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ABSTRACT

Ways that states can help improve the academic achievement of minority college students are recommended by the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEOs) Task Force on Minority Student Achievement. Current concerns regarding minority representation in college and minority student achievement are outlined, and implications in the context of future trends are examined. Attention is directed to demographic and economic trends. While in the late 1960s and early 1970s, minority groups made great strides and fairly uniform strides in educational attainment, today that progress has become uneven. In general, minorities have higher attrition rates, lower grade point averages, and slower progression rates than majority students. Data are provided on college enrollments by race/ethnicity of students for fall 1968 to fall 1986. Causes for disparities in achievement are considered that revolve around socioeconomic and psychological/cultural factors, as well as educational considerations. Ten task force recommendations for SHEEOs are offered, including: state and federal governments should help remove economic barriers to college attendance; and SHEEOs should establish a formal institutional planning and reporting process dedicated to improving minority student access and achievement. (SW)

A DIFFERENCE OF DEGREES: STATE INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Report and Recommendations of the
State Higher Education Executive Officers
Task Force on Minority Student Achievement

July 1987

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FOREWORD

On behalf of the SHEEO Task Force on Minority Student Achievement, I am pleased to present this report, and its associated recommendations, for consideration by the full membership of the association of State Higher Education Executive Officers.

The task force had its origins in a 1986 survey which asked SHEEO members to identify the most critical issues in higher education facing their states. As survey results were being analyzed, two reports of great import for state policymakers in higher education were released: Time For Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education from the National Governors Association (NGA) and Transforming the State Role in Undergraduate Education from the Education Commission of the States (ECS). The concerns emerging from these reports coincided in many respects with those expressed by SHEEOs. Four major issues, in particular, stood out: institutional roles and missions, assessment, school/college collaboration, and minority student achievement. Accordingly, SHEEO President Richard Wagner appointed four task forces--one to study each topic. Each working group was asked to share information and suggestions at the next annual meeting as to how that issue might be effectively addressed in the various states.

The question of how we, as state higher education executive officers, can best act to improve the collegiate achievement of minority students is one that has been of central importance for some time now, and it is one that promises to command an ever-increasing portion of our attention in years to come. In making its recommendations on college quality, the National Governors' Association stressed that quality and access are

inseparable imperatives for higher educators, and the governors urged state policymakers to reaffirm their strong commitment to access to public higher education for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. Similarly, two of the major "challenges" put forward in the ECS report, that of meeting the educational needs of an increasingly diverse population and that of improving college participation and completion rates, were noted as being particularly critical for minority students. Both organizations have called for more effective and targeted state action, to improve college education in general, and to improve the education of minorities in particular; clearly we are among those who cannot let such calls pass unanswered.

Part of our aim, then, in developing this policy paper, has been to frame an appropriate response--a response that is direct, vigorous and comprehensive. Some might find this report unusual in that it represents an organization making action recommendations primarily to itself, rather than to others, regarding an issue of profound national importance. Certainly this particular approach is unique in SHEEO's history, and our task force members have not been insensitive to its novelty. We only hope that in attempting such an assignment we have not abused the trust of our colleagues, and that the results of our efforts to suggest a common direction for fifty very different states will prove constructive and stimulating.

In preparing this policy paper, the task force has benefited from collaboration with the Education Commission of the States in two important ways. First, ECS decided to field a "Full Participation of Minorities" project with an emphasis on graduate and professional education, thus permitting us to narrow our own focus to minority involvement in undergraduate education. Second, ECS joined with SHEEO to produce two documents which serve both as background material and companion pieces to this report. I commend them to your attention:

Focus on Minorities: Trends in Participation and Success in Higher Education provides a statistical portrait of the status of minorities in higher education, while Focus on Minorities: Synopsis of State Higher Education Initiatives surveys the many state-level programs designed to improve minority student achievement already in existence around the country. Both are available through the SHEEO office in Denver.

The task force is also grateful to the many organizations (listed in the appendix to this report) who graciously responded to our appeal for comments and information. I would like particularly to thank Dick Wagner for setting this process in motion and for focusing SHEEO so directly on issues of true substance, and Jim Mingle for the counsel and assistance he has provided throughout our efforts. In addition, SHEEO officers owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Diane Yavorsky of the New Jersey Department of Higher Education who, as principal author of this report, added an elegant style to her strong commitment on the issues. Several other members of my staff in New Jersey also made various contributions to the report's development, with Sharon Schley shouldering the burden of getting it all down on paper in a form suitable for presentation. Further, I personally want to acknowledge Governor Thomas H. Kean, Governor of New Jersey, whose vision for our colleges has been a significant inspiration for me. Finally, I would like to thank my fellow task force members for their spirited and thoughtful contributions and, most of all, for their strong commitment to the importance of this subject and to the need for us all to act forcefully so that equal educational opportunity--at all levels--is no longer a promise or an intention, but a fact.

T. Edward Hollander
Chancellor, New Jersey Department
of Higher Education and
Chairman, SHEEO Task Force on
Minority Student Achievement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite two decades, and more, of effort to improve minority educational attainment, minority students remain seriously under-represented in our nation's colleges. Enrollment gains achieved in the mid-to-late 1970s have plateaued and, in some cases, slipped. Equally troubling is the fact that achievement levels (in terms of both academic performance and persistence to the baccalaureate degree) of minority college students tend to lag behind those of their majority peers.

The country can no longer countenance significant shortfalls in minority student achievement, nor can it tolerate anything less than wholehearted commitment to their removal. Some of the most fundamental principles of our society are at stake in this effort, and the consequences of failure are sobering, especially in view of the steady proportional increase in our minority population. The threat to our national character and well-being posed by these achievement gaps (and the larger socioeconomic disparities they reflect) has never been greater; fortunately, however, neither has the opportunity to achieve a major social transformation through education ever been more promising. The country's shrinking pool of young adults combined with the economy's growing appetite for (and dependency on) entry-level workers with higher-order skills means that college-educated minorities have substantial potential for rapid economic advancement. Educators, however, first must ensure that sufficient numbers of minority students receive the preparation--and college degrees--that they need to succeed.

Within the education community, higher educators have a special obligation to set a standard for committed and effective action to improve minority student achievement. Though the ultimate measure of

success will be determined by actions taken at the campus level, it is State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEOs) who must step forward to provide leadership and support for these efforts. Because achievement disparities have multiple and complex causes, only a broad-based and coordinated strategy will bring about fundamental change. Accordingly, the SHEEO Task Force on Minority Student Achievement calls upon each SHEEO to develop and implement a comprehensive and systematic plan of action--one that is based on individual state needs and collaborative effort. Specifically, the task force recommends that:

1. SHEEOs establish the issue of minority student achievement as a preeminent concern for the higher education community within their states.

2. Both states and the federal government do their full share to remove economic barriers to college attendance.

3. SHEEOs put in place a formal institutional planning and reporting process dedicated to improving minority student access and achievement.

4. SHEEOs be creative and persistent in their search for resources to support minority-related programming and that they make special efforts to pursue cooperative ventures in this regard.

5. SHEEOs, and higher educators in general, actively pursue more aggressive involvement with elementary and secondary education.

6. SHEEOs encourage institutions to rely on broader and more effective means of assessing students for admission.

7. SHEEOs ensure that opportunities are available to minority students at two- and four-year institutions alike.

8. SHEEOs support institutional programming that meets two equally important ends: to better equip minority students to function well in the institutional environment, and to adapt that environment to better accommodate the needs and interests of minority students.

9. SHEEOs institute broad-based programs to promote racial and ethnic diversity among higher education's professional ranks.

10. SHEEOs regularly disseminate information, both to the public and the higher education community, about higher educational opportunities for minority students and progress in meeting their needs.

The task force concludes by suggesting that the association of State Higher Education Executive Officers help states to help each other in accomplishing these tasks; establish linkages with other groups pursuing the same ends; and serve as a vehicle by which SHEEOs can hold themselves accountable for their progress in ensuring that minorities benefit in equitable measure from the opportunities for higher education afforded by this country.

I. INTRODUCTION: A QUESTION OF COMMITMENT

Equal opportunity has been a recurring theme on the educational landscape for much of the second half of this century. Yet today, as we approach the 1990s, minorities still are seriously under-represented among the ranks of the nation's college graduates. At the start of this decade, the percentage of whites over 25 years old holding baccalaureate degrees was more than double that of blacks or Hispanics (College Board 1985). The implications of this state of affairs are large, and steadily growing: for institutions of higher education, for minorities, and for the nation's general economic, political and social well-being.

As State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEOs), we--and the agencies we lead--are in a position to make a significant difference in the struggle to ensure that all citizens have a truly fair opportunity to achieve their educational potential. In presenting this policy paper to the full SHEEO membership, this task force seeks to suggest ways by which we can all put our substantial influence vigorously to work towards that end.

It is perhaps fitting that the development of this report has taken place against a crescendo of historical commemorations. As tribute to the Statue of Liberty has given way to celebration of the Constitution, we have been reminded with some frequency of the fundamental characteristics and commitments that justify this nation's claim to greatness. The possibilities symbolized by the Statue of Liberty and the guarantees made concrete by the Constitution have particular resonance for minority citizens, representing hope for the future as well as standards by which to measure past and present national failings.

Unfortunately, we all need only to look around us to know that too much evidence of unfulfilled promise exists to permit these anniversary celebrations to be unrestrained occasions for self-congratulation.

Lagging participation by minorities in higher education is only one facet, though a critical one, of what is obviously a broader national concern regarding the inequities that afflict certain groups within our society. After an era of genuine progress for minorities on a number of important fronts, including educational attainment, the years bracketed by the bicentennial celebrations of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution have seen that progress stall and, in some cases, dissipate. Economic and social dislocations of the past decade have wrought their ill effects with disproportionate force within minority communities, to a degree that scholars and commentators alike speak with increasing alarm of a seemingly irreversible trend toward the development of a permanent "underclass." Such a trend, while to be strenuously resisted under any circumstances, becomes increasingly ominous in view of demographic projections that make the term "minorities," as currently applied, a soon-to-be obsolete concept. Very shortly, the majority of children in many of our most populous states will be both poor and non-white. As adults, we will ask them to fuel a productive economy and support an aging, white, middle-class population. Will they be able and willing to respond?

