology Programs and Centre move forward to Departmental status (Recommendation 6.1.1.). Planning for this development will commence in earnest as soon as the full complement of tenure stream faculty is in place (Fall, 2001). While immediate representation on relevant upper level committees is desirable (Recommendation 6.1.2), it may be unrealistic to request such at this time given the limited staff resources available for committee service.

Planning will continue with respect to expanding the distance component of the Diploma program internationally and to international development work generally. This will be facilitated by the movement of the head office of the International Association of Gerontology (IAG) to the Gerontology Research Centre for the period July 2001 to June 2005, during which Dr. Gutman will serve as President of the IAG.

Other future plans include exploring the possibility of expanding the teaching program to include a major as a complement to the existing Minor and Diploma programs well as establishing a small PhD program.

Table 1 Completion Times for MA Students in Gerontology

Name	Introduced into Program	#Leave Terms	Degree Awarded	Total Term #
Andrie, Heidi	1996-3	0	1998-1	5
Choy, Deborah	1996-3	0	2000-1	10
Cvitcovich, Yuri	1996-3	0	1999-2	9
Flegal, Christine	1996-3	1	2000-1	10
Geldart, Kathy	1996-3	0	1999-2	9
Hearn, Brenda	1996-3	0	1999-1	10
Low, Gail	1997-3	0	2000-2	11
McCoy, Bonnie	1997-3	0	1999-1	5
Patterson, Ilsa	1998-1	0	2000-1	5
Romedor, Zan	1997-1	3	2000-1	7
Wallace, Jennifer	1996-3	0	1999-3	10
Wilson, Kelly	1996-3	1	1999-2	8
Wong, Melanie	1996-3	0	1999-2	9
Wu, Chun-Li	1997-2	0	2000-2	12

* There are 3 semesters per year lasting four months each (1 = Spring, 2= Summer, 3=Fall)

Table 2: Occupations of MA Graduates

Name	Occupation
Wong, Melanie	Ph.D. Candidate , USC Leonard Davis School Andrus Gerontology Program University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA
Andrie, Heidi	Co-ordinator Store Front Location, Seniors, Peer Counseling Co-ordinator, West End Seniors Network, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Choy, Deborah	Community Relations Manager , Crescent Gardens Retirement Community, White Rock, BC, Canada
Cvitkovich, Yuri	Research Assistant, Seniors Arthritis Management Project, Gerontology Research Centre, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Flegal, Christine	Consultant, Henriques Architects, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Geldart, Kathy	Volunteer, and Program Co-ordinator, West End Seniors Network, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Hearn, Brenda	KPMG Management, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Low, Gail	Geriatric Nurse, Clinician, MSA Hospital, Abbotsford, BC, Canada
McCoy, Bonnie	Clinical Exercise Specialist, Burnaby Healthy Heart Program, Burnaby, BC, Canada
Patterson, Ilse	Occupational Therapist and Research Assistant, Seniors Arthritis Management Project, Gerontology Research Centre, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Romedor, Zan	Director, South Granville Seniors Centre, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Wallace, Jennifer	Outreach Co-ordinator/Office Administrator Sunset Towers Advocacy and Resources Office, West End Seniors Network, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Wilson, Kelly	On Parental leave, pursuing part-time work teaching and research work
Wu, Chun-Li	Director, R & D Division , The League of Welfare Improvement for Older People R.O.C, Taiwan

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REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMITTEE
FOR THE GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM AND
GERONTOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE
AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Submitted By:

Carolyn J. Rosenthal, McMaster University (Chair)

Victor W. Marshall, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

MAY 2000

REVIEW OF GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM AND GERONTOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Review Committee consisted of two external members (Victor W. Marshall and Carolyn J. Rosenthal) and one internal member (Kim Bartholemew, Department of Psychology). In preparation for our visit, members of the Review Committee received a variety of informative and relevant materials concerning the Gerontology Program and Gerontology Research Centre. These included the 1992 Report of the External Review Committee and Response to that report, the 17th Annual Report of the GRC, a three-year plan for the GRC and Program, detailed activities reports and plans for five specific research areas, administrative data, the report of the Faculty of Arts 3-Year Plan, and additional information about Simon Fraser University.

On March 23 and 24, 2000, we met with Gerontology faculty, students in the Diploma program, students in the graduate program, alumni, associate and adjunct professors, members of the Steering Committee, practicum supervisors, the five research area committees, the Gerontology Information Officer, representatives from the libraries at Harbour Centre and the Burnaby Campus, and members of the SFU senior administration. Our meetings were held at Harbour Centre.

The Committee was very impressed with the energy and commitment of the faculty members and the amount that they have accomplished despite very limited resources. The SFU Gerontology Research Centre is well known and respected in the Canadian Gerontology community. The M.A. Program is the only M.A. in Gerontology offered in English-speaking Canada. The Gerontology Program and Research Centre are a credit to Simon Fraser University and a valuable resource to the local community and the broader academic community.

In this report, we follow the outline of the Terms of Reference for the review. We address, in separate sections, Gerontology programs, faculty, administration, connections of the

Faculty within and outside the University, Gerontology Research Centre, and Future Directions. An Executive Summary appears at the end of this report, beginning on p.33.

1. PROGRAMS

Gerontology education at SFU currently consists of three components: the M.A. in Gerontology, the Diploma Program, and the Minor in Gerontology. Students and alumni praise the interdisciplinary aspect of the programs, the quality and supportiveness of the full-time faculty, the variety of courses, and the balance between research and practice. Below, we address each program, in turn, following which we offer recommendations for improvement and change.

1. The M.A. Program in Gerontology:

The M.A. program began in Fall, 1996. Approximately one in three applicants are accepted into the program. The M.A. program draws applicants from all over Canada and from other countries. We were told that about half the students who enrol in the program already have a job, while the other half come directly from undergraduate studies. To date, 37 students have enrolled in the program; of these, 12 have graduated, while the rest are still in the program. Average completion time is 2.69 years. The committee met with students from Year 1 and Year 2, as well as with graduates.

