

Part One: The Committee Approach

During a span of approximately 21 months, committee members read and discussed pertinent literature, interviewed numerous persons on- and off-campus, and investigated outreach on other campuses. The committee took an iterative approach to its deliberations. The acts of reading, discussing, interviewing, and writing were intertwined in a dynamic manner.

In Chapter 1, information is shared about how committee members were selected, and about various topics associated with the "how" of committee operations.

Chapter 1 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND PROCESS¹

Committee membership

Committee members were selected by the Provost with considerable input from the Provost's staff. The Provost's Office recognized that "the messenger is as important as the message," and the goal was to select well-respected faculty members and administrators who represented the University's breadth. Many committee members served the University before, during, and after the committee deliberations in other leadership and "high profile" positions (e.g., a committee member chaired a campuswide committee on scientific integrity). Academic governance and the Council of Deans were not used extensively in the committee member selection/screening process.

Committee members were:

Jes Asmussen
Professor and Chairperson, Department of Electrical Engineering

Kenneth Corey
Dean, College of Social Science

George Cornell
Associate Professor, Department of English and Department of History; Director, Native American Institute

¹Chapter written by Frank A. Fear

Hiram Davis
Director, University Libraries

James Dearing
Assistant Professor, Department of Communication

James Dye
University Distinguished Professor, Department of Chemistry

Frank Fear, committee chairperson
Professor and Chairperson, Department of Resource Development

Daniel Ilgen
Hannah Professor, Department of Management and Department of Psychology

Gail Imig
Associate Vice Provost and Director, Michigan State University Extension

Karen Klomparens
Professor, Department of Botany and Plant Pathology; Director, University Center for
Electron Optics

Richard Lerner
Professor, Department of Family and Child Ecology; Director, Institute for Children, Youth,
and Families

John Metzler
Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Outreach Programs, African Studies Center

Julia Miller
Dean, College of Human Ecology

Marilyn Rothert
Acting Dean, College of Nursing

Lorilee Sandmann
Director, Outreach Program Development, Office of the Vice Provost for University
Outreach

Harvey Sparks
Vice Provost, Human Health Programs

Linda Stanford
Professor and Chairperson, Department of Art

Christine Stephens
Assistant Dean, Extension Administration; Program Director, Agriculture and Natural
Resources, MSU Extension

Charles Thompson

Associate Professor, Department of Teacher Education; Director, Institute for Research on Teaching Adults

James Tiedje

University Distinguished Professor, Department of Microbiology and Department of Crops and Soil Sciences, and Director, Center for Microbial Ecology

Provost's Office support for this initiative

The Provost's Office support enabled the committee to accomplish its agenda. Fifty percent of the committee chairperson's time was devoted to the committee assignment. The chairperson coordinated the work of the committee staff, which included graduate assistants, secretarial support, and editorial staff. Committee staff members were:

Laurie Wink, John Fallon, and Chandra Oden, graduate assistants
Glenda Gatewood and Jane Voss, secretarial support
Nancy Gendell and Shawn Lock, editorial staff

In addition, members of the Provost's staff served as liaison to the committee. These staff attended all committee meetings and were most helpful in responding to committee questions and helping the committee reach important decisions. Those who served as Provost's Office liaison to the committee included:

James C. Votruba, Vice Provost for University Outreach
Robert L. Church, Assistant Vice Provost for University Outreach
Mary Jim Josephs, Assistant Vice Provost for University Outreach
Martha L. Hesse, Assistant Director for Planning and Budgets

Committee structure, decision-making approach, and writing process

The committee charge was prepared by the Provost's Office. It was presented to the committee at the time committee membership invitations were extended, and the charge was interpreted by the Provost and the Vice Provost for University Outreach at the opening committee session (see Chapters 2-4).

Throughout the process, these norms were associated with committee dynamics: mutual respect, desire to learn from group discussion, the ability to disagree vigorously without being disagreeable, and a sincere effort to incorporate group input in the next written draft of materials for review.

The only formal leadership role on the committee was the position of chairperson. Decisions were made via committee-of-the-whole discussion with decision making by consensus dominating the process. Most of the early meetings were held in two-hour blocks on Friday afternoons. As the writing process intensified, fewer meetings were held and the meeting length was expanded to four- and five-hour Friday afternoon meetings (held approximately once a month).

The writing process began almost immediately after the committee was assembled. At the beginning, the chairperson did all the writing and committee members reviewed draft text. Later, a number of writing committees were assembled with each writing committee having responsibility for specific parts of the final report. The chairs of the writing committee constituted a "writing

team," and this group met regularly to review and discuss report progress. This meant that the full committee met less regularly during this time but considerable progress was made between meetings because of the writing team's efforts.

Toward the end of the writing process, the committee chairperson (Fear) and a writing team member (Thompson) were given responsibility for preparing a final draft for committee review. The committee came together several times to review and discuss the proposed final draft until the report met their satisfaction. This approach gave all committee members an opportunity to contribute to the writing process but, at the same time, provided a way to address the issue of disjointedness—the need to ensure that the report did not read as though it was prepared by 20 different writers.

Committee Study Process

The study process spanned 21 months (January 1992–September 1993). The process can be reconstructed in the form of eight phases. The study process provided Committee members with an opportunity to seminar about outreach, gather input from key stakeholders, prepare a draft report, seek input from stakeholders about the draft report, and revise and produce a final document.

- Phase 1: Seminar on outreach (January–March 1992):** Readings were assigned and read, Committee members engaged in vigorous discussion, and the writing process began immediately. (See Chapters 5, 6, 10, and 11.)
- Phase 2: Interviewing selected persons on campus (March–June 1992):** Literature on organizational culture was drawn upon to create a typology of campus organizational cultures with respect to outreach. This framework was used as a guide to identify categories of key informants. Over 100 persons were interviewed (most in focus group sessions). (See Chapters 7, 12, and Appendix A and B.)
- Phase 3: Receiving and reviewing reports from other institutions on university outreach (May–September 1992):** Materials were received from 17 universities—AAU/land-grant schools plus others identified as having vibrant outreach programs. (See Chapter 9 and Appendix D.)
- Phase 4: Interviewing key Michigan constituents (June–November 1992):** Roundtable (focus group) interviews were conducted with approximately 100 constituents in 16 sites across Michigan. (See Chapter 8 and Appendix C.)
- Phase 5: Intense report writing (September 1992–February 1993):** A "writing committee" of five was selected (through committee nomination) to work with the chairperson on drafting a preliminary version of the final report.
- Phase 6: Editing and fine tuning the report (March–June 1993):** One member of the writing committee along with the committee chairperson took the text prepared by the writing committee, together with full committee reaction to the text, and crafted a draft version of the final report.
- Phase 7: Soliciting feedback from reviewers (July–August 1993):** All those whom we interviewed in Phases 2 and 4 received copies of the draft report. They were asked to

review the draft, and to communicate their reactions to the committee chair. Approximately 65 (of the over 200 persons solicited) submitted written feedback.

Phase 8: Making final revisions and producing the final report (August–September 1993): The written feedback was reviewed by the full committee. Based on this feedback, a number of important additions and revisions were made, and the final report was produced. (See Chapters 14-16).