

December 2002

## **Cultivating a Sense of Community through Student Life and Learning**

### ***Overall Expectations***

For the purpose of this report, community refers to students, faculty, staff, and alumni who come together on the Durham and Manchester campuses for the common purpose of developing the qualities that define an educated citizen. This community is reflected in numerous settings and in various ways. The UNH community is present in the structured learning environments of its classrooms, laboratories, on and off-campus clinics and service learning programs. The UNH community is equally reflected in the informal personal interactions that occur in a variety of settings - during cultural events, at student activities, within the residence halls, during recreational pursuits, in casual social gatherings, in community service efforts and through spontaneous encounters with friends and colleagues in hall ways, coffee lines and parking lots.

The University of New Hampshire is a campus-based university and one of the critical values of this setting is the degree to which students and faculty learn from one another and are models and examples to peers and colleagues. The collaboration among students and interactions with faculty in both formal and informal ways creates the fabric of our community. Our vision is to combine the living and learning environment of a small New England liberal arts college with the breadth, spirit of discovery, and civic commitment of a land-grant research institution (UNH Academic Plan, 2002). As the 1998 Boyer report attests, a sense of community is an essential element in providing students a strong undergraduate education in a research university (Boyer, 1998).

UNH strives to provide its undergraduate students with a sense of personal identity within both large and small groups. In order to deliver on the vision and expectations of a small liberal arts college within the larger research university entity, the UNH campus must be a purposeful place of learning that provides options and pathways for each student to feel connected to intimate smaller groups as well as an allegiance to the larger community of the whole. Our expectations of our students and ourselves are that we will become engaged members of the UNH community and in the pursuit of knowledge, develop a sense of citizenship and the recognition of responsibilities and benefits of being a member of community. It is in providing a living and learning environment that supports a sense of community, integrity, and engagement that UNH will deliver its most powerful educational value to its students.

### ***Integration and Coherence***

There are numerous and varied aspects to Student Life that contribute to the sense of community at UNH. The community is influenced by where students reside, which organizations they invest in, which activities both inside and outside the classroom capture their interests, and the types of informal interactions they have with peers, staff, faculty and administrators. The following represents both areas of strengths at UNH that facilitate students' ability to make connections at UNH and areas of weakness that are obstacles to integrating the educational benefits of community activities with other academic forms of learning.

## ***Strengths***

### **Athletics**

Intercollegiate Athletics at the University of New Hampshire is an integral component of the overall educative process. Academic achievement is a high expectation for student-athletes and in fact the intercollegiate programs out-perform the student body as a whole.

UNH is annually among the national Division I leaders in athletics graduation rates. Many national entities (*U.S. News and World Report*) ranks the athletics department among the very best schools relative to the integration of athletics and academics. Student life is greatly enhanced by the combination of intercollegiate athletics success and the appropriate emphasis on the athletics department's academic mission. Intercollegiate athletics has a greater percentage of students of color than the overall student body. The recruitment and retention of students of color is an important issue for not only the athletics department but the overall institution. Athletics creates a comfortable environment within the University for students of color to flourish.

The student-athletes are also expected to be campus-wide "leaders" and to contribute to University life. For example, student-athletes at UNH perform over 3000 hours annually in community service. Additionally, the student-athletes are viewed as "role models" for the area's youth and take their role as ambassadors to the University seriously.

Because of the healthy perspective on the role of athletics in higher education, the University of New Hampshire's athletics department is a major asset to the state of New Hampshire. Athletics creates a unique synergy that links the campus community to the local area and beyond.

### **Campus Activities**

To assess the status of campus life through organized events, the following information sources were used:

- 2001 Student Profile Survey. This is an annual, UNH-based undergraduate student survey measuring satisfaction with life in the residence halls. It is administered each November and averages a 98% return.
- Residential Life database of social and educational programs for the 2001-02 academic year.
- Interviews with MUB Director and Program Advisor
- Database of programs and attendance estimates for the Fall of 2002, maintained by the Student Organization Service Office

In the residence halls, last year alone, there were more than 2,500 social programs. This past fall semester, MUB staff and several major student campus programming groups sponsored campus-wide, large-scale entertainment events every Friday and Saturday night in venues such as the MUB, Field House, or through athletic events. These programming efforts will continue throughout the academic year. Attendance at events, such as comedians and concerts, is strong. For example, two outdoor movies shown at midnight on the Thompson Hall lawn this past September attracted 500 students each time. The average attendance during September, 2002 at an all-campus event was 275.