Prerequisites for entry into the program are: an introductory course in Gerontology, a Research Methods course, an advanced seminar or research project/paper in Applied Gerontology, a Physiology of Aging course, and a Psychology of Aging course, or a Sociology of Aging or Social Policy and Aging course. As well, one or two additional courses are required, depending on which stream the student chooses. While our discussions with students and faculty did not focus on the issue of prerequisites, the committee's view is that the number of prerequisites is very high.

Students are required to complete six courses plus a project or a thesis (in the latter case, our understanding is that the number of courses is reduced to 5, although this is not mentioned in

the Master of Arts in Gerontology brochure). Students lacking relevant work experience also complete an Internship. This is a demanding workload but does not appear to be excessive according to standards developed by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education. Students may choose one of two streams: Aging and the Built Environment, and Health Promotion and Aging.

The committee was impressed by the good morale and sense of community among the M.A. students. They know each other, and have a graduate caucus that organizes social events (e.g. career night, films) monthly or more often. Although they find ways to get together, students emphasized how much they would like and benefit from a meeting area and office space.

Students expressed some confusion about the distinction between the project and the thesis. They understand the argument that there are not enough faculty to supervise theses, but are concerned about the ambiguity about which option they will eventually pursue. Students told us that some students enter the program knowing they want to do a project, and that others enter knowing they want to do a thesis and even what the topic of their thesis will be. There is a third group, however, who experience problems, according to the students. Moreover, it was disturbing to the review committee to sense that some students who might have preferred the thesis option (not all did prefer it) felt informal pressure to accept the project option.

One outcome measure of interest is whether and where graduates find employment. We were provided with information on the occupations of graduates of the M.A. program. One has gone on to a PhD Program in Gerontology, four are working in research positions, four are working in programs for older adults, one is working at a financial management firm which has component research activities, one is an Occupational Therapist, and one is working part-time while raising a family. It would appear that there is a market for graduates with this degree.

Another outcome measure of interest is whether thesis work is published in refereed journals. To date, one article based on a thesis in the M.A. in Gerontology Program has been accepted for publication and two are in preparation. Programs in which students do not proceed

to PhD studies face difficulties in regard to thesis publications since the authors graduate and lose motivation to publish; faculty supervisors, already burdened with a heavy workload, must expend further energy to urge graduates to bring the thesis to publication form. Nonetheless, journal articles provide an excellent indicator of quality and we urge supervisors to co-author thesis-based articles. Consideration might be given to having theses be written in a format that is largely ready for journal submission (see, for example, the "sandwich thesis" format used in the University of Guelph PhD in Family Studies and Gerontology program). The program should develop a policy regarding co-authorship on publications based on theses and convey it in writing to students.

The level of financial support for the graduate students in Gerontology is not high (although it may be typical for SFU). Students benefit from access to a number of special Gerontology awards, but these are very small (ranging in from \$100 to \$2500). As well, they may apply for SFU graduate fellowships once in their program (16 students have held these). One or two Teaching Assistantships are available each year. We were told that over the course of the 2.5 years a student spends in the program, a strong student may expect to get about \$7,500 in total. Ideally, we would like to see every student have access to at least a partial T.A., or financial equivalent, each year. One mechanism for greater student support would be to expand Research Assistant opportunities for students in the Gerontology Research Centre. According to the information provided to the committee, 5 of the 24 current students have had the opportunity to be Research Assistants. While we understand the vagaries of scheduling and meshing the availability of funds and the availability of qualified students, having graduate students do Research Assistantships would seem to be an obvious benefit of having both a Research Centre and a Graduate Program within the same unit. Finally, we were told that efforts are underway to enable Gerontology students do their internship as a co-op, earning money while fulfilling the internship requirement. These efforts, if successful, will help improve the financial support situation for students.

M.A. students were unclear about the difference between the practicum required in the Diploma Program and the internship that is a requirement of the Master's program. A problem of greater concern is that M.A. students would like more support from the program in arranging their Internship placement. At present, students are expected to find an appropriate placement, based on information provided by the program or on their own initiative, and to make all arrangements on their own. While all students feel more support from the program is needed, the situation is particularly difficult for students who come from outside the Vancouver area, since they lack existing contacts and general knowledge about the organizations in the city. The information provided to students does not seem sufficient, from the students' point of view. There does not appear to be regular contact between the program and the field supervisors, unless problems arise.

Students mentioned they would like a course in administration and management. We note that such a course was recommended as an elective in the Diploma program in the previous review, but that there is still no such course at either the undergraduate or graduate levels. This course would seem to be very appropriate in a program in which the majority of students go on to employment in organizations. Students praised the existing course on quantitative analysis (GERO 803-4) but said that some students would like at least one more research course, to provide more in-depth research training.

The concerns expressed by students are consistent with the review committee's views. The M.A. Program is quite good and student support for the program is strong, despite its being precariously resourced in terms of faculty, space and other support. Further development of this Program (see below) should be done in such a way as to reduce somewhat the reliance on sessional instructors, and all core courses should ideally be taught by regular faculty. Expansion of the program cannot occur without finding a way to reduce the supervisory burden on the limited number of core faculty members. The ability of graduates to find employment, and the ratio of applicants to accepted candidates suggest that there is a demand for this program.

1.2 The Diploma Program in Gerontology:

In connection with the review of the Diploma Program, the review committee met with the Gerontology Curriculum Committee, three current students (one of whom brought a three-page document containing the views of students who were not able to attend our meeting), a practicum supervisor, and the Assistant to the Director/Student Advisor.

The Post-baccalaureate Diploma Program in Gerontology was established in 1983. It has 136 graduates, as noted in the program's annual report for the period April 1 1998 to March 31 1999. We were told that about three-quarters of Diploma students come from the Vancouver area. During the year covered by the annual report, active student enrolment was approximately 90, a number said to be typical for other years. We were told that, typically, all students who apply and who have a 2.5 (B-) average, are accepted. We were not provided with documentation on the number of students admitted per year, but we were told that about 15 to 25 new students are taken into the program each year. We were also told that sometimes intake is as low as six students.

The Diploma students spoke highly of the Gerontology courses offered on campus. They like the mix of students in their classes, appreciate the small class size and feel they have good access to their instructors (although the busy schedule of the Program Director did reportedly pose some problems of access). They think highly of the Gerontology Research Centre. Part-time students are very appreciative of the scheduling of some courses in the evening.