More than 125 ethnic, racial and language groups currently reside in this country in substantial numbers (Maguire 1987). Unfortunately, we have not been totally--or even generally--successful in weaving these groups equitably into the nation's social, economic and political fabric. Over the years, a succession of immigrant groups have, indeed, within a generation or two, managed to join the mainstream; for all intents and purposes, they are now part of the "majority". Others, however--particularly those who were brought here forcibly or those who held prior claim to the land--historically have faced stiffer prejudice (much of it racial) and more intransigent cultural barriers. They recently have been joined by new waves of immigrants from points around

the globe, both near and far. While some of these newer arrivals have made remarkable progress, most give evidence that they too may find equal opportunity a chimera.

For many, education is the chief battleground where the struggle to promote equity and avert socioeconomic polarization will be won or lost. For all its unfulfilled potential as a remedy in the past, we still hold this to be true. Where once an individual could raise his or her state through hard (and relatively unskilled) work on the farm or in the factory, today few legitimate avenues to a better life exist other than through education. Education not only helps to transmit the values and attitudes that promote nondiscrimination, but it also provides the essential foundation of skills and knowledge that allows all individuals, as adults, to compete on an equitable basis for the economic rewards society has to offer. Success with regard to educational achievement will inevitably enhance efforts in other areas--political, economic and social. Failure, however, will almost certainly mean defeat on these other fronts as well.

While the challenge at hand obviously confronts education on all levels, higher education has a particular obligation in this regard. Arguably the most concentrated institutional repository of intellectual imagination and moral concern in our society, the higher education community must set a standard for practical and effective action within its own boundaries and, ultimately, beyond. Higher educators must show by example that the best way to honor (and preserve) the ideals we currently celebrate is to redouble our efforts to see them more fully realized. In truth, neither higher educators--nor the country at large--can afford to do otherwise. If moral concern is not sufficient as an imperative, self-interest alone eventually will dictate, perhaps too late, the high priority these issues deserve.

The obvious disparities of status and condition suffered by most minorities in residence test the character of this nation. Such disparities, significant in size and multiple in dimension, have

stubbornly persisted and, in some cases, even widened despite the active measures of national scope taken in the past two decades to combat them. When problems prove unexpectedly complex and intractable, as they have in this instance, it is not lack of resources or imagination that poses the greatest danger, but failure of will. If bona fide corrective efforts yield discouraging results, there is a strong temptation to change priorities and move on to other concerns that promise quicker and more satisfying resolutions. There are times, perhaps, when this might be justified; the fresh perspectives of another day have their advantages. In most circumstances, however--and this certainly is one of them--abandoning a challenge to other minds in other times courts disaster.

For State Higher Education Executive Officers, the disparity which demands our most immediate attention and effort is the failure of many minorities--most dramatically blacks and Hispanics--to benefit in equitable measure from the opportunities for higher education afforded by this country. It is incumbent upon SHEEOs to speak out clearly and strongly on this matter. Among the legacies of the Constitution is the reservation to the states of the primary power and responsibility for education. And while the states are not the sole custodians of educational equity at the collegiate level--the federal government has its own pivotal role to play, and considerable prerogative and obligation devolve to individual institutions as well--they are natural candidates to take on the mantle of leadership in this area. SHEEOs, of course, are not the only--nor even necessarily the most powerful--actors in shaping state higher education policy. They must work in concert with governors, legislators, boards and other parties with rightful roles and duties in this regard. Nonetheless, we believe that SHEEOs should step forward and take the lead in building partnerships to address this critical issue.

The paper that follows outlines the dimensions of current concerns regarding minority representation and achievement. It also examines their implications in the context of future trends, and proposes initiatives to be taken by state higher education officials, in company with the efforts of others who share this commitment, to redress

imbalances in college enrollment and performance among racial and ethnic groups. We recognize that in speaking about "minority" student achievement (and related enhancement measures) we are dealing with an immensely complicated topic. Clearly there are considerable variations in needs and circumstances both within and among minority groups, and these must constantly be recognized and taken into account. Further, solutions for the most difficult problems must emanate from a number of quarters, many of which are beyond the direct control (but not necessarily the influence) of higher educators. Finally, individual states--as they move to take the initiative in this area--must contend with differing population profiles, historical circumstances, institutional and governance structures, and degrees of current financial health. These factors may modify the specific forms of action adopted by a given state, but they in no way alter the general imperative for each to act, and act aggressively, to ensure that minority achievement is an urgent priority for its higher education community.

For some states, perhaps, this may involve an unprecedented assumption of responsibility and unqualified effort; for others, it may mean a continuation and intensification of a campaign that is already well underway. As educators, we simply can no longer content ourselves with progress for minorities that is episodic, grudging and vulnerable to quick reversal at the slightest hint of benign indifference. What is needed is a level of commitment that produces change so fundamental that the risk of retreat is forever banished. It is that dedication to dramatic and lasting change--change that will benefit not only minority students, but all students, and ultimately the nation as a whole--that we commend to SHEEOs, and the states they represent, today.

II. ON THE HORIZON: CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

The approach of the year 2000, with all the portentous overtones that surround a turn of millenium, has produced in recent years a perhaps greater effort to anticipate (and shape) the future than might have occurred under more routine circumstances. Current economic, social and demographic trends are well-charted and well-publicized and, despite the uncertainties attendant to forecasting, there are enough seeds of turmoil discernible to make us properly uneasy. There are also, however, signs that point to an unusual and welcome window of opportunity for effectively addressing minority concerns, one in which education at higher levels can, and must, play a major role.

Demographic Trends

Thanks in large part to the efforts of Harold Hodgkinson, senior fellow at the American Council on Education, most in the higher education community are, by now, well aware of population trends and their implications for campuses across the land. The traditional college-age population of 18- to 24-year olds has begun a decline that will not begin to reverse itself until very near the end of the century. Not until 1998 will colleges begin to see an increase once again (the baby boom "echo") in the numbers of high school graduates (Hodgkinson 1983).

While the pool of traditionally college-aged youth will decrease dramatically in coming years, minorities will constitute a growing proportion of their numbers, due both to higher birth rates and to immigration. The U.S. Bureau of the Census (Spencer 1986) predicts that Hispanics alone will contribute one-fourth of the total population growth

between 1982 and 2000. Non-Hispanic whites will drop from approximately 75 percent of the 18- to 24-year-old population in 1985 to about 70 percent in 2000. (See Table 1.) Hispanics will increase from roughly 8 to 11 percent of the cohort, blacks from 14 to 15 percent, and those of other races from 3 to 4 percent. This trend is potentially so dramatic that, if current patterns hold, the Population Reference Bureau projects that by the year 2080 slightly more than half of all Americans will be Hispanic, Asian or black. Furthermore, before the next century ends, about 40 percent of the nation's workers will either be immigrants who arrived after 1980 or their descendants.

The growth in relative numbers of minorities will have differential impact around the country. The black population is largest in the South, followed by the Midwest, the Northeast and the West. Among Hispanics, Puerto Ricans and Cubans cluster in the East, Chicanos in the West. The high-growth Sun Belt states will have some of the largest concentrations of nonwhites. By 1990 over 45 percent of the children born in Texas and California will be members of a minority group. In California, it has been predicted that minorities will collectively constitute a majority of the state's population soon after the turn of the century. By 2035, only 43 percent of Texans will be non-Hispanic whites (Bouvier and Gardner 1986).

The decline in the pool of entry-level workers and the corresponding increases in both the median age and the minority constitution of the general population have import for the nation's economy as well as its educational system. Of particular concern to both sectors is the relative balance between the supply of jobs at various skill levels and the availability of appropriately trained individuals to fill them. The shrinking entry-level labor pool offers marked opportunities for advancement to minorities, if the economy can generate sufficient demand for highly-skilled individuals and if higher educators can provide sufficient numbers of minorities with the proper preparation to meet that demand. At the moment, prospects are relatively bright for the former, but clouded for the latter.

Table 1

COLLEGE-AGE POPULATION (18-24), SELECTED YEARS 1950-2050

Year	Total (in thousands)	White	Minority	Percent Minority to Total 18-24
1950	16,075	14,186	1,889*	11.8*
1960	16,128	14,169	1,959*	12.1*
1970	24,712	21,532	3,180*	13.0*
1975	27,734	23,775	3,959*	14.3*
1980	30,081	25,415	4,666	15.5*
1982	30,344	23,074	7,270	24.0
1983	30,054	22,736	7,318	24.3
1984	29,476	22,181	7,295	24.7
1985	28,715	21,491	7,224	25.2
				projected
1990	25,777	18,768	7,009	27.2
1995	23,684	16,753	6,931	29.3
2000	24,590	17,062	7,528	30.6
2025	25,447	15,468	9,979	39.2
2050	25,659	14,278	11,381	44.4

Source: 1950-1970: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-25 (Washington: GPO), No. 311, p.22; No. 519, table 1; No. 704, table 8; No. 880, table 1; No. 870, table 1; No. 917, table 1; as reported in 1986-87 Fact Book on Higher Education, American Council on Education, page 4.

1975-1980: Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 917, table 1.

1982-2050: Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 922, table 2; No. 995, table 2.

NOTE: Minority 1982-2050 derived by subtracting "Spanish-origin" from "white" and redistributing to "black and other."

* Does not include Spanish-origin population if they were classified as "white" rather than "black and other" in the survey data.

Economic Trends

On the employment front, the economy's transition away from a manufacturing base already is well-advanced, and high technology and service industries promise to continue to dominate the economic terrain well into the next century. Of the 18 million new jobs projected to be created by the year 2000, nine out of ten will be in service industries, with the two fastest growing labor markets to be found in highly skilled business and health services jobs (Fortune 1987). According to U.S. Labor Secretary William Brock (1987), a "predominant number" of those new service sector jobs will be in areas that require at least some postsecondary training. One-sixth will be executive, administrative or managerial. By 1995, about 20 percent of all available openings will require four or more years of college--up from 16 percent in 1984 (Fields 1986). Of those positions that are newly created, the number requiring baccalaureate degrees will rise by 45 percent over the same period, an increase three times as great as the projected 15 percent rise in new positions generally (Sargent 1986).

If the above scenario proves accurate, job-seekers not only will need increasingly sophisticated skills to secure entry-level employment, but also the flexibility to capitalize, through retraining and relocation, on quickly shifting job opportunities throughout the course of their careers. As a result, Brock posits that the greatest economic roadblock of the future lies, not in a potential labor shortage, but in a "skill shortage":

> many new work force entrants may not have the appropriate education and other training for entry-level jobs. This will result in more intensive competition for fewer unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. In other words, we're going to have more jobs than there will be qualified people. And we're going to have more unqualified people competing for the very low-skilled jobs, the few that remain (p. 26).

