



OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Members of the University Affairs Board
FROM: Ian Orchard, Vice-Provost, Students
DATE: March 18, 2002
AGENDA ITEM: #7

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Administrative Response from the Warden of Hart House to the Report of the Advisory Committee on the Warden, Hart House

SPONSOR:

Ian Orchard, Vice-Provost, Students

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION;

Terms of Reference of the University Affairs Board give the Board responsibility for policy affecting the operation of student service ancillaries, including Hart House, and for appointment of the Warden.

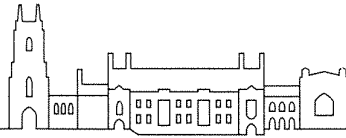
HIGHLIGHTS:

The Report of the Advisory Committee (to the Provost) on the Warden of Hart House was received for information by the Board at its meeting of February 26, 2002. At the same meeting, the Board approved, on the recommendation of the President, the re-appointment of Ms. Margaret Hancock as Warden of Hart House for a further five year term.

The attached is Ms. Hancock's administrative response to recommendations in the Advisory Committee Report.

ACTION SOUGHT:

For information only.



HART HOUSE • University of Toronto

Office of the Warden

WARDEN'S ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE
TO THE REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON THE WARDEN, HART HOUSE, JANUARY 2002

The Provost established an advisory committee to consider and review the work of Hart House during the first term of the current Warden (1997-2002) and to make recommendations regarding the reappointment of the current Warden. The Advisory Committee submitted its report to the University Affairs Board at its meeting on February 26, 2002, at which time the Board approved the reappointment of the warden for a second five year term.

Hart House is very appreciative of the work of the Advisory Committee and the opportunity it provided to hear opinions from the university community about the work of Hart House. Their reflection on the issues identified in the 1996 Hart House Review Committee Report and their assessment that Hart House has made great progress in the resolution of those issues in the last five years is an essential indicator for us for setting future priorities. Our first five year plan set goals to address those issues and we think that we have achieved most of them. The assessment of the advisory committee coincides with the experience of staff, students and senior members of the House with respect to the governance experience, the dynamism of the staff team and our greater emphasis on creating a climate of inclusion and welcome for diverse campus groups and needs.

The first year of the integration of Hart House Theatre into the House is almost complete and it has been an extraordinary experience. The programme has been filled with successful student productions in dance, drama, music and film. Innovations such as workshops with professional playwrights and directors have been very well received. The endowment campaign is well begun and the financial operations are exceeding the plan. The inclusion of the theatre has brought tremendous opportunities for collaboration with the existing programming of the House so the integration is mutually beneficial. With such a strong beginning, we are optimistic that the integration of the theatre will be successful.

We think that the warden's participation and presence in initiatives outside the House on campus and in the wider community is essential to the mission of the House; therefore we appreciate that the advisory committee recognizes this as contributing to a more cohesive experience for students. In this regard, the addition of the social justice programme is helping to meet a need for students and student groups to make a difference in the world. With this work, we bring a community outreach component to the social and cultural programming at Hart House which enhances our mission, providing an important opportunity for students to learn about active citizenship.

The report makes eight specific recommendations for future work. The recommendations are listed below, with our response to each. The response includes the input of Hart House staff however the Board of Stewards will not be able to consider the report until their meeting of March 21. Their input will follow as an addendum to this response. Several of the recommendations are addressed in our second five year plan which is attached for your information.

Recommendation 1.

Governance: That efforts be made to exploit opportunities for the broader student community to have more access to the planning and priority formation process.

We agree that efforts to include as much input from students as possible must be made. We are always interested in developing our capacity to receive input from the entire student community about planning and the setting of priorities. We have tried various formal and informal approaches during the annual planning process for the five year plan and will continue to do so. Although we focus on the plan annually, we listen for input, ideas and feedback continuously throughout the year. Some interesting ideas including the creation of student at-large seats on the Board of Stewards will be considered.

With respect to governance, students from the entire campus community are in the majority on each of the thirty-two clubs and committees and on the Board of Stewards. By definition, they are the major stakeholders in the House and, in effect, hundreds of students have input into the policies, procedures, programmes and budget of Hart House. In addition to the ten student secretaries elected by the standing committees, the twenty-one member Board of Stewards includes five more students appointed by SAC, APUS, the GSU, UTSC and UTM. As a result, fifteen out of the twenty-one members of the Board of Stewards are students. Students on the Board of Stewards govern with the best interests of the House as a whole in mind and the budget is determined in this context.

Recommendation 2.