The students we met with were clearly agitated about some aspects of the program. (Indeed, the committee was struck by the contrast between the enthusiasm of the M.A. students and the frustration and dissatisfaction expressed by the Diploma students). Many of the issues they raised were related to inadequate support from the program in dealing with students' "bureaucratic" needs, e.g. processing practicum forms, getting the practicum approved, getting responses to their inquiries or questions, not being able to get a response from someone in the office around the time of admission (a lag between having to pay the deposit and hearing about

their acceptance). The Assistant to the Director/Student Advisor appears to do almost all the work for these students. The students understand how overloaded this person is and are sympathetic, but at the same time they are extremely frustrated. As one student said, "The courses are good but, especially as a part-time student, getting through the hoops is impossible." We wish to emphasize that the level of students' agitation about this was very high. It may be that their frustration with inadequate response to these bureaucratic needs spills over into other areas, creating an overall feeling of dissatisfaction even though they like the program's courses.

Some of the students' concerns were more directly related to curriculum. One concern has to do with prerequisites (The committee was, in fact, surprised to learn that students had to meet so many prerequisites; we discuss this issue below). Students were confused about prerequisites and felt there was a lack of consistency in the waiving of prerequisites for certain courses as well as in the waiving of requirements. We heard this complaint in connection with the three required courses from outside Gerontology (Kinesiology, Psychology, and Sociology), as well as the Gerontology statistics course, and the practicum.

The Kinesiology course, Physiological Aspects of Aging, continues to draw complaints, as it did at the time of the 1992 review. Students think it is a good course, in principle, but very difficult for students from social sciences who have not taken a science course since high school. This problem is compounded in the case of mature students.

Diploma students were concerned about course scheduling. For example, they complained that a required course had been offered only during the summer, and that sometimes a student has no choice but to take a course by Distance Education. Students feel that taking a course by Distance Education should be their choice, not something that is forced on them because the course is unavailable in any other format. There is a strong sense that the quality of distance education courses is not as high as that of the regular courses, and this is a matter of some concern to the committee, given the intentions to expand such offerings. Moreover, the delivery mechanism of the distance education courses appears to rely on print media, when surely at this point in time electronic media should play a stronger role in distance education.

Another complaint related to scheduling was that the Program Information brochure does not make it clear that the Diploma Program cannot be completed by taking evening courses exclusively. This is a problem for students who are part-time and are employed. Course availability was an issue for both full-time and part-time students. It was suggested that more detail about which courses are not offered every year be provided in the Program Information brochure. It would be very helpful to students if, wherever possible, information on course offerings over a two- or three-year period could be provided. This could be done quite easily, for example, with courses which are offered alternate years on a regular basis.

Students raised the issue of the number of prerequisites. There are five prerequisites for the three required courses taught by other departments (two for PSYC 357, one for SA 420, and two for KIN 461). This means that students might have to take an additional 15 units before they can fulfill the required 30 units. While some applicants to the Diploma Program may have taken some of these prerequisites as part of their undergraduate degree, our impression was that most students had to do at least some additional courses. This seems excessive. While we applaud the linkages with other departments and recognize as well the resource "savings" in having other departments teach these courses, the situation seems punitive to students. Should the Diploma Program be continued, we recommend that courses be developed in these three areas that are specifically tailored to the needs of students who do not have a background in these subject areas, and that prerequisites be dropped.

The practicum component is valued by students but students object to having to make all the arrangements themselves, with program support being limited to providing a list of potential placement opportunities. In essence, nothing seems to have changed since the 1992 review, during which the same complaint was voiced by students. The review committee was dismayed to learn that virtually no direct contact occurs between the program and the practicum supervisors, unless specific problems arise. Everyone -- the Director, the Assistant to the Director, the students, and the supervisors -- is aware of this problem, no one likes it, and everyone attributes it to inadequate resources (see Administration section, below).

The students referred to the four objectives stated in the Program Information brochure. The first two objectives refer to learning about aging and applying that knowledge to individual older clients. Students feel these objectives are accomplished through the program. The other two objectives refer to assessing the needs of individuals in the community and planning action to meet their needs, and to "put into operation a service philosophy focused upon optimism about the potential of the older individual and an awareness of the person in the sociocultural, political and economic context of Canada." Students are not clear as to whether and how these last two objectives are being met.

Other ways in which students felt the Program could be improved were to have more emphasis on the positive aspects of aging and the strengths of older adults, and to have more practical application in class, through practice exercises, case studies, role-playing, and so on. Students also suggested that new courses on Policy and Bioethics would be valuable additions to the current course offerings.

Many Diploma students feel worried and pessimistic about their future careers. This is not attributable to the design, structure or quality of the program, but rather it is likely related in part to the stage of development of Gerontology as an emerging specialization, and to the changing nature of Gerontology education programs. We return to this critical issue later. However, if the Diploma Program is to serve its students well, it should take some helpful steps, for example by developing material about career possibilities and holding career workshops for students. The program should collect information on its graduates and feed this information back to students. The committee was surprised that so little information on employment following completion of the Diploma Program was available. As with most deficiencies in the program's administration, this was attributed to under-resourcing. However, such information is critical for rational program planning. Moreover, information about graduate careers can feed into both development (fund-raising) activities, program guidance activities, and the teaching program. In this regard, alumni suggested that a mentoring program be developed, which would include

bringing former students back to talk about their current employment and how the Diploma has proved helpful.

There is another aspect to Diploma students' concerns, however. They are worried about the "value" of the Diploma relative to other competing credentials. One student commented that if she competes with someone with a Master's degree in nursing, the nurse will get the job. Others worried that they were investing a lot of time, money and energy in a "diploma that might lead to a job in which their wages range from \$12 to \$14 per hour." Without the information on graduates, we do not know whether these concerns are valid, but as we note below, our sense is that they have some foundation; and students need to have their worries addressed.