These predictions stand in some contrast to current realities, however. Recent declines in median household income levels and a high rate of low-wage job creation have caused some scholars to predict the demise of the middle class and the growth of a two-tier society comprised

of the very rich and the very poor, with the latter far more numerous than the former. Others argue strongly that these statistics are temporary phenomena that reflect the recent social and economic turbulence of a country in transition. Whatever their other disputes, however, both pessimists and optimists agree that the proportion of the population that has borne the brunt of these upheavals is composed in inequitable measure of minorities, and that, barring strong and effective action, minorities are in great danger of being left even farther behind as the nation continues its march to the 21st century.

Both sides agree as well that education is, and will be, an increasingly important determinant of who fares well and who fares ill in society. According to Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison (1986, 32), whose study for the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress describes the current growth in low-wage employment:

> College-educated workers have not been immune to the tendency toward low-wage employment, but compared with the experience of both high school dropouts and high school graduates, their employment opportunities have been much less constrained by post-1979 labor market developments. At least in terms of annual wages, Americans are apparently becoming increasingly divided along the lines of educational attainment . . . .

And, looking toward the future, "what is no longer possible," says Peter Drucker (1987), "is that a worker will make an upper-middle-class living except through knowledge [emphasis added]."

The fact that recent growth in college graduation rates has resulted in a current surplus of graduates in relation to jobs requiring a college degree (on the order of three graduates for every two jobs, according to Hodgkinson) does not, in itself, argue that we should produce fewer graduates (Jacobson 1986). Higher education clearly has benefits to both individuals and society that extend beyond training for a particular job. Even if those non-job-related benefits are put aside, however, a strong case for college still exists. The phenomenon of a graduate surplus has actually served to strengthen a growing perception that

college education is, in fact, basic education--something that more and more employers will come to expect as a matter of course among their job applicants. Further, the argument can be made that a better-educated work force, with its greater flexibility and talent, will--even if initially "under"-employed--eventually produce a more sophisticated economy that will, in turn, lead to growing numbers of higher-skilled (and higher-paid) job openings. This process is, in fact, already underway. In sum, the greatest economic danger the nation faces for the future is not that of an oversupply of college graduates, but rather that of a bottleneck in economic growth due to a shortage of versatile, well-trained workers.

III. EXISTING DISPARITIES: ENROLLMENT AND PERFORMANCE

If new opportunities for economic advancement are likely to be provided in coming years, especially to younger job-seekers with college backgrounds, how well are minorities positioned to capitalize on the opportunities offered? The answer, unfortunately, is not well. For a time in the late sixties and early seventies, minority groups made great and fairly uniform strides in educational attainment. Today that progress has become decidedly uneven, and gaps that were once closing are, in some instances, starting to widen again. Blacks, in particular, have seen their progress ebb in recent years. There are also indications that Hispanic gains, never sufficient to keep pace with their corresponding growth in the population, may be leveling off.

Enrollment

Any general summary of the current educational status of minorities must be preceded by the caveat that available data are not nearly as current, complete or precise as we might wish. Further, categories such as "Hispanic" or "Asian-American" embrace a wide range of constituent groups; Cubans, Colombians, Puerto Ricans and Chicanos, for example, may all be of Spanish origin, yet their experiences can, and do, differ. Consider, however, the following general statistics* pertaining to enrollment:

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* Unless otherwise indicated, enrollment data are from U.S. Department of Education figures summarized in the July 23, 1986 Chronicle of Higher Education or from the American Council on Education's Fifth Annual Status Report on Minorities in Higher Education. Because data from some institutions were omitted or imputed, minority enrollments may be slightly understated; the State of New York particularly notes the omission of data for the City University of New York in the latter publication.

- According to 1985 estimates, minorities account for only 17 percent of total college enrollments, yet 21.3 percent of the U.S. population at large. (See Table 2.)

- While minority enrollment at two-year colleges approximates their proportional representation in the general population, minorities are significantly under-represented (14.5 percent of total enrollment in 1984) at four-year institutions. (See Table 3.)

- American Indians and Hispanics are concentrated to an exceptional degree at two-year institutions. Two-year colleges enrolled 54.7 percent of all American Indian students and 54.3 percent of all Hispanic students in 1984. In contrast, only 35.9 percent of white students were similarly enrolled. Comparable figures for Asian-Americans and blacks were 43.2 percent and 42.7 percent, respectively.

- Minorities are more likely to be found in public institutions (17.6 percent of enrollment in 1984) than in private institutions (13.9 percent).

- Of all racial/ethnic groups, only Asians are over-represented at all levels of education. Asian enrollments grew 33.6 percent from 1980 to 1984. Such progress, however, disguises a far different situation for certain sub-groups, particularly refugees from Thailand, Laos and Vietnam.

- After previously posting double-digit biennial gains, Hispanic enrollment grew only 1.9 percent from 1982 to 1984. In 1985 Hispanics represented approximately 8 percent of the 18- to 24-year-old cohort; in 1984 they constituted 4.6 percent of undergraduate enrollment.

- Total enrollments for American Indians declined 1.2 percent from 1980 to 1984, increasing 4.8 percent from 1980 to 1982 and then dropping 5.7 percent from 1982 to 1984. Over the same four-year period, undergraduate enrollments rose 2.6 percent, but the proportion of the total undergraduate population represented by American Indians remained constant at 0.7 percent.

- Total black college enrollment peaked around 1980, and has declined significantly since that time (down 3.3 percent by 1984). Blacks were the only group to experience a drop (3.8 percent) over those four years in undergraduate enrollments, and only six states succeeded in increasing black enrollments at <u>both</u> two- and four-year institutions during that time period.

Table 2

TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
EDUCATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS, FALL 1968-1986
(In Thousands)

Year	Total #	Percentage						
		White	Minority	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Alien
1968	4,820	90.7	9.3	6.0	Other	3.5		---
1970	4,966	89.4	10.6	6.9	Other	3.7		---
1972	5,531	87.7	12.3	8.3	Other	4.0		---
1974	5,639	86.5	13.5	9.0	Other	4.5		---
1976	10,986	82.6	15.4	9.4	3.5	1.8	.7	2.0
1978	11,231	81.9	15.9	9.4	3.7	2.1	.7	2.2
1980	12,087	81.4	16.1	9.2	3.9	2.4	.7	2.5
1982	12,388	80.7	16.6	8.9	4.2	2.8	.7	2.7
1984	12,162	80.3	17.0	8.8	4.3	3.1	.7	2.7

Source: 1968-1974: U.S. Department of Education, "Racial and Ethnic Enrollment Data from Institutions of Higher Education," biennial; as reported in Statistical Abstract of the United States 1986, 106th edition, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Table 259, page 153.

1976-1984: U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics, "Fall Enrollment in Colleges and Universities" surveys, as reported in Digest of Education Statistics 1986-87 and Digest of Education Statistics 1980.

Table 3

TOTAL ENROLLMENT IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION AND BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF STUDENTS
IN THE UNITED STATES, FALL 1976 TO FALL 1984

Type of Institution and Race/Ethnicity of Student	Percentage Distribution (within institution type) 1976	1978	1980	1982	1984
All Institutions	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	82.6	81.9	81.4	80.7	80.3
Total Minority	15.4	15.9	16.1	16.6	17.0
Black	9.4	9.4	9.2	8.9	8.8
Hispanic	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.2	4.3
Asian	1.8	2.1	2.4	2.8	3.1
American Indian	.7	.7	.7	.7	.7
Nonresident Alien	2.0	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.7
4-Year Institutions	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	84.4	83.7	82.9	82.5	81.9
Total Minority	13.1	13.5	13.9	14.1	14.5
Black	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.0	8.0
Hispanic	2.5	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.1
Asian	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.5	2.8
American Indian	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5
Nonresident Alien	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.5	3.7
2-Year Institutions	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	79.3	78.6	78.6	77.8	77.6
Total Minority	19.5	20.1	19.8	20.8	21.1
Black	11.0	11.0	10.4	10.3	10.1
Hispanic	5.4	5.6	5.6	6.1	6.4
Asian	2.0	2.4	2.7	3.3	3.7
American Indian	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0
Nonresident Alien	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics, "Fall Enrollment in Colleges and Universities" surveys, Table 97.

Four-year and two-year are derived from data Table 5E.

1978 data source: Center for Education Statistics, Fall Enrollment in Institutions of Higher Education, 1978. Reported in Digest of Education Statistics, 1980.

College enrollment figures, of course, depend heavily on high school graduation rates. In this regard, minorities are handicapped at the outset. According to a recent report from the Institute for Educational Leadership, about 13 percent of white students drop out prior to receiving a high school degree. Estimates for blacks, however, range from 12 to 24 percent; for Hispanics, up to 40 percent; and for Native Americans, up to 48 percent (Olson 1987). Disturbing as these figures are, others give even greater pause to higher educators. Although high school graduation rates for minorities have risen in recent years, the proportion of graduates going on to college has declined. For black 18- to 24-year-olds, high school graduation rates increased from 58 percent in 1968 to 75 percent in 1985, yet the proportion of such students participating in college (after a brief rise) dropped significantly, from a high of 34 percent in 1976 to 26 percent in 1985. A similar drop (from 36 percent in 1976 to 26 percent in 1985) was recorded for Hispanics, who also carry the burden of the lowest high school graduation rates (62 percent in 1985). In contrast, white graduation rates held relatively constant (83 percent in 1985), as did the percentage of white graduates enrolled in college, which stood at 34 percent in 1985 after a small dip in the seventies. (See Tables 4 and 5.)

Scholars argue over the degree to which minority "access" to higher education is still a cause for major concern. Chaikind (1987), for example, sees reason for optimism in his analysis of "High School and Beyond" data showing that black and white high school graduates attend college in similar proportions within the same income and academic achievement groups. Such optimism must, of course, be severely tempered by the fact that minorities are disproportionately represented in the lower income and achievement categories, where college attendance is least likely. As long as an overall enrollment gap persists, issues pertinent to access will require continuing vigilance and active programming. What has changed over time, however, and legitimately so, is a growing realization that access alone is not enough. Equal, if not greater, attention must also be given to how well minorities fare once they are on campus, that is, to their ability to perform at a college level and to persist to graduation.