The numbers of programs and attendance figures indicate a strong expectation by students for activities to be made available. Many events are planned, advertised, and produced by students. Funding for campus-wide events comes from the Student Activity Fee, which is managed by Student Senate. Students, therefore, have extraordinary influence over what is funded. Without adequate professional guidance and advice, many programming groups have not achieved success with their events. As with organizations, advising is key to success. Those programming groups who work closely with staff advisors, and administrative offices throughout campus, offer the best attended events, overall. The Campus Activities Board is achieving great success in managing campus events, as they are advised by MUB staff, and possess knowledge of University resources that are useful in planning events. In contrast, some long-standing social programming groups who have historically worked without staff advising tend to offer events that are less well planned, and therefore, not well attended. The Memorial Union Student Organization (MUSO) is an example. For the first time in their 30 year history, they are no longer have the responsibility to plan the weekend movie series for the MUB, due to poor management of the series, and therefore, poor attendance.

According to the 2001 Student Profile Survey, 54% of students in residence stay on campus during the weekends. Given successes noted above, demand for on-campus weekend programming will continue to drive efforts to expand both the numbers of events, as well as their duration (into early morning hours). Those student programming groups who take advantage of advising from professional staff with experience in major events production, and who seek student input via surveys and other instruments designed to collect both valid and reliable information on interests and trends, should continue to provide entertainment that is well received.

### Campus Recreation

Data provided here includes ongoing actual participation demographic information and participant numbers acquired through the Banner system, the Residence Life Survey and national trend line data provided by National Intramural Recreational Sports Association member institutions.

The department consists of 22 sport clubs (which are student organized, administered); 26 intramural sports for men and women; faculty and staff interaction; and currently over 114 hours per week of facility availability. There are over 700 participants in the sport club program, over 4,500 intramural participants, and an average of 300 student employees. Over 71% of the student population, use the Hamel Recreation Center (over 339,000 uses during FY '02), and over 80% of the students utilize some aspect of the Campus Recreation program or facilities (other program components include non credit instructional classes, fitness, wellness, aquatics, summer programs/camps and outdoor experiential educational programs).

Campus Recreation offers wide ranging educational and co-curricular activities. The goal is to serve all students on or off campus who wish to utilize this program and it's services-ideally, 100% of the student body. It is through these many programs and services, which allow the staff to offer/integrate the varied educational, social and recreational benefits. This is achieved by providing broad opportunities for the development of leadership skills, a sense of responsibility, sportsmanship, a greater appreciation of difference, and basic physical/social

skills which can be utilized throughout a lifetime. These programs contribute to: sense of community (bridging academic class and major, gender, age and ethnic barriers), positive first year experience (our highest participating class), lifelong friendships/connections, and encourages and facilitates interaction/integration between the many facets of the university including faculty, staff, students, university departments and the community at large. The Campus Recreation staff will always attempt to offer a maximum number of options, both programmatically and socially, to provide positive alternatives to the many social pressures seen on every campus (substance use/abuse, stress). Assessment will be ongoing, and relevant to the educational, social and recreational success of each student, the Campus Recreational program and the university overall.

### Residence Halls

To assess the status of campus life as organized through events and clubs/organizations, the following information sources were used:

- Residential Life Database (includes hall programs/discussions and individual contacts)
- Residential Life Survey
- Student Profile Survey

The residence halls are one of the strongest learning communities at UNH. It is an expectation of UNH that the residence halls serve as an educational environment. The highly trained, committed, live-in professional staff provides a living-learning environment that fosters academic success for the 4500 students in the halls through individual contact regarding personal support, community citizenship, academic success, and appreciating differences; academic-based programs such as test-taking and study skills; and appropriate referrals to the many academic support services on campus including the student's instructor, the Center for Academic Resources, the Connors Writing Center, and the University Advising Center. To further support academic success, some hall directors sponsor study groups. Other staff invite faculty into the buildings to discuss the role of faculty or facilitate review sessions. Staff meet one-on-one with students to discuss various issues. When hall directors talk with students who face academic challenges, the hall directors may work individually with those students to support their academic success.

In addition, this integration of learning occurs when staff foster social and personal growth through individual contact, educational programming, and informal small group discussions so that students can learn more about themselves, others, expand their knowledge, and can develop interpersonal skills. Staff lead discussions that cover topics such as diversity, ethical decision-making, building personal support networks, and controversial issues that force students to think critical in order to examine their own beliefs and understand the opinions of others. Staff may also refer such students to other offices on campus such as Access, for learning disability issues, the Counseling Center for counseling issues, the Memorial Union Building for campus involvement.