1.3 Minor in Gerontology:

The Minor in Gerontology was approved by Senate in January, 1999. As of Spring, 2000 there are seven individuals in the Minor program. It is anticipated by Dr. Gutman that eventually about 25 students will be in the Minor program. It is expected that the Minor will foster interest in the M.A. Program (and the Diploma Program, should it be continued, see below). Students in the Minor must complete the Introduction to Gerontology course plus 4 other Gerontology courses (15 credit hours in all). The value of the minor program is, in our opinion, independent of the role it plays in providing prerequisites for entry to the Diploma or M.A. Programs.

1.4 Recommendations:

1.4.1 M.A. Program:

1.4.1.1 The MA program should be refined into two types of Master's degrees: (1) a professional Master's that includes a project, a practicum for students who have not had work experience in the field, and the option of doing the degree on a part-time basis (raising the completion time limit from the current one of four years); (2) a Master's that includes a thesis, and with a practicum being optional. It may be that the first degree

would be an Master of Gerontology and the second a Master of Arts. The thesis Master's would be full-time, with part-time study being an option.

- 1.4.1.2 In keeping with other M.A. programs in Gerontology, students should be able to enter with no prerequisites other than an undergraduate methods and statistics course. Students who have had no previous courses related to Gerontology might be asked to make up one or two courses at the undergraduate level (which will be available since they are offered in connection with the minor in gerontology), or they might simply be required to take one or two additional electives at the graduate level, while they are registered in the graduate program. We reiterate our concern that the M.A. program has an unreasonable expectation that students entering it already have an extensive background in Gerontology. Many professional programs in other fields have no such requirement (e.g. Health Promotion, Rehabilitation Sciences, Social Work). In our view, in Gerontology education, the phrase, "disciplinary depth, multidisciplinary breadth, and interdisciplinary linkages," should describe the educational philosophy. It should be sufficient for students to come into the Master's Program (or, for that matter, the Diploma Program) with a strong baccalaureate training in a discipline, be it Biology, Psychology, Sociology, or whatever. The current emphasis on prerequisites is a departure from common practice, an additional barrier to students and a burden to them, and we consider it to be misplaced.
- 1.4.1.3 Space should be provided for students, including office/work space with computers, and a meeting area/lounge.
- 1.4.1.4 Funding for students should be increased through increased support from the university (Teaching Assistantships and Markers) and from the Gerontology Research Centre (Research Assistantships) and through the development of co-op internships which enable students to earn money while fulfilling the internship requirement.
- 1.4.1.5 Efforts should be made to increase publications based on thesis work. Relatedly, a policy on co-authorship between faculty and students should be developed and provided to students.

1.4.1.6 A course on Administration and Management should be added to the electives offered in the M.A. Program.

1.4.2 Diploma Program:

1.4.2.1 The Gerontology faculty, in concert with the Steering Committee and with university officials who can bring an independent perspective to this issue, should do their own strategic planning exercise which should include consideration of whether there is a demand for the Diploma Program or whether it should be wound down. The committee's view is that, after 17 years, the time has come to wind down the diploma program and move on to new programs that are better suited to the changing times and educational needs of students and professionals. The program met a need and served an important function in establishing a place for gerontology education at SFU. However, it is likely that students would be better served by investing their efforts in a Master's rather than a Diploma program. Students' comments, as noted above, suggest that despite meeting the demanding requirements for the diploma, they cannot compete successfully for jobs with applicants who are prepared at the Master's level. This is consistent with our own experience concerning the Diploma Program in Gerontology at The University of Toronto (this was the first diploma program on aging in Canada, but plans are underway to replace it with a master's program), and with our more general understanding of gerontological education developments. We anticipate that the market for diploma graduates will contract as graduate education through master's programs becomes more and more widespread. In short, we are not convinced of the need for this program, nor that it provides the maximum value to students. We note that we were not provided documentation such as graduate placement and career data. Nor did we have documentation that established that there is a demand that exceeds capacity for the program as it now stands. We would rather see students and resources directed to the

M.A. program, as well as towards further developing the undergraduate minor in Gerontology (with the likely long-term development of an undergraduate major).

- 1.4.2.2 During our visit, we heard some discussion about plans to expand the Gerontology Program's educational activity -- specifically, the Diploma Program -- into the international market in the future. Our recommendation that the Diploma Program be phased out need not conflict with these plans. With sufficient resources, a program could be developed for an International Certificate, by taking a package of courses from the Gerontology Minor and the Master's Program.
- 1.4.2.3 If the Diploma Program is phased out, we recommend offering fewer undergraduate Gerontology courses, while retaining enough courses to support a Minor. As the Program moves towards a Gerontology Major, courses could be added at the undergraduate level, contingent on having sufficient faculty.
- 1.4.2.4 Should the Diploma Program be continued, we recommend that consideration be given to moving to one student intake period per year, in order to simplify planning and administration.
- 1.4.2.5 A number of other recommendations for the Diploma Program are embedded in Section 1.2 above. These will be irrelevant if the Diploma Program is phased out and so we will not discuss them in detail here. In summary, however, they are: the Physiology of Aging course should be improved; the number of prerequisites should be reduced; the problem of inconsistency in the waiving of prerequisites should be addressed; career counseling and workshops should be developed; a mentoring program making use of graduates should be developed; the Program brochure should make clear the Diploma cannot be completed by taking evening courses exclusively and should provide more information on which courses are not offered every year; information should be collected more systematically on where graduates find employment.

1.4.3 Minor in Gerontology:

1.4.3.1 The Minor in Gerontology should be further developed.

1.4.3.2 Once the minor is well established, and depending on enrolment patterns and perceived demand, consideration should be given to building it into an undergraduate major.

2. FACULTY

Dr. Wister receives a 3-unit course release to supervise the M.A. program. This seems essential and he appears to be doing an excellent job.

M.A. Program students and faculty spoke of the problem of a small number of faculty supervising a large number of theses. Of the theses and projects in progress at the time of the review, Dr. Wister was supervising three, Dr. Gutman was supervising six, and Dr. Carriere was supervising three. These people do further duty on thesis/project committees: Dr. Wister serves on five, and Dr. Gutman on two. Only tenure-track faculty can supervise theses, meaning that the freeze on hiring for the second position has contributed substantially to the supervisory load on the three full-time Gerontology faculty members.