TABLE 4

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES*
1968-1985

	White	Black	Hispanic
1968	79%	58%	---
1972	82%	67%	52%
1976	82%	67%	56%
1980	83%	70%	54%
1985	83%	75%	62%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 404.

* Persons 18-24 years old reporting four or more years of high school.

Table 5

COLLEGE PARTICIPATION BY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES*
1968-1984

	White	Black	Hispanic
1968	35%	25%	---
1972	32%	27%	26%
1976	33%	34%	36%
1980	32%	28%	30%
1985	34%	26%	26%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 404.

* 18-24-year-old high school graduates enrolled in colleges (civilian population).

Performance

The noticeable difference that appears to exist in the academic performance of minority and majority college students is, as Glenn Loury (1986-87) has noted, a matter "of exquisite sensitivity." Patterns of achievement are complicated and vary from minority to minority and from setting to setting. Many minority students, from all backgrounds, not only succeed but excel, without special assistance and entirely on their own merits. Nonetheless minorities have, in general, higher attrition rates, lower grade point averages and slower progression rates than majority students. According to the Association of American Colleges (1985, vii), "approximately 59 out of every 100 white undergraduates complete their college degrees compared to 42 black, 31 Hispanic and 39 Native American students." Minorities are also over-represented in remedial programming and under-represented in those fields of study (generally math and science-related) that are traditionally thought to require the highest levels of academic talent. With the exception of Asians, they are much less likely to pursue a course of study in natural sciences or engineering than in the social and behavioral sciences or in education and the humanities. Blacks constitute only 5.5 percent and Hispanics only 3.2 percent of those holding undergraduate degrees in science or engineering fields (Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology 1987, 26).

This gap in performance is not a phenomenon that appears suddenly at the collegiate level. It is also manifest at earlier levels of schooling, as data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress and from college entrance examinations make painfully clear.*

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* For detailed data summaries and further analysis of these and other aspects of minority participation and performance, please see the joint SHEEO and Education Commission of the States' (ECS) publication, Focus on Minorities: Trends in Participation and Success in Higher Education, by James Mingle, which serves as a companion document to this report and as the source of all tables included in this paper.

Undergraduate education has merely served to perpetuate, and perhaps aggravate, achievement disparities that take an increasing toll at each point of what has become a particularly damaging cycle. Colleges, in failing to produce a sufficient number of minority college graduates, have almost virtually dictated that there will be a corresponding shortage of minority individuals who are available to proceed on to graduate and professional school, to fill well-paid employment openings requiring sophisticated skills, or to serve as teachers for the nation's elementary, secondary and collegiate classrooms. Thus new generations of minority students continue to be exposed to the ills of poverty and deprived of the encouragement that comes from seeing that others have, in fact, realized their aspirations. Our task is to replace this cycle with one that serves positive rather than negative ends.

IV. EXPLORING CAUSES: NEITHER SINGLE NOR SIMPLE

Addressing disparities in enrollment and performance requires some notion of their causes. In this regard, Kenneth Clark's (1972, 13) words of fifteen years ago are as true now as they were then: "no single, simple explanation can account for the present intolerable level of academic retardation and, therefore, . . . no single, simplistic remedy can suffice to correct it." Higher educators, in the past, have been tempted to finesse the matter by asserting that minorities underenroll and underperform in college due to poor academic preparation at the elementary and secondary level. While this is undeniably a major factor, it is by no means the only one, nor does its validity exempt higher education from substantive responsibility for the problem. Higher educators can be faulted both for taking a less than spirited role in addressing the deficiencies of lower levels of schooling, and for compounding the difficulties that minority students face once they come under a college's jurisdiction.

The root causes for disparities in achievement are much the same regardless of educational level, and they revolve around socioeconomic and psychological/cultural factors, as well as other considerations that are more purely educational in nature.

Socioeconomic Factors

Historical poverty, aggravated by increases in unemployment and underemployment in recent years, has taken a stiff toll in minority communities. According to figures from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, in 1982 the median incomes of black and Hispanic families stood at their

lowest percentages of median white family income since 1972; by 1984 the percentages had inched up only slightly, to 55.7 percent and 68.0 percent of median white family income respectively. In 1984, 11.5 percent of the country's white population was below the poverty level; for blacks and those of Spanish origin, however, the comparable figures were 33.8 and 28.4 percent. For children under 18 years, the percentages below the poverty level rose to 16.5 for whites, 46.5 for blacks, and 39.0 for those of Spanish origin.

Accompanying poverty has been a host of other ills including poor housing, malnutrition, divorce, single parenthood, teenage pregnancy, violence, crime and substance abuse, to name just some of the more familiar concerns. While clearly no segment of society has been immune to these travails, and all segments contain many members who have escaped them, the pattern of disproportionate exposure within minority communities persists. In the case of single parenthood alone, for example, about 60 percent of black families with children under 18 had only one parent present in 1985, compared with 21 percent for white families.

The poverty suffered in disproportionate measure by minorities has straightforward implications for collegiate enrollment and attrition in terms of the greater need for financial assistance exhibited, on average, by students from these groups. It has been strongly suggested that declines in black enrollment, in particular, may be due to the combination of increasing college costs, declining family incomes, decreasing student aid (down three percent in inflation-adjusted dollars from 1980-81 to 1985-86 according to the College Board), and a shift from grants to loans as the preferred form of assistance. The latter factor may be particularly critical, since research has linked heavy reliance on loans to the decision to drop out of college. Recently, blacks and other minorities have seen their share of student financial aid drop. Similarly, the financial assistance provided to those with low incomes has not kept pace with inflation, while that going to middle-income students has increased. (See Arbeiter 1986; Cooperative Institutional Research Program 1986; Kirschner and Thrift 1987; and Lee, Rotermund and Bertschman 1985.)

The implications of persistent poverty and weakened family structures for academic achievement are somewhat more complicated. The impact is obviously debilitating, especially for the young. It is not, however, determinate. Clark cites evidence that improved instruction has yielded significant gains in academic achievement for children despite continuing socioeconomic deprivations, and Nettles, Thoeny and Gosman (1984, 19-20) have shown that "socioeconomic status is not among the significant predictors of students' college performance--neither in terms of progression rates nor grade point averages." They go on to note that:

> The fact that socioeconomic status is not significant implies that while students' performance in college may be somewhat dependent upon the by-products of their parents' socioeconomic status, i.e., high school preparation, low financial need, etc., students from families with low socioeconomic status are not in an academically disadvantageous position in college provided they receive adequate pre-college educational preparation and their in-college financial and other needs are met.

Psychological/Cultural Factors

The "other" needs noted above have been shown to be crucial for minority students. The factors which most affect persistence and performance, while similar, are not necessarily the same for minority and majority students. (See Clewell and Ficklen for a review of the literature.) Attitudes, aspirations and expectations, in particular, seem to have greater influence on educational attainment for minorities. The attitudes held by both minority and majority individuals are, in large measure, products of complex cultural interactions. Depending on their nature, such cultural encounters can either enrich all concerned, or create profound handicaps for minority students to overcome.

Pronounced isolation can be responsible for some of the most damaging effects on minority student aspirations and performance. William Wilson has ascribed the problems of the urban black poor, not to a "culture of poverty," but rather to economic changes that have intensified their social isolation from the middle classes--both black and white.

According to Wilson (as quoted by Cordes, 1987), poor blacks are much more likely than poor whites to live in neighborhoods of highly concentrated poverty, where they are isolated from "mainstream role models that help keep alive the perception that education is meaningful, that steady employment is a viable alternative to welfare, and that family stability is the norm, not the exception." Similar forms of isolation have, unfortunately, come into evidence for Hispanics as well. Since the 1960s, Hispanics have been increasingly segregated in predominantly minority schools (currently 70.6 percent of Hispanic children, as opposed to 54.8 percent in 1968). Significantly, Asian-Americans, however, usually attend mostly white schools (Monfort and Orfield 1986).

While isolation from mainstream values and privileges obviously can be detrimental, cross-cultural encounters can be equally damaging if members of the majority bring with them significant measures of prejudice, intolerance, ignorance or disdain. This is particularly true when these individuals are teachers in positions of authority. If a second language other than English is not viewed as a valuable asset to be nurtured and respected, then efforts to master English itself will be compromised. If expectations are low and standards are altered to accommodate such expectations, then students will internalize the message that they are likely to fail, and will do so. If attending college is viewed as an improbable goal for certain students, then those students will adjust their aspirations downward accordingly. One theory currently being debated suggests that many students, in reaction to such negative environments, will reject outright majority values regarding educational attainment, and exert strong pressure on their peers to do likewise. Those students who do attempt to excel, it is contended, must do so with the accusation that they are "acting white" and in some way betraying their roots (Snider 1987).

Unfortunately, too often the attitudes to be found on campuses have merely mirrored those of the larger society. The recent upsurge in incidents of racial hostility on the streets of New York City or

Philadelphia, for example, has its counterpart in incidents at the Universities of Michigan and Massachusetts, at Columbia and at numerous other campuses around the land. The current generation of college students has no personal recollection of the civil rights struggle of an earlier day, or of the gross violations of individual rights that prompted it. Even among those on campus who do remember, too many have fallen into the comfortable stance that the necessary corrective mechanisms have already been put in place and any further evidence of disparities must be laid largely at the feet of minorities themselves.

It would be unreasonable not to expect attitudes such as these to pose significant barriers to the progress of minority students. These attitudes need not be rampant, just present as a constant undertone, to damage self-esteem, especially if there is a dearth of minority faculty role models or of strong supportive programming to counteract them. Thus it is not surprising that studies have shown that such psychological and cultural factors as perceptions of discrimination, peer relations, satisfaction, faculty attitudes, and "interfering" problems are closely related to levels of college performance for minority students (Nettles, Thorny and Gosman 1986).

We should perhaps note that many sources in the literature speak of "involvement" as an important key to student success. Involvement will serve minorities as well, but only if it occurs in an atmosphere where their contribution is valued, and their ability to meet high standards is accorded genuine respect.