Participation: That effective methods to market events continue to be developed with a view to encouraging more students to get involved in committees and programs.

We agree with this recommendation and our five year plan includes several objectives and activities to implement it. A primary objective is to strive to have every first year and first time student into Hart House at least once so that they can make an informed choice about how they want to engage with the House. Our website will be improved and enhanced to be a more effective marketing tool.

While elections are not always hotly contested and many positions are acclaimed, this circumstance is similar to all other elections on campus. In Hart House we find that low participation in elections should not be confused with or equated to lack of participation in committees, activities and events. Seats are filled on the executives of all thirty-two clubs and committees; participation in organizing and attendance at Hart House events is high, with thousands of events taking place each year. However, the effort to reach

out to all areas of the campus is at the heart of everything we do and we will continue to strive to be effective.

Recommendation 3.

Suburban Campus Issues: That two options be considered further: (1) divert the fees that suburban campus students pay towards Hart House to programming at the new student centres or (2) introduce new initiatives that reach out to suburban campuses by promoting specific events such as theatre productions, music performances and art exhibitions.

This is a challenging issue which will continue to evolve as the east and west campuses grow in the next several years. Participation from UTM and UTSC students in the theatre programme and the art competition is high. We will build on this model of engagement in activities unique to Hart House in the next five years. In addition, UTM and UTSC students will continue to need to feel at home on the St. George campus and we think that Hart House can provide that sense of belonging through our provision of welcoming common spaces, food, and drop-in activities. The two options suggested by the advisory committee will be considered by the Board of Stewards. We hope to be invited to work with the student centres at UTM and UTSC to share our experience as they develop their programmes.

Recommendation 4.

Financial Issues: That Hart House develop a list of funding priorities and implement an aggressive development program to augment revenues.

Hart House has been part of the U of T Campaign since 1998. We have a list of funding priorities and a goal of raising \$12 million. At the top of our list is making the House accessible by installing an elevator and building an endowment for Hart House Theatre. We have a development department of three staff which will be expanded in the near future to meet the increasing needs of our campaign.

An operating plan for the next 10 years has been created based on a model for the House which we believe is a sustainable and prudent approach. It meets our programmatic and service goals while preserving the building and providing excellent stewardship for Hart House's finances. With respect to annual operating deficits, although a deficit is proposed for 2001/02 and 2002/03 due to significant priorities for deferred and major maintenance, the ten year forecast shows surpluses in every future year which will replenish and build the total net assets. A recently updated engineering survey and new architectural survey of the deferred and major maintenance needs of the House provide us with a fifteen year plan for the continuous preservation and improvement of the building. They form the basis on which the deferred and major maintenance expenditures are projected.

Recommendation 5.

Space for licensed events: That Hart House consider providing space for large licensed events for student groups and clubs.

Hart House does provide space for licensed events for student groups and clubs. With the closure of the HangaR there are some unmet needs for large licensed social spaces and we have considered how we might fill that gap. We will explore this further with campus organizations.

Recommendation 6.

Child friendliness: That the Warden work with the staff and the Board of Stewards to make family friendly events a high priority.

There are many events in Hart House which are family friendly. These include the farm, theatre productions, art exhibits, musical concerts and events and Festive Eve. Through Hart House, students are engaged from time to time in special activities with children including debaters working with children in Regent Park and art committee members collaborating on a children's community art project with Lupe Rodrigues.

We think that we need to promote these activities more effectively to students with families so that they know that they are welcome in the House. We are considering holding a Family Day each year so that students with families can be introduced to the House and all its wonders.

Recommendation 7.

Review and evaluation of clubs and activities: That the Warden work with the staff and Board of Stewards to develop tools to systematically evaluate Hart House programs on a regular, on-going basis in the context of the needs and interests of the wider student body and to make changes accordingly.

We agree with this recommendation. Guidelines for clubs and committees exist which include the provision for regular review of clubs. Tools to conduct such reviews systematically will be developed this year. Our second five year plan includes an emphasis on enabling the timely realization of "good ideas" so that we can welcome and experiment with innovative ideas which are of interest to the student body. Our recently successful programming for Black History Month is an excellent example of the potential of this approach.

Recommendation 8.

Waste management and environmental responsibility: That Hart House undertake an environmental audit to look at ways to reduce waste, use natural resources and reduce energy consumption.

We agree with this recommendation. The five year plan stipulates that an active plan for making the building and our practices as environmentally responsible as possible will be developed. Our facility manager has particular expertise in this area and has begun to make changes which are reducing our energy use. A current review of the Arbor Room will consider the benefits of replacing disposable supplies with reusable ones.