The teaching load of faculty is comparable to that in other similar programs. However, as noted above, the supervisory load is heavy. Added to this are responsibilities that emanate from the GRC, such as involvement in Centre-sponsored conferences and involvement with community organizations. These multiple responsibilities add up to a workload that is very heavy and probably very stressful. Interestingly, no faculty member we spoke with complained explicitly about his or her workload. What did emerge is that faculty feel they are stretching themselves to the limit to try to meet a myriad of responsibilities. They conveyed a sense of concern that they might be short-changing students or the Program simply because there was so much to do and so few people among whom to share responsibilities. The faculty complement has improved in recent years with the CFL (Health Promotion area) appointment of Dr. Carriere and the .50 appointment of Dr. Mitchell. However, the CFL appointment in the Built Environment area and the .5 Practicum Supervisor appointment that were part of the approved M.A. Program proposal have yet to be filled. It is very clear to the committee that the M.A.

Program needs these individuals in order to fulfill its potential, to meet its responsibilities to students, and to meet growing expectations for accountability. The Program has had understandable difficulty in hiring someone in the Built Environment area on a limited term basis. It is vital that someone be hired into a tenure-stream position in this area. SFU is unique in offering this area as a specialization in Gerontology in Canada and efforts should be directed towards maintaining and expanding this strength; this is becoming urgent in view of the pending retirement of Dr. Gutman, currently the program's mainstay in the Built Environment area.

The lack of administrative support and the delay in hiring new faculty lead to some concern that the multiple demands on faculty may compromise or undermine their professional development. The 1992 review urged an increase in publishing in scientific peer-review journals and, relatedly, less in-house publishing. Dr. Wister has managed to produce a number of refereed journal articles, despite a heavy workload and substantial in-house publishing. Nonetheless, we are concerned that more junior faculty (Carriere, Mitchell) be supported and encouraged to build their publication record in scholarly journals. We understand, but question, the practice of having Gerontology faculty be regular contributors to annual events such as the Friesen conference. This typically means preparing a lengthy presentation which then appears in a GRC published book. While this may contribute to the Centre's goals, it does little to further the individual faculty member's professional development. (An outstanding exception to the in-house publication pattern is the book recently published by Oxford University Press, containing papers from the 1998 Friesen conference).

The Program is hoping to add two half-time positions over the next three years: (1) it is hoped that a 21st Century Chair will be jointly appointed in Gerontology and Criminology, to expand teaching and research capacity in the theme area, Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons; (2) An application has been submitted by Dr. Oakley, currently on a Limited Term appointment, for a New Investigator Award under the Health Transition Fund. Part-time instructional staff will continue to play a major role in the educational programs,

whether the M.A., Diploma, or the Gerontology Minor. However, any and all programs require a strong core of regular faculty members, especially for core courses and for graduate supervision.

2.1 Recommendations:

- 2.1.1 The Faculty appointments that were included in the M.A. Program proposal that was approved by SFU Senate in 1996 should be made without further delay. Specifically, a CFL in the Built Environment and a .5 Practicum Supervisor should be hired immediately. Consideration should be given to filling the CFL-Built Environment position at the associate level. The Practicum Supervisor should have faculty status, with at least a Master's Degree. The current situation in which students do internships (and placements) without regular, overall supervision from the program, is substandard academic practice; the M.A. Program was approved on the understanding that someone would be in place to supervise this important component of the program and it is imperative that the university fulfill this commitment.
- 2.1.2 Greater attention should be given to research which will result in refereed journal articles.
- 2.1.3 Expectations that faculty will provide articles for in-house books should be lessened.
- 2.1.4 A supportive professional environment should be created for new CFLs, including attention to mentoring and professional development. New hires should receive some course release in their first year. Suitable office space and lab space should be provided.

3. ADMINISTRATION

It appears that the lack of support for the Diploma Program practicum, noted in the 1992 review of the Gerontology Program, is now a feature of both the Diploma practicum and the

internship component in the M.A. Program. The recommendation of the previous review that a full-time Program Assistant be hired to assist with the Diploma practicum has not been adopted. With the new M.A. Program, the need is even more acute. A graduate of both the Diploma and M.A. Programs who has had two students do placements with her told us that her organization, like most others, is very excited to get Gerontology students but feels the program badly needs a coordinator for the practica, someone who would have the time to monitor how the practica are going and who could have students (and supervisors) come together to talk about their experiences. As we have recommended above (see 2.1.1), a .5 faculty member should be hired to supervise the M.A. Internships. Should the Diploma Program be retained, a Program Assistant should be hired.

More space is needed to support Research Assistant activity (office, computer), and more will be needed to accommodate the new CFL to be hired. While touring the office suite, the committee members were shocked to see a visiting professor housed in a cubicle, with no privacy, conducting research interviews by telephone. It is to the Centre's credit that it is able to attract distinguished visiting scholars, but embarrassing to offer truly inadequate space to house them. In the suite of offices in which Gerontology is located, there is some space currently occupied by Kinesiology; one solution to the space problem might be to relocate the Kinesiology people.

Laboratory space has been a problem for one faculty member who requires this type of space. This problem has been recently resolved, at least for the moment. More lab space may be needed in the future, depending on grants and new faculty, and should be provided as a stimulus to faculty to develop a stronger research presence.

The Program receives an equipment allowance of about \$3,000 per year; this is used to upgrade printers and computers. We recommend that this amount be increased, perhaps five-fold, as it is woefully inadequate. There should be sufficient funds for equipment for the new faculty and staff whom we trust will be appointed, but the fund should also allow a complete refreshing of equipment on roughly a four-year cycle, and continuous software upgrades for all

users. We were dismayed, for example, to learn that student records are maintained on a five-year old computer.

The Centre employs a full-time Information Officer who manages the in-house library (which includes a useful collection of "grey literature"), responds to requests for information, maintains the web site, and fulfills other duties. One of the Information Officer's activities has been to produce specialized bibliographies; to date, 250 such bibliographies have been prepared, including 31 in 1998-99. The 1992 review recommended that the Centre move away from producing in-house bibliographies. We emphatically repeat this recommendation. Increasingly, faculty and students have the ability and technology to do their own computerized bibliographic searches. Therefore, we recommend that the Information Officer stop doing bibliographies except in response to specific requests.