Educational Factors

According to Astin (1982, 91), "the quality of the student's academic preparation at the time of college entry" is, generally speaking, the most critical influence on college performance. Some studies have suggested that other factors (such as those noted above) may play a stronger role in determining the academic success of minority--but not majority--students (Lunneborg and Lunneborg 1986). Even so, the

importance of academic preparation can not be ignored. Increasingly in recent years, colleges have been forced to offer a wide range of remedial programming. Valuable as such programming might be, it does not confront the problem at its roots: in the academic curricula provided by high schools, in the number of minorities that are encouraged to pursue college preparatory coursework, in the skill with which such instruction is provided, and in the atmosphere of discipline, caring, innovation, and academic aspiration that must surround it. Higher educators simply have not done all they can do to effect change where it is most needed--at the elementary and secondary levels. They have either preferred to view this as beyond their domain of responsibility, or have drawn narrow boundaries around their spheres of influence or, alternatively, through insensitivity, have created levels of resistance that make meaningful cooperation difficult, if not impossible. Higher educators have also failed to communicate--clearly, strongly and early enough--directly with students and their parents regarding the importance of choosing a sufficiently rigorous college preparatory curriculum.

Other outreach-related activities, specifically recruitment procedures and admissions policies, also have considerable influence on minority participation in college. Unless special efforts are made to seek out potential minority students, to inform them regarding the availability of financial assistance, and to convince them that they are truly welcome at an institution, then far too many will assume that college is not a viable option. Further, special efforts must be made to make college a <u>preferred</u> option. To date, higher educators have failed to make a vigorous, responsible case that college can be, for many, a more valuable option than immediate employment, military service or short-term training through proprietary schools. Recruiting efforts, particularly as they relate to non-traditional students, have also failed to keep in mind, as Hodgkinson (1986, 11) has noted, that "we need to think of older <u>minority</u> students . . ., not just older whites." Finally, too often institutions have not taken sufficiently into account the mounting evidence that scores on standardized admissions tests are not, as Astin has contended, exceptionally good predictors of many important

student outcomes. Admissions criteria have lacked sufficient flexibility to accommodate minorities with poor preparation but high potential, nor have such criteria been grounded in adequate institution-specific research regarding the characteristics that are most likely to produce a good and productive student/institution "fit."

The last major educational factor influencing the success of minority students is, of course, the educational environment they are exposed to once they arrive on campus. If instruction takes second place to other institutional concerns, all students will suffer, but minorities disproportionately so. Though speaking of children, Kenneth Clark's words on this subject are applicable to students of all ages and levels:

> While it is possible for children of exceptional and superior intelligence to take the initiative in determining their own rapid rate of academic learning, the average child requires skilled, compassionate, and stimulating teaching in order to reach or approach and fulfill his maximum academic potential (pp. 15-16).

If quality of instruction does not take high priority on a campus, then student performance cannot be expected to meet its potential. Those who enter with an educational disadvantage will be the first to be left behind.

Even where instruction does take high priority, however, there may still be obstacles to overcome. Financial resources continue to be concentrated at the research universities that have traditionally occupied the top ranks of higher education's hierarchy of prestige. Institutions whose missions are predominantly instructional, such as the two-year colleges where minorities are concentrated, may not receive their fair share of support. They may also fail to emphasize, in cooperation with four-year institutions, the possibilities for transfer and higher degree attainment. If this is the case, educational careers will be unnecessarily shallow and brief.

Other considerations affecting minority performance include the level and quality of academic counseling and support services. Counseling may

not supply full and accurate information, encourage the exploration of a wide range of majors, or feature generous student/faculty contact. Remedial programming may not be deemed a high priority. Supplementary instruction in areas with high academic pay-off (such as study and test-taking skills) or other forms of assistance (such as tutoring or study groups) may not be available. Curricula are also of major importance. A curriculum that fails to provide a solid general educational foundation limits the future versatility and capability of all students, not just minorities. A curriculum that fails to incorporate the concerns and contributions of a variety of cultures not only alienates and devalues minorities but limits the understanding of an entire generation that must live and work in a increasingly interdependent world. A final consideration involves the use of educational assessment procedures. A constructive assessment system produces feedback for student learning, information for overall instructional improvement, and evidence to support institutional accountability; it does not produce arbitrary barriers to student advancement.

V. EFFECTING CHANGE: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Assistant Secretary of Education Chester E. Finn, Jr. recently admonished educators not to get themselves "into another round of overpromising that the education system is going to solve problems [such as the social pathologies described in typical underclass literature] that it is incompetent and powerless to solve (Education Week, 35)." It is true that educators, and higher educators in particular, would be foolhardy to think that they alone can end society's inequities; obviously there are serious limitations on what any one type of institution can do to affect society at large. Nonetheless, it would be grossly irresponsible for higher educators not to recognize, and act upon, the unique power and potential they have to make a significant difference in the lives of individuals and, by extension, the communities those individuals represent. That power extends to all missions associated with higher education: instruction, research and service. In this report we have confined our attention just to the first mission, for the possibilities for constructive change in that one realm alone are both extensive and highly promising.

It is our contention that higher education is, in fact, in a better position than many other societal institutions to have positive impact on these larger social concerns. Why do we say this? First, because higher education has been successful in making a difference in the past. Those minority students who have left college with a degree have, indeed, found better jobs and better lives that have translated into better futures for their children. Second, higher education is in a better position to effect positive change because of the nature of its clientele. College students are adults, and they are highly motivated. They choose to attend college and assume its associated responsibilities voluntarily in the spirit of self-improvement. They are, nonetheless, by and large

young adults whose values and aspirations are still open to the influence, hopefully positive, of others. Third, many institutions of higher education are residential, able to provide through their dormitories and associated campus activities a "total" experience that makes change highly possible. Fourth, since today's college students will (and may already) be tomorrow's parents, their more fully-developed capabilities and aspirations will nourish the next generation, thus breaking for many the devastating cycle of defeat and despair passed from parent to child. Finally, colleges--more than many other institutions in today's society--provide an atmosphere of social commitment. While there may be discouragement and indifference to overcome, there will be much less active antagonism to the overall goals to be found than may be the case in other settings.

For these reasons, then, higher educators can approach the task we commend to them with hope and optimism that a committed effort will make a difference worth making. Clearly the central battles must be fought at the campus level. The strategies that can be used by individual institutions to improve minority student access and achievement are many and varied, and should be developed and implemented within the context of each institution's mission and special circumstances. Excellent overviews exist (see Clewell and Ficklen, as well as Christoffel, 1986 and Richardson, Simmons and de los Santos, Jr., 1987) of the assortment of promising initiatives that have been pursued on various campuses with relative success. Success, however, comes not just from the nature of the strategy, but from the quality and the pervasiveness of the commitment. The challenge to improve minority student achievement is one that must be assumed by the entire institution; commitment and responsibility should start with the president and the board of trustees, and extend into every corner of the campus as a natural outgrowth of its basic educational mission. Only then is a true chance for lasting success assured.

For such institutional labor to reach full fruition, however, something more is yet required. There must be strong leadership from government to guide and support campus-based activities. Further, full

advantage must be taken of the myriad possibilities for joint effort with other concerned interest groups. Here is where states in general, and SHEEOs in particular, must step to the fore.

In the past, since the principle of equal educational opportunity is one of overriding national interest, the federal government has, quite properly, played an instrumental role in promoting access to higher education for minority students. It has done so by providing student financial assistance, support for pre-college preparation and counseling programs, direct aid to institutions serving large numbers of minority students, research and national data collection, and by monitoring court-ordered state-level desegregation plans. Today, the need to curtail federal deficits and a current administration philosophy that accords lower priority to equal educational opportunity considerations have combined to create a perception of sharply reduced federal leadership.

While we firmly believe that the maintenance of a strong federal role is critical, we would also contend that the time has come for states collectively to assume a larger share of moral and practical leadership than may have been the case to date. This is consistent with their Constitutional responsibility for education, and it is consistent with the need to develop strategies for action that are in accord with regional variations in conditions and concerns. The state level also provides a more manageable focal point for bringing together the disparate efforts of various state agencies, private firms, community organizations, professional associations, foundations, accreditation groups and others working toward the common goal of minority advancement. Establishing partnerships among these groups is an important key to effecting rapid and sustained progress.

Our recommendations for how SHEEOs, and the states they represent, can take the initiative to offer such leadership and build such cooperative partnerships, follow.

VI. THE STATE LEADERSHIP ROLE: RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to a variety of considerations--including increasingly unsettling minority enrollment and retention statistics, and a growing awareness of the general link between student academic achievement and state economic development--a new urgency exists in many state capitals regarding minority educational advancement. While exhortations to institutions have been common, frequently, too, concrete actions have been taken at the state level to underscore and supplement the rhetoric directed at campuses. Most steps of the latter sort, however, have been pursued in a piecemeal fashion. While a few states have a comprehensive, coherent and coordinated plan of action to address the problem systematically in all its aspects, most do not.

The institution of such a systematic plan of action, based on a detailed understanding of the particular needs and deficiencies of a given state, is the central charge this task force commends to its fellow state higher education executive officers. Prior to outlining its possible elements, however, a few general observations should be made. First, the emphases of such a plan inevitably will differ from state to state, depending on the extent to which initiatives have been pursued in the past and the current realities with which each state is confronted. Some states may find that ensuring equal access remains a pressing priority, while for others the emphasis may have shifted to assisting minorities to persist to the point of graduation. Since population profiles differ, some states may focus on the needs of one minority group, others on another. Some may find that rural settings offer the greatest challenge and opportunity; others, urban.

Second, the mechanisms used to implement such a plan will vary according to the type of governance system in place in a given state and the roles normally assumed by the major parties involved. Legislation, regulation, board resolutions, policy directives and executive orders may all be called into play, as the officials of an individual state deem appropriate. It is up to SHEEOs, however, to take a leading role in orchestrating an effective combination of actions and incentives consonant with the particular requirements and traditions of the state at hand.

Third, a systematic plan of action will usually carry with it certain resource requirements, but it is a mistake to think that significant progress can be achieved only with a huge infusion of state dollars. When strategies are recommended as worthy of state financial support, as they will be, it must be remembered that a limited "seed money" approach or modest performance-based grants are often appropriate options. The most effective programs are born of grass-roots efforts where faculty or student commitment powers a program into being. Once such programs have proven their potential for success, then targeted state dollars can be used to sustain and expand their impact. Further, by adopting careful procedures for the evaluation of existing programs, at both the institutional and the state level, funds frequently can be redirected to achieve greater return.

Finally, while the purview of state authorities extends most directly to public institutions of higher education, many of the measures called for below are equally applicable to private institutions, and we would urge SHEEOs to explore ways to enlist their participation in state-wide efforts to improve minority achievement. The opportunity and the responsibility to serve minority populations encompasses public and private colleges alike.