With respect to the university library resources, in our meetings with representatives from the Belzberg and Bennet libraries, we learned that some aging journals are shelved at Belzberg and some at Bennet. While the principle seems to be that a journal is shelved on the campus of the department that pays for it, this was not always the case. We recommend that if a journal is being paid for by Gerontology, that journal should be shelved at Belzberg. The committee was given information on the journals subscribed to and the amount of funding available for books and journals. Based on this information, the committee feels that the appropriate journals are available but that the situation with respect to book acquisitions should be examined. Our impression was that more support in this area might well be necessary.

An integrated approach should be taken to staffing the Centre and educational programs. Additional support staff should be hired, as outlined in the Program's three-year plan. At present, the Centre covers the cost of a half-time receptionist. A full-time receptionist is required and we recommend that half the cost be covered by the Program. A graduate secretary should be hired, to remove some of the excess work of the Assistant to the Director/Student Advisor.

It seemed to the review committee that, in a program in which faculty and administrative resources are stretched to their limit, the Diploma students may be getting less than their fair

share of attention. As was seen above (see Section 1.2), Diploma students express the need for considerably more attention from the Program. Additional administrative resources are essential if the Program is to properly fulfill its responsibility to students.

3.1 Recommendations:

- 3.1.1 If the Diploma Program is retained, a Program Assistant should be hired immediately. If it is to be phased out, some additional administrative support is needed in the interim.
- 3.1.2 More space should be provided for Research Assistants, Visiting Professors, and to accommodate the new CFL, Practicum Supervisor, and graduate secretary.
- 3.1.3 Laboratory space should be provided as required.
- 3.1.4 The equipment allowance should be dramatically increased.
- 3.1.5 The Information Officer should stop producing bibliographies except in response to specific requests.
- 3.1.6 Journals which are paid for by Gerontology should be shelved at the Belzberg library.
- 3.1.7 The amount of funding for Gerontology book acquisitions by the library should be examined, and probably increased.
- 3.1.8 Additional support staff should be hired, as outlined in the Program's three-year plan. A full-time receptionist is required, with the cost shared between the Program and the Centre. A graduate secretary should be hired.

4. CONNECTIONS OF THE FACULTY WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY

The Program is linked to other units within the University through its Steering Committee and through courses taught through other departments, including three core courses.

Relationships with Kinesiology and Sociology/Anthropology seem to be smooth, but we are uncertain as to the relationship with Psychology.

We heard mixed comments about the relationship of the Program to the community, but we sense that this is quite strong, enhanced by the Harbour Centre siting of the program, by the flow of program students into the 'aging network' of health and social services for the aging society, and further strengthened by the applied and contractual research activities of the Centre. The line between the Centre and the educational programs is unclear, if for no other reason than personnel overlap. Thus, they likely to not have distinctive relationships to the community, and what relationships exist are strongly conditioned by alumni. These seemed to be positive, but we recommend a specific effort be made to nourish alumni relationships. Alumni can provide mentoring, placement opportunities, research partnerships, and donor support for the Centre and the Program.

4.1 Recommendations:

4.1.1 Systematic efforts should be made to nourish alumni relationships.

5. GERONTOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE

The SFU Gerontology Research Centre is well known in Canada and beyond. It has been a leader in the development of Gerontology in Canada. Both Dr. Gutman and Dr. Wister have served in executive positions on the board of the Canadian Association of Gerontology. The profile of the Centre will be raised even further through Dr. Gutman's role as President of the International Association on Gerontology and Chair of the Organizing Committee of the 2001 World Congress of Gerontology, to be held in Vancouver. The university reaps benefits from the Centre in many ways, including funded research, publications, profile in the academic and professional communities, and profile in the lay community through, for example, newspaper

articles, media coverage, and special events. In an era in which a community presence is becoming increasingly important to universities, the GRC seems to be a strong asset. The committee was very surprised to learn that the university does not provide even a very limited operating budget to the Centre. We recommend below a move toward departmental status to link the GRC and the Program. With this should come base budget support consistent with academic practice at Simon Fraser University. Both the Centre and the Program have proved to be genuine assets for the university and this should be recognized budgetarily.

The Centre's mandate encompasses both academic research and community service. The undertaking of contract research may sometimes fulfill the latter as well as providing financial resources. At times, in order to maintain credible relationships in the community, it may be necessary to do research that is of interest at the local level, but ultimately not publishable. We recognize that striking a balance between traditional academic research and other activities is a challenge. However, to the extent that senior scholars are engaged in this type of research, this activity detracts from the development of a scholarly research centre and from individual professional development.

The research program plans articulated in the three-year plan do not strike us as realistic. Moving forward in Health Promotion and the Built Environment continues the strong track record of the Centre in these areas and is also consistent with the national reputation of the Centre. The third area, "Changing Demography and Life Styles", has also become quite strong, and with the appointments of Dr. Carriere and Dr. Mitchell, can become even stronger (particularly as Dr. Carriere moves his research support and activity to SFU -- something he should be encouraged to do). This area is also broadly supportive of the other areas and increases the policy relevance of the entire GRC program.

The fourth proposed theme area, "Older Adult Education", relies far too heavily on non-core faculty and looks very much like a one-person program. We recommend abandoning this as a research theme unless additional faculty strength can be added to sustain it. Older adult education can still be a role of the Centre or a newly created Department of Gerontology. The

same can be said for the fifth area, "Prevention of Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons", which is largely a one-person effort, and not an effort with a strong research presence. This area might be grouped with Theme 3.

The total amount of research funding held by Gerontology faculty or resident associates of the Gerontology Research Centre in 1998-99 is \$127,663 (not including grants in which the P.I. is located in another university or department). While we recognize the pitfalls of "dollar counting", as a research centre, the GRC should house more funded research than this. We note that Dr. Carriere has submitted a grant to NHRDP, and that plans for other grant applications are mentioned in the GRC's 3-year plan; these are positive indications that the GRC recognizes that more funded research is needed.

The Centre produces a variety of publications. The purpose served by such publications should be reviewed. There should probably be fewer in-house publications but a consistent production of publications using established university or private-sector presses. In general, we repeat the recommendation of the 1992 external review that less attention be given to the production of "grey" literature (in-house publications, reports, etc.) and more to publishing in refereed journals. We recommend that GRC News, which is distributed to approximately 2,000 recipients, and Seniors' Housing Update continue to be published; these are very good publications and are a service to the professional and, to some degree, the academic communities. They also help maintain the Centre's presence in the community, something that is likely of value in regard to the practicum and internship components of the educational programs.

While publication of research in refereed journals has increased substantially, it is important in our view to further expand scholarly publication activity. This should happen as recent hires develop their research programs, but it is important that their efforts be directed toward scholarly activity and not drained off in in-house publishing. Each of the Centre's research theme areas should be represented in funded research and refereed journal publications. The Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons area is notably lacking in this regard.

We wish to stress that a stronger research presence needs to be developed, and that this should be reflected through a much stronger record of publication in standard venues (as contrasted with the current strong emphasis on in-house publication). Standardized publication is not only required for responsible professional development of existing faculty; it is a requirement if the Centre (or a future department) is to gain national and international stature and the ability to attract new faculty and high-quality students.

The Committee was favourably impressed with the extensive ties with community agencies, including the network of practicum supervisors, and with the fact that program graduates form ties back to the program when they become practicum supervisors. The Committee was also impressed with the Centre's research ties beyond the university. Within the university, the Centre has some strong relationships, notably Sociology/Anthropology, Education, Criminology, Geography and Kinesiology. Systematic efforts should be made to form research relationships with colleagues in other departments such as Psychology. Liaison with the Law and Public Policy Institute and the proposed Institute for Health Research at SFU should be explored. While we recognize the difficulties in putting together research teams comprised of people from various parts of the university, we recommend that more of this type of activity be pursued.

The committee's impression was that the GRC is very oriented toward the community but less so toward the university. In part, this may be related to geography and the Centre's downtown location. The Centre might consider strategies such as holding seminars to promote interest in Gerontology and the visibility of the GRC on the Burnaby campus.

We encourage more use of students as Research Assistants. Among the 21 current students there appear to have been 6 RA positions, spread among five students. We understand the vagaries of scheduling and meshing availability of funds with availability and qualities of students. Nonetheless, employing students as RAs seems of obvious mutual benefit and one of the advantages of having a research centre and a graduate program in the same unit.

5.1 Recommendations:

- 5.1.1 Base budget support to the Centre should be provided by the university.
- 5.1.2 The Centre should engage in only a limited amount of contract research, and should concentrate its efforts on obtaining grants for scholarly research.
- 5.1.3 The research plans outlined in the three-year plan should be modified. While the Health Promotion, Built Environment, and Demography and Life Styles themes should be pursued, the Older Adult Education theme should be abandoned unless additional faculty strength can be added to sustain it, and the Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons should either be abandoned or grouped with the Demography and Life Styles theme.
- 5.1.4 The emphasis on in-house publishing should be decreased, but the GRC News and Seniors' housing Update should continue to be published.
- 5.1.5 Publication of research in refereed journals should be increased.
- 5.1.6 Efforts should be made to form research relationships with colleagues in departments with which Gerontology does not currently have strong relationships.
- 5.1.7 Consideration should be given to strategies for raising interest in Gerontology and the visibility of the GRC on the Burnaby campus.
- 5.1.8 More use should be made of students as Research Assistants.

6. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Three-Year Plan (2000-2003) of the Gerontology Research Centre and Program notes an intention to eventually apply for departmental status, contingent on being brought up to full strength as per the M.A. Program proposal. While this would be a small department, we endorse this planned direction. We recommend that the Gerontology Research Centre and

Program develop a plan to move to departmental status, either in the Faculty of Arts or, perhaps, the Faculty of Applied Science. As noted above, the line between the Centre and the Program is ambiguous, and the personnel overlap considerably. Formally consolidating the Centre and Program as a Department would result in greater efficiencies. It would facilitate the formation of a much clearer organizational structure which could integrate the education and research functions and would create a natural synergy between the two. Department status would further underline the importance of faculty development and of increasing attention to research and publication of such research through standard, refereed publication venues. Finally, departmental status would ensure Gerontology's representation on important upper level university committees (e.g. Faculty Arts Graduate Studies Committee, Dean's Advisory Committee).

6.1 Recommendations:

- 6.1.1 The Gerontology Research Centre and Program should develop a plan to move to departmental status.
- 6.1.2 The GRC and Program should be represented on relevant upper level university committees (e.g. Faculty of Arts Graduate Studies Committee, Dean's Advisory Committee).

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In our view, the Simon Fraser Gerontology Research Centre and Program is an asset to Simon Fraser University, the community in which it is based, and to the Canadian community of researchers, educators and practitioners in the field of Gerontology. The review committee was impressed by the amount that had been accomplished by such a small number of people working with such limited resources. However, the SFU program may be in danger of failing unless it gets more support. Time and resources were two inter-related issues that came up repeatedly during our meetings. Faculty lack the time to carry out all their responsibilities to the degree they would like. Students and alumni felt they would have liked more time with faculty and that their practicum/internship experiences should have had more direct involvement from a faculty

member. The recommendations we have made are directed towards urging a move forward, with increased resources to support an expanded Master's Program and a Research Centre with an increased focus on scholarly research and publication, so that the SFU Gerontology Research Centre and Program may maintain its position of leadership in Gerontology in Canada.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

On March 23 and 24, 2000, the External Review Committee met with Gerontology faculty, students in the Diploma program, students in the graduate program, alumni, associate and adjunct professors, members of the Steering Committee, practicum supervisors, the five research area committees, the Gerontology Information Officer, representatives from the libraries at Harbour Centre and the Burnaby Campus, and members of the SFU senior administration. These meetings took place at Harbour Centre. The Committee makes the following recommendations regarding the Gerontology programs, faculty, administration, connections within and outside the university, Gerontology Research Centre, and Future Directions.