These things said, the task force offers the following specific recommendations for SHEEO consideration. We also direct your attention

to the joint SHEEO/ECS compendium of state initiatives targeted at minorities for a fuller description and more complete listing of illustrative programs cited in this report.

1. State Higher Education Executive Officers should establish the issue of minority student achievement as a preeminent concern for the higher education community within their states. It is our belief that SHEEOs must, with conviction and with persistence, sound the call to battle on this issue. Commitment must be evident at the very highest level. SHEEOs should stress awareness of the depth of the problem and the scope of its implications, not just to higher educators within their states, but also to the general public and its elected representatives. SHEEOs should bring the issue to their boards or other appropriate bodies, consult with their governors, and work to enlist ideas and support for a concerted effort to effect change.

Before higher educators, in particular, SHEEOs should leave no doubt that the priority given equality of opportunity can be no less than that accorded the issue of quality. A higher education system that fails to equip large numbers of its students to meet requisite standards can never be deemed high in quality, no matter what peaks of performance it inspires among the few. Alternatively, lowering standards to give the illusion of spurring the progress of greater numbers merely cheats both students and society of their due. Further, in setting a tone of urgency, SHEEOs should emphasize that higher education's concern stems from a sense of moral responsibility. As one respondent (Cates 1987) to this task force's appeal for views and opinions noted, "if the prime motive in seeking achievers among the minorities is to perpetuate the system by fitting them into classroom spaces no longer sought by the white majority, let us all have the integrity and the good grace to look elsewhere for something to do."

The ability to serve as an effective spokesperson for minority student achievement is highly dependent upon careful documentation of the

problem. The collection and analysis of timely, valid and reliable data on minority enrollments and academic progress are critical in this regard. Both the state and the federal government share responsibility for producir an accurate picture of the educational status of minorities. The federal government recently has acted to improve the consistency of the data it collects and to lessen the turnaround time for publication; SHEEOs should encourage these efforts. Further, SHEEOs should call on the federal government to collec' minority-related IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, which replaces the Higher Education General Information Survey) data on an annual basis and to provide resources so that states might better coordinate the data systems they use for elementary and secondary, vocational, and higher education. Federal financial assistance might also be requested to help states obtain augmented state-specific samples from national longitudinal studies. These and other recommendations are described in detail in the SHEEO/CES (Center for Education Statistics) Network's 1987 conference report, which we commend to your attention.

While assistance from the federal government is important, states as well must identify the need to collect comprehensive, quality minority-related data as a major priority. Statewide data collection is one of the most basic responsibilities of higher education coordinating agencies. SHEEOs must ensure that such data collection provides a complete picture of the status of minorities in their respective states, and we urge them to make available whatever computer capacity or field training is necessary to that end. Quantitative data from institutions should be supplemented by statewide demographic studies as well as by surveys of minority students, faculty and staff to identify perceived barriers to access and persistence. The picture that emerges will vary from state to state; each will have its own emphases and needs. The important thing is to document clearly the nature of the individual challenges to be faced.

2. Both states and the federal government must do their full share to remove economic barriers to college attendance. Due to their low-income profile, minority students are the most vulnerable to increases in college costs and decreases in student aid. In recent years, they have confronted both. At the federal level, maximum Pell grants increased only $300 between 1982 and 1985 while college costs rose more than three times that amount. Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, National Direct Student Loans and College Work-Study have been funded at the same dollar levels since the late 1970s. Since 1980-81, the share of student aid assumed by the federal government has dropped from 83 percent to 77 percent today (Evangelauf 1986). Each year massive cuts in the federal student aid budget have been proposed by the current administration. Even though Congress later has rejected these cuts, thousands of potential students, of minority status and with low and moderate incomes, nonetheless assume that adequate aid will not be forthcoming and rule out college from their plans.

Student aid is an investment in this country's future. This is true generally, and even more so with regard to minorities, whose potential contributions to this nation's prosperity have only just begun to be tapped. For this reason, the federal government legitimately should be expected to shoulder the major responsibility for providing funds for this purpose. It is our position that moves to reduce federal student assistance are shortsighted in the extreme. Pell grants should, instead, increase in accordance with the schedule provided by the recently reauthorized Higher Education Act, and other federal assistance programs should be maintained at current levels, allowing for inflation and increases in college costs. We would urge SHEEOs to do all they can, through their own testimony and by enlisting support from others in their states, to protect federal student assistance dollars.

Though the major responsibility for keeping college within the financial reach of all who can benefit rests with the federal government, it is also true that states have a critical role to play as well. Currently, maximum Pell Grants cover only 60 percent of college costs.

That leaves a large, and frequently insurmountable, gap for low-income students to bridge. In many cases, states have been the chief source of aid to fill the breach. In fact, according to a recent survey conducted by the National Association of State Scholarship and Grant Program (Davis and Reeher 1987), state spending on grants and scholarships is expected to rise 13 percent this year.

There are several disturbing aspects to this development, however. First, most of the growth is accounted for by only half the states; eleven states actually have plans to decrease such spending. Second, only half the states saw their spending grow at a greater rate than college costs. Third, aid based on academic performance has grown much faster than aid based on need. Finally, less aid is expected to go to minority students and to those who attend college part time. The percentage of grant recipients who are black has already dropped from more than 25 percent in 1981-82 to approximately 18 percent by 1986-87 (Reinhard 1987).

In devising strategies to provide state-supported student financial assistance, we believe SHEEOs should work to ensure that the needs of low-income students receive first priority. This means giving emphasis to those forms of assistance that are most appropriate to the needs of low-income and, by extension, minority students. The increasing reliance on loans at both national and state levels is, therefore, regrettable. Grants, which in 1975-76 made up 80 percent of federal student aid, accounted for only 48 percent in 1985-86 (Miller 1986). Minority students are generally, and understandably, reluctant to take on loans that may exceed their total annual family income, when their own persistence and future job prospects are frighteningly uncertain. Ideally, loans would begin to be an element of the low-income student's financial aid package only when upper division status has been achieved, and abilities and prospects are more certainly predicted. Even then, loans should not exceed half of each year's aid package.

Rather than relying on loans, we would encourage SHEEOs to propose expanded work-study and cooperative-education programs where students

earn financial support concomitantly with college attendance. If properly structured, such programs not only remove the default possibility which attends loans, but promote involvement in college life, increase later job opportunities, and (under the best circumstances) provide experience directly relevant to a student's course of study--all of which enhance student retention.

Clearly, need-based grants are powerful devices for making college more affordable for significant numbers of minority students. Ever with merit-based scholarships, however, efforts can be made to target minority students through "urban scholars" or, where appropriate, "rural scholars" programs. Other measures with great potential to aid minority students include initiatives, as have occurred in New York and Connecticut, to provide financial assistance to part-time students, and aid targeted at single parents, accompanied by grants to help institutions establish child care facilities or, as has been proposed in New Jersey, by child care vouchers. In the latter instance, and others as well, state higher education agencies must work cooperatively with other state human services agencies to ensure that such financial assistance does not result in the loss of welfare benefits. Other experimental initiatives worth considering include loan forgiveness in exchange for public service, reduced tuition for the freshman year, extended terms of eligibility for financial aid, and pre-paid tuition plans that make special efforts, perhaps through matching fund contributions, to serve low-income citizens.

No matter what specific aid programs states may have in place, however, SHEEOs must ensure that prospective students are well-aware of the full scope of opportunities available. Students often assume, for example, that only tuition (not fees or other expenses) are covered by aid programs. Special efforts must be made to prevent such misconceptions.

Finally, it is important to note that financial aid should not be designed or operated in isolation from other strategies to improve minority student achievement. Such programs gain in impact when they are

offered in close coordination with special admissions efforts and support services, such as has occurred, for example, with the various "educational opportunity" programs in California, New Jersey and New York. Other states have combined financial assistance in creative fashion with incentive programs; examples include Pennsylvania's Early Identification Program to encourage college attendance and Wisconsin's Undergraduate Minority Retention Grant Program to encourage college persistence and high performance. Young disadvantaged students, in particular, tend to be skeptical that college aid programs will really be there for them when their time comes to graduate from high school. If states can personalize the promise of aid, and build as much predictability and certainty into their aid programs as possible, then financial assistance takes on the added dimension of a motivator. SHEEOs should explore models such as Eugene Lang's "I Have A Dream" Foundation (White 1987) for suggestions as to how this might be done, particularly in the context of public/private partnerships.

3. SHEEOs should put in place a formal institutional planning and reporting process dedicated to improving minority student access and achievement. The success or failure of a state's effort to improve the college participation and performance of minority students ultimately rests on the actions taken and the commitment displayed by the individual institutions within its system. A SHEEO can and must issue a call to high purpose in this regard. Even the most eloquent and convincing moral suasion, however, should be supplemented by structures and guidelines to channel and focus the efforts which it inspires. Also, this is an issue of such high priority that institutions need to be put on formal notice that both actions and outcomes will be subject to outside review.

We suggest that SHEEOs specify the major elements such plans should contain, yet allow for varying emphases and strategies based on the individual missions and circumstances of institutions. Guidelines might call for institutions to provide statistics on enrollment and retention, with accompanying explanatory analyses, and descriptive data on the

current student body and staff and on surrounding communities and major recruitment areas. Further, institutional plans should include an overview of current activities addressing factors related to minority student achievement; specific short- and long-term goals, objectives and numerical targets for both recruitment and retention; a description of planned activities, and a timetable for their implementation; and information on how such efforts will be administered, monitored and evaluated.

In requesting such a plan, we urge SHEEOs to be clear that they expect the design and execution of measures to improve minority access and achievement to be a total institutional responsibility and not one that is simply delegated to whatever minority affairs office may exist. Commitment must begin with the president and board of trustees--whom SHEEOs should specifically charge with leadership roles--and extend to all academic departments and support functions. While the expertise of the minority affairs office is a valuable resource not to be ignored, there should be wide involvement in developing and implementing the plan, and accountability for its results should rest with the institution as a whole.

We recommend that plans be subject to outside evaluation, either through an in-state peer review process (as in Arizona and Connecticut) or by a panel of out-of-state consultants (as in New Jersey). SHEEOs should also require annual or biennial reporting on progress and results. States must also search for some meaningful way to factor such outcomes into available reward and sanction systems. This may mean that success in promoting minority access and achievement becomes a formal criterion for consideration in periodic degree program reviews, as New York has done, or that progress (or lack thereof) leads to concrete budgetary consequences. Currently, only a few states have taken the latter step, but if minority achievement is to be clearly understood to be of the highest priority, the practice must become much more widespread.

We should note that the practice of requiring specific plans from institutions does not relieve SHEEOs of the responsibility to develop a broader statewide plan to supplement and coordinate efforts across institutions. In fact, most will likely find, as occurred in Colorado, that the one leads naturally to the other.

4. SHEEOs should be creative and persistent in their search for resources to support minority-related programming, and they should make special efforts to pursue cooperative ventures in this regard. A SHEEO's first obligation, as noted in our initial recommendation, is to make a strong public case for the importance of improving minority access and achievement. A critical audience in this regard is, of course, the state's political establishment. The hope is that it too will deem the matter of high priority when budgets for higher education, and minority-related programming in particular, are proposed. Sometimes the financial exigencies faced by a state are so severe that a SHEEO's best efforts must, of necessity, be confined to defending whatever supportive programming may already exist from cutbacks. In such cases, our charge to SHEEOs can only be to examine proposed budget cuts carefully to determine their impact on minority students, and to forge compromises that not only avoid disproportionate burdens on minorities, but protect their interests to the maximum extent possible. Under other circumstances, we believe SHEEOs must be forceful advocates for supplemental resources to promote equal educational opportunity.

Even where a state's financial situation is healthy, however, the nature of the problem is such that it demands coordination of resources across a wide variety of parties. Considerations of turf must be put aside to permit pooling of efforts--and funds--across state agencies to support coordinated programming for at risk youth. Demonstration projects in Massachusetts, Oregon and South Carolina have shown the efficacy of this approach with regard to job training (Goldberg 1987); similar initiatives would hold promise for improving educational aspirations and academic performance. We would urge that SHEEOs take an

active role in proposing such cooperative endeavors, and in shepherding them into reality.

The search for augmented resources should also extend beyond government to include foundations and the private sector. Models for foundation involvement include the various McKnight programs in Florida and the Ford Foundation's sponsorship of a study and pilot program to improve transfer opportunities for two-year college students. Some firms have shown themselves willing to support minority scholarship programs--General Electric's program for minority undergraduates in engineering science and the Miller Brewing Company and the National Basketball Association's partnership with the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges to launch a merit scholarship program for students at historically black public colleges can be cited in this regard--and similar initiatives could be mounted at the state level. Further, with encouragement, companies involved in cooperative education programs might be persuaded to sponsor minority students, not just with cooperative placements, but with tuition subsidies as well. We believe that SHEEOs should take the lead in soliciting and structuring such public/private partnerships.

Accrediting associations also can be natural allies, as can professional associations and community organizations, in promoting opportunities for minorities. The Middle States Association's Commission on Higher Education, for example, has spoken forcefully in recent years in its annual reports about a lapse of interest in affirmative action on campuses and the need for it to serve as a "conscience" in the region in this regard (Kirkwood 1985). Similarly, the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering has served as a model for cooperative effort within a given area of professional training; some of the most successful minority achievement programs are those that have had an explicit career emphasis. Minority communities themselves are also well-organized and active in promoting their own educational advancement. The Urban League's National Education Initiative is a compelling example of a comprehensive effort to improve the educational preparation of minority

youth. SHEEOs should seek to work closely with all these various types of organizations so that efforts can be mutually reinforcing.

Finally, it must be remembered that groups and organizations outside the higher education community can be called on for more than just money or help in establishing broad-scale initiatives. Often advice, ideas and day-to-day support are just as important. Georgia, for example, has required each institution in its state system to establish relationships with minority businesses and civic, social and religious leaders in its service area. Broadly representative advisory committees are useful not just at the institutional level, but at a state level as well.

5. SHEEOs, and higher educators in general, should actively pursue more aggressive involvement with elementary and secondary education. No matter what higher educators do within the confines of their own boundaries, if students continue to enter college unprepared for its academic rigors, both students and professors alike will operate from a profound disadvantage. Elementary and secondary educators have heard the criticisms cast in their direction during this age of educational reform, and are moving to address them. Nonetheless, higher educators cannot assume that preparation problems, especially for minorities, will soon disappear. Such problems have deep and stubborn roots, and will be removed only through the extended effort and cooperation of all education professionals. For this to work, higher educators must divest themselves of both arrogance and aloofness, while those in the schools must curb their defensiveness. Only then can the two groups meet as equals and focus their combined talents on remediating--and, more importantly, preventing--deficiencies in preparation as early in the educational process as possible. Clearly, the earlier intervention strategies can be mounted for disadvantaged students, the more likely it is that they will produce meaningful results.

Cooperation between colleges and schools is not new; higher educators long have assisted in elementary and secondary curriculum and staff

development, and these activities by all means should continue, especially in the rapidly changing science and technology areas. Further, many have taken the next step and brought college faculty into direct instructional contact with junior-high and high school students through a vast array of jointly sponsored pre-college programs. These programs increasingly have emphasized the participation of at-risk students, and have broadened their ocus to include not just academic preparation but also counseling and motivational efforts, especially with regard to stimulating the interests of minority students in fields in which they have been under-represented. While such programs rightly seek to benefit all at-risk students with the potential to benefit from college, we might caution educators at all levels not to overlook the need to better identify and meet the needs of gifted and talented minority students in conjunction with these efforts.

Since summer programs on campus have proven to be particularly effective variants of pre-college programming, colleges should consider extending the on-site instruction concept even farther. A promising model that deserves replication is the Middle College program sponsored by La Guardia Community College in New York. There, high school students who have been identified as potential drop-outs attend a special school on campus, where they have access to all college facilities and the option of enrolling in certain college-level courses. Such a high school continues under the jurisdiction of the school district, but benefits from the resources of the college. Students, who have everyday exposure to degree-aspiring role models, are not the highest achievers, but rather those who pose the greatest challenge to the conventional educational system (Lieberman 1985).

Other possibilities for more aggressive collaborative involvement include teacher/faculty exchanges and the provision of other than instruction-related services. University medical centers, for example, can undertake to provide health services in districts whose school children are most in need of such care. Colleges can also mount programs of benefit to children on their own initiative. For example,

institutions could both assist low-income single parents and enhance the education and aspirations of their children by offering "family" programs whereby special classes for children are held concurrently with those for their college-attending parents. Such "classes" might range from supervised homework sessions to age-appropriate content learning to structured career explorations.

Examples of pre-college programs that enjoy targeted state support include the California Academic Partnership Program, the CONNCAP program in Connecticut, the Governor's Minority Student College Preparation Program in Kentucky, the Pre-College Academic Program in New Jersey and the Science and Technology Entry Program in New York. In addition to providing direct funding, state agencies can also stimulate innovative programming by offering seed money for conferences where new avenues of collaboration can be discussed and planned.

One very obvious focus for collaboration that has not yet been discussed is the collegiate function of preparing professionals to serve in the elementary and secondary schools. Improving the preparation of minority students also demands concerted attention to better preparing teachers to meet their needs. In addition to vigorously recruiting minority students, teacher education programs must, in cooperation with schools, respond by establishing greater numbers of professional development schools (emphasizing populations with low-income and minority children), by enhancing curricula to include multi-cultural concerns, and by providing special instruction on how to teach children for whom English is a second language. We urge SHEEOs to take what steps they can to foster such changes. We also recommend that two-way communication systems be established, with state-level coordination, so that both colleges and schools are formally notified regarding the performance of their respective graduates. Similarly, colleges and schools should cooperate in the development of assessment systems, so that the deficiencies of individual students in both settings can be identified and remediated well before graduation.

Finally, it is important to note that efforts to encourage better college preparation have been supported by the federal government through the so-called "Trio" programs, which provide counseling, tutoring and outreach services to economically disadvantaged high school students, college students and adults. A 1980 study found that 20 percent of black and Hispanic college students had been aided by at least one of these programs (Miller 1987). Recently cutbacks for these initiatives have been proposed. We would urge SHEEOs to oppose any such pullback, particularly from efforts targeted to high school students; at the same time, we believe that more rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures should be instituted to determine how the programs can be made more effective. The federal role in supporting these particular programs (as well as a host of others that affect children at the pre-school, elementary and secondary levels) is critical, for both substantive and moral reasons. It provides a national symbol of commitment that we can ill afford to abandon, especially at a time when recent gains in minority college enrollment are slipping.

6. SHEEOs should encourage institutions to rely on broader and more effective means of assessing students for admission. In considering students for admission, especially those from educationally and financially disadvantaged backgrounds, institutions should take more into account than just standardized test scores and high school grades, important as these might be. Study after study and report after report have emphasized the importance of relying on multiple indicators when assessing individuals. Factors such as motivation, resourcefulness and determination are important predictors of collegiate success, and there must be room in the admissions process for identifying and accepting individuals with strong, but as yet unrealized, potential--especially those who have had to struggle to overcome significant obstacles to their academic development. States can ensure that this approach is followed by creating statewide special admissions programs and by recommending--and, if necessary, requiring--that a certain percentage of students be accepted under their aegis.

Having special admissions programs in place, however, does not--as we have already stressed--relieve SHEEOs from the responsibility of working on parallel fronts to ensure that more minority students improve their standing on traditional admissions criteria. Since so much depends on the scope and rigor of the high school curricula experienced by students, states have come to realize that they must be more prescriptive in this regard. Thus, strengthening high school course requirements for college admission has become a common state practice in recent years. We would caution that such moves are only a first step, however. SHEEOs must also work cooperatively to ensure that course content at the high school level is consistent with the label it receives and that minority students are not tracked away from strong college preparatory curricula. To support the latter end, SHEEOs should communicate directly, clearly, and at an early stage with junior high school students and their parents regarding the importance of high school course selection.

Since minority students are frequently unable to afford the privately sponsored test preparation courses that have recently grown in popularity, SHEEOs would also do well to consider supporting a state-level effort to improve the test-taking skills of minority and low-income students. California is currently piloting a College Admissions Test Preparation program along this order. Finally, SHEEOs should provide financial incentives to institutions to conduct studies to determine exactly those characteristics that best predict success in a given campus environment, so that admissions criteria can be refined accordingly.

7. SHEEOs must ensure that opportunities are available to minority students at two- and four-year institutions alike. The responsibility to serve minority students extends to all institutions in the academic spectrum. Since retention is generally greater in four-year colleges, it is important that minorities have equal access to such institutions and that they not be disproportionately barred by rigid conceptions of academic mission or by moves to strengthen admissions standards. For this reason, we suggest that special admissions programs be applicable to

all institutions within a state and that remedial or developmental programming be fully supported at both two- and four-year colleges.