3. PROGRAMS

1.1 The M.A. Program in Gerontology:

1.1.1 The MA program should be refined into two types of Master's degrees:

- a professional Master's that includes a project, a practicum for students who have not had work experience in the field, and the option of doing the degree on a part-time basis (raising the completion time limit from the current one of four years);
- a Master's that includes a thesis, and with a practicum being optional. It may be that the first degree would be an Master of Gerontology and the second a Master of Arts. The thesis Master's would be full-time, with part-time study being an option.

1.1.2 In keeping with other M.A. programs in Gerontology (e.g. Health Promotion, Rehabilitation Sciences, Social Work), students should be able to enter with no prerequisites other than an undergraduate methods and statistics course. Students who have had no previous courses related to Gerontology might be asked to make

up one or two courses at the undergraduate level (which will be available since they are offered in connection with the Minor in Gerontology), or they might simply be required to take one or two additional electives at the graduate level, while they are registered in the graduate program.

- 1.1.3 Space should be provided for students, including office/work space with computers, and a meeting area/lounge.
- 1.1.4 Funding for students should be increased through increased support from the university (Teaching Assistantships and Markers) and from the Gerontology Research Centre (Research Assistantships) and through the development of co-op internships.
- 1.1.5 Efforts should be made to increase publications based on thesis work. Relatedly, a policy on co-authorship should be developed and distributed to students.
- 1.1.6 A course on Administration and Management should be added to the electives offered in the M.A. Program.

1.2 The Diploma Program:

- 1.2.1 The Gerontology faculty, in concert with the Steering Committee and university officials, should engage in a strategic planning exercise regarding the future of the Diploma Program. This exercise should include consideration of the extent of demand for the Program, whether its graduates can compete successfully in the employment market, whether students would be better served by investing their efforts in a Master's Degree rather than a Diploma, and whether the Program should be phased out. The committee's view is that, after 17 years, the time has come to wind down the diploma program and move on to new programs that are

better suited to the changing times and educational needs of students and professionals.

- 1.2.2 Should there be an initiative to offer the Diploma Program offshore, and should the Diploma Program at SFU be phased out, an International Certificate could be offered by taking a package of courses from the Gerontology Minor and the Master's Program.
- 1.2.3 If the Diploma Program is phased out, fewer undergraduate Gerontology courses should be offered, while retaining enough courses to support a Minor. As the Program moves towards a Gerontology Major, courses should be added at the undergraduate level, contingent on having sufficient faculty.
- 1.2.4 Should the Diploma Program be continued, consideration should be given to moving to one student intake period per year, in order to simplify planning and administration.

1.3 The Minor in Gerontology:

- 1.3.1 The Minor in Gerontology should be further developed.
- 1.3.2 Once the Minor is well established, and depending on enrolment patterns and perceived demand, consideration should be given to building it into an undergraduate major.

2. FACULTY

- 2.1 The two Faculty appointments that were included in the M.A. Program proposal that was approved by SFU Senate in 1996 should be made immediately. These are:

- a CFL in the Built Environment. Consideration should be given to filling this position at the associate level. Filling this position is essential to maintain the strength in this area of the Program and to ensure adequate supervision of graduate students.

- a .5 Practicum Supervisor . The Practicum Supervisor should have faculty status, with at least a Master's Degree. The current situation in which students do internships (and placements) without regular, overall supervision from the program, is substandard academic practice.
- 2.2 Greater attention should be given to research which will result in refereed journal articles.
 - 2.3 Expectations that faculty will provide articles for in-house books should be lessened.
 - 2.4 A supportive professional environment should be created for new CFLs, including attention to mentoring and professional development. New hires should receive some course release in their first year. Suitable office space and lab space should be provided.

3. ADMINISTRATION

- 3.1 If the Diploma Program is retained, a Program Assistant should be hired immediately. If it is to be phased out, some additional administrative support is needed in the interim.
- 3.2 More space and equipment should be provided for Research Assistants, and the new CFL, Practicum Supervisor and graduate secretary.
- 3.3 Laboratory space should be provided as required.
- 3.4 The current equipment allowance should be dramatically increased.
- 3.5 The Information Officer should stop doing bibliographies except in response to specific requests.
- 3.6 With respect to the university library resources, all journals that are paid for by Gerontology should be shelved at Belzberg.

- 3.7 The amount of support for book acquisitions should be examined, and likely increased.
- 3.8 Additional support staff should be hired, as outlined in the Program's three-year plan. A full-time receptionist should be hired, with the cost shared between the Centre and the Program. A graduate secretary should be hired, to remove some of the excess work of the Assistant to the Director/Student Advisor.

4. CONNECTIONS OF THE FACULTY WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY

- 4.1 Systematic efforts should be made to nourish alumni relationships.

5. GERONTOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE

5.1 The university should provide base budget support to the Centre. The committee was very surprised to learn that the Centre has not had any operating budget support from the university. Should Gerontology move toward departmental status, as is recommended below, an operating budget for the Centre should be part of the overall department budget.

5.2 Contract research should be de-emphasized. The Centre should concentrate its efforts on obtaining grants for scholarly research and thus increasing the amount of funded research.

5.3 The research plans for the Health Promotion, Built Environment, and Demography and Life Styles areas, as articulated in the three-year plan, should move forward.

The fourth proposed theme area, "Older Adult Education", should be dropped as a research theme unless additional faculty strength can be added to sustain it.

The fifth area, "Victimization and Exploitation of Older Persons", should either be dropped or grouped with the Demography and Life Styles theme.

- 5.4 The emphasis on in-house publishing should be decreased, but the GRC News and Seniors' Housing Update should continue to be published.
- 5.5 Publication in refereed journals should be increased.
- 5.6 Efforts should be made to build more ties within SFU. Systematic efforts should be made to form research relationships with colleagues in departments and units with which Gerontology does not currently have strong relationships.
- 5.7 Consideration should be given to strategies for raising interest in Gerontology and the visibility of the GRC on the Burnaby campus.
- 5.8 More Research Assistant opportunities should be provided to M.A. students.

6. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- 6.1 The Gerontology Research Centre and Program should develop a plan to move to departmental status.
- 6.2 The Gerontology Research Centre and Program should be represented on relevant upper level university committees such as the Faculty of Arts Graduate Studies Committee and the Dean's Advisory Committee.