As long as significant numbers of students enter college without adequate academic preparation, SHEEOs must place a high priority on remedial programs. Since minorities are over-represented in this population, it is sometimes forgotten that most poorly prepared students are, in fact, white. The needs of both groups demand that effective remediation be pursued. The state role in this effort should not just be one of providing financial support; SHEEOs should also consider putting in place a statewide system of placement testing to identify those in need of further preparation. The Basic Skills program in New Jersey is the oldest and most established program of that type. SHEEOs should also adopt reporting procedures to ensure that remedial instruction programs are systematically evaluated and that they do, indeed, prepare students adequately for subsequent college-level work.

While specific efforts should be made to encourage the equitable distribution of minorities across all types of institutions, it is clear that, for financial, academic and logistical reasons, minorities will continue to be better represented at two- than at four-year institutions for some time to come. Minorities enrolled in two-year colleges represent a large and accessible pool of prospective minority baccalaureate degree-holders. Their needs are often particularly well-suited to the two-year college mission; the state imperative is to see that that mission--particularly with regard to the transfer function--is more successfully executed than in the past. In general terms, SHEEOs can contribute to this end by ensuring that two-year colleges receive their fair share of state financial resources, and by holding them to their obligation to adopt high and consistent standards for all students. More direct action would include establishing mechanisms to stimulate greater articulation between two-year and baccalaureate-granting institutions; examples would be the Community College Transfer Center Program being piloted in California or, in a partnership approach, the United Negro College Fund's Transfer/ Articulation Project which promotes four-year black private colleges as

a transfer option. Set-aside admissions places, articulated information systems, and special bridging programs to provide both pre- and post-transfer counseling to targeted groups are among the various strategies to be considered.

8. SHEEOs should support institutional programming that meets two equally important ends: to better equip minority students to function well in the institutional environment, and to adapt that environment to better accommodate the needs and interests of minority students. A wide array of programs can and should be assembled on campus to assist minority students to deal with both the academic demands and social pressures of what is, for many, a new and intimidating environment. These range from summer orientation and "head-start" programs to year-round counseling and academic support services, including special instruction for those for whom English is a second language. While we believe that such efforts must be based primarily on institutional commitment, we would also urge that some measure of state-level financial support be provided, either through targeted grant monies or through coordinated state-level equal opportunity programs (as cited elsewhere in this paper). The University Student Retention Program in Florida, the Minority Advising Program in Georgia and the Mentor Program in Mississippi are all examples of state-supported programs of this type.

We must caution, however, that while such supportive programming is a critical transition device, it constitutes only part of the answer to the problem. Many of the difficulties faced by minority students are embedded in the nature of the college environment itself, and it too must be subject to change. As Jacqueline Fleming (1984, 156) has noted in her study of black college students, "the problem involves an interaction between the factors that . . . students bring to white colleges and the conditions that they find within these institutions." It is the lack of a supportive community--defined by Fleming as one which provides opportunities for friendships with both peers and role models, for full participation in campus life, and for a sense of progress and success in

academic pursuits--that leads minorities to fare less than well at predominantly white institutions. By the same taken, the success of predominantly black institutions in seeing their students achieve degrees is due in large measure to their ability to meet these kinds of needs.

Establishing such a supportive environment where minorities can feel a part of the mainstream must, therefore, be one of the first orders of business for most colleges. Faculty "cross-cultural literacy" (Ross 1986) must be increased and their instructional skills developed to serve a wider variety of learning styles. Advising procedures in general should be strengthened, and early academic warning systems put in place. Curricula need to be revised and enhanced to incorporate a multi-cultural perspective and to increase the emphasis given to international affairs and language education. A general campus atmosphere must be established--through values seminars, cultural activities, and creative and responsible residential programming--which promotes civic responsibility and respect for cultural pluralism. All these strategies for institutional change are legitimate candidates for state-level support.

9. SHEEOs should institute broad-based programs to promote racial and ethnic diversity among higher education's professional ranks. One of the most important aspects of the institutional environment needing change is the severe under-representation of minorities among collegiate faculties and administrations. At a minimum, states should establish appropriate recruitment and hiring guidelines and actively monitor their results. More extensive programming--either to support graduate study by minorities in exchange for a commitment to teach at an in-state college, or to provide development opportunities for minorities already employed on campus--can be found in such states as Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Tennessee. Massachusetts has proposed a special reserve fund to support minority faculty appointments; similar subsidies are already provided in Mississippi. We endorse such initiatives and recommend their replication. Special programs to orient new minority faculty and to support their professional development

through a mentoring approach are to be encouraged as well. Faculty exchange programs between predominantly white and predominantly minority institutions also serve a valuable purpose for all parties involved.

Certain of the difficulties encountered in diversifying college faculties spring from shortages in qualified minority candidates. For this reason, we would like to make special mention of the efforts of a concurrent study group sponsored by the Education Commission of the States which is focusing on encouraging full participation by minorities in graduate and professional education. We ask all SHEEOs to give serious consideration to recommendations emerging from that study as well.

It should be noted further that SHEEOs have a responsibility to recommend (and, if possible, appoint) minorities for service on both institutional and state-level boards, and to pursue affirmative action strategies vigorously when filling staff positions in their own agencies. Also, SHEEOs should regularly solicit minority candidates to serve on state-level higher education planning and policy committees.

One short-sighted tendency that states must avoid is hiring minorities predominantly for positions that specifically involve minority affairs. Though minority-oriented programming is both necessary and desirable given current realities, ultimately such functions should be integrated into mainstream collegiate offices and structures. The only way to ensure that this can be done constructively, without loss of priority or momentum, is by having minorities employed in positions of responsibility throughout the institution (or agency). Then all parties can be reasonably assured that such efforts will continue to receive the dedicated attention and strong support they deserve.

10. SHEEOs should regularly disseminate information, both to the public and the higher education community, about higher educational opportunities for minority students and progress in meeting their needs. We believe that SHEEOs and their boards should take the lead in providing comprehensive information to minority students and their parents

regarding college preparation, financial assistance, and the wide variety of educational programs and settings available within their states. State-level outreach programs can be structured to supplement and complement the recruitment efforts of individual institutions and can be expanded to serve motivational and advisory purposes, thus ensuring that students receive the proper counseling that is so crucial to their needs. Programs of this general type currently exist in several states, including Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Ohio. The "Project for an Informed Choice" in Pennsylvania is particularly noteworthy for the broad partnership approach of its statewide informational campaign.

SHEEOs and their boards must speak directly to the public on the merits of a college education and the means that make it attainable. They must advertise the "product" they have to offer, particularly within minority communities, with the same persistence and strength of conviction that has previously been associated with the military and proprietary schools. Higher educators must communicate, directly to those who stand to benefit the most, that the option of college is real and of lasting value.

SHEEOs, and the agencies they lead, also can offer important technical assistance in keeping their states' institutions abreast of current research on minority recruitment, retention and achievement and in facilitating the statewide exchange of information. Georgia's Statewide Minority Advisement Conference, Kentucky's Task Force on Minority Student Recruitment, Retention and Mobility, Virginia's annual Conference on Black Student Retention, and Texas' Minority Student Recruitment and Retention conference and regularly published statewide newsletter on the subject are examples of this kind of initiative.

Finally, we believe that SHEEOs have an obligation, as institutions and states alike implement and evaluate their plans to improve minority participation and performance, to report to the public on the results achieved. Colorado, for example, regularly publishes periodic status reports; we recommend a similar practice for all states.

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

We conclude with recommendations to the national SHEEO organization itself. First, SHEEO should seek to find ways to help states help each other to improve minority student achievement. For example, we believe it would be useful if SHEEO sponsored a series of practical seminars for state agency personnel on the experiences that various states have had in developing and implementing their minority-oriented programming. In addition, SHEEO should provide an on-going forum for communication among state officials on this topic, perhaps through a newsletter or annual meetings. SHEEO might also consider establishing a roster of qualified consultants who could work as teams, at or near cost, to help institutions that request assistance in designing and executing strategies to improve minority student achievement.

Second, SHEEO should establish continuing linkages with other organizations that are concerned with this issue. The Chief State School Officers have their own study of at-risk students underway; the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and the Southern Regional Education Board have done considerable work in this area; and many other organizations have a strong interest in the subject. We recommend that SHEEO explore ways to bring representatives of such organizations together to discuss measures by which strategies to improve minority student achievement can be coordinated.

Finally, we would like to suggest that SHEEO serve as a vehicle by which we can all hold ourselves accountable for our progress in effecting

improvements in minority student achievement at the baccalaureate level. We ask that the SHEEO executive committee place the topic once again on its agenda in 1989, and that the task force be reconstituted at that time so that each state might be given an opportunity to report on the new initiatives it has undertaken and the progress it has achieved.

We well know, from hard experience, that the issue of minority student achievement is not one that will be simply or readily resolved. The easiest gains are behind us, and only the combined and concentrated dedication of all sectors of the higher education community--public and private--will lead to permanent solutions for the problems that remain. It is clearly in our best interest to see that such solutions are found. Only a limited number of institutions will be able to continue to serve a student body that is made up predominantly of high-achievers; the task for most will be to develop the full potential of those who heretofore have fallen into the middle and lower ranges of academic performance. The increased emphasis on instruction and on supportive programming that are so critical to minority success yield educational improvements that benefit all students. But no matter what benefits we stand to gain--and no matter what catastrophes we stand to avoid--we call on state higher education executive officers to take the initiative in meeting this challenge not because it is the sensible thing to do, but because it is the right thing to do. We ask all to join us in the task.

APPENDIX

ORGANIZATIONS RESPONDING TO TASK FORCE INFORMATIONAL REQUESTS

Adult Performance Level Project
American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
American Economic Development Council
American Planning Association
Association of Urban Universities
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
The College Board
Council for Noncollegiate Continuing Education
The Council of State Governments
The Council of State Planning Agencies
The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation
Educational Resources Information Center, Clearinghouse on Higher Education
Educational Testing Service
Hispanic Policy Development Project
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, Inc.
National Alliance of Black School Educators
National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association of College Admissions Counselors
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
The National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Center for Postsecondary Governance and Finance
National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

National Education Association

National Governor's Association

National School Boards Association

National Urban League, Inc.

Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges: (also: Heritage College, Salish Kootenai College and the University of Washington)

Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Universities

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Southern Education Foundation, Inc.

United Negro College Fund

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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