The First Year Integration Program was established to help the approximately 950 first year students living in Williamson and Christensen be successful at UNH. The expectation of the program is to help students build relationships with other students, faculty, and staff in a way that overlaps, supports, and enhances the academic experience. Through collaboration between

students, faculty, staff from across campus including Residential Life, the Center for Academic Resources, and the Connors Writing Center numerous services and types of support are provided to achieve this goal. Students live on the same floor and in the same building with others in their classes, they connect through the Internet using Blackboard, and meet individually and in groups with other students, mentors, faculty and staff. Some of these meetings include in-hall study groups and review sessions, discussions and support cover study skills, test taking skills, and writing skills.

Living in the residence halls affords students a rich, integrated learning environment that nurtures a sense of community spirit. For many, and in particular UNH freshman, the residence halls provide smaller, personalized communities of learners that provide connections and offer forays into the larger and broader UNH community.

Assessment takes place in many forms. Hall staff track the types of hall programs and discussions they sponsor and document the attendance at these events. The Residential Life Survey also evaluates the satisfaction of students regarding staff while the Student Profile Survey focuses on the student experience with faculty, staff, other students, and learning outcomes resulting from living in the residence halls.

Results on past surveys leave little room for hall staff to improve in regard to the type of experience students receive when they live in UNH residence halls. The central staff have begun the next logical step by measuring the learning outcomes which they theoretically believe occur. This type of examination will result in a stronger learning environment for residential students. In regard to the First Year Integration program, while this program provides a fantastic array of services and supports, it is not clear if the program is meeting its goals. Preliminary results are not conclusive regarding grade point average and policy violations. Assessment focusing on learning outcomes as well as the overall collegiate experiences of the students in and out of this program will help program leaders identify strengths and weaknesses in order to make improvements.

### Student Organizations

To assess the status of campus life as organized through events and clubs/organizations, the following information sources were used:

- 2002 database of registered clubs and organizations from the Student Organizations Services Office in the Memorial Union Building
- “Get Involved” booklet. This is distributed by the SOS staff throughout the campus each year; and is a comprehensive guide to listings, membership requirements, and how to join or start a group.
- 2002 Association of College Unions-International/EBI College Union/Student Center Study. This is an annual national benchmarking instrument that surveys student satisfaction with their institution’s student union facility and student activities program.
- Interviews with the Director of the Memorial Union Building, and Program Assistant with the Student Organization Services Office.

There are currently over 150 registered student organizations at UNH, divided among 11 major categories of interest. Those categories are: political and world affairs, media and publications, honor societies, special interest, leisure and recreation, religious, arts and entertainment, governance, Student Activity Fee funded, academic and career, and campus concerns/community service. Thirty six percent of the student body belongs to an organization. MUB staff report that students exhibit great interest in connecting classroom learning to practical applications. As one upperclass student indicated in the December 20, 2002 focus group on the undergraduate experience, extra-curricular activities give students a chance to “follow their passions”.

Approximately 60% of registered organizations have faculty/staff advisors. Advisors provide formal and informal learning opportunities by presenting workshops on topics of interest, mentoring individuals and small groups, facilitating topical discussion groups, and offering assistance in technical problem solving. The benefits for student groups in having advisors are many. MUB staff report that those clubs with a faculty or staff advisor tend to have clear statements of purpose and strong membership bases. Organizations with no advising may begin with a clear learning purpose, but over time they become more disorganized and focus primarily on social activities. To better integrate academic experiences with a broad spectrum of student-based interests, MUB staff are making connections with Deans of each of the colleges to showcase student success with activities connected to their courses of study. Their goal is to generate more awareness among faculty about opportunities to advise organizations, and therefore increase the percentage of groups who have faculty advisors.

As stated in the 2002 edition of “Get Involved”, “experiences beyond the classroom afford students the opportunity for social interaction, recreation, leadership, and enhancement of academic interests”. An encouraging note is that students of color report significant involvement in organizations, and feel strong satisfaction with their experiences. Students in the December 5, 2002 focus group discussing the undergraduate experience indicated that they connect satisfaction with UNH to their involvement in activities outside the classroom. MUB staff hold several membership recruitment drives each year in order to increase student participation in organized clubs. There is also information available on the MUB website regarding how to get involved.

In order to stay aware of how students evaluate their experiences, Memorial Union Building staff rely on an annual national benchmarking survey. Data indicate that students at UNH cite leadership development and acquiring life skills as major reasons for becoming involved in campus activities. MUB and Student Affairs staff provide annual workshops and conferences that are designed to bring large groups of student organization leaders together in formal ways to meet these expectations for learning. For example, in late spring, a conference titled “Stairway to September” is held to build a sense of community among student leaders through a series of shared experiences. Workshops on understanding leadership styles, conflict management, goal setting, and other related topics to group performance are offered. Students also learn how to navigate the administrative systems of the University. Many helpful relationships are built among leaders, and with participating University faculty and staff, as a result of these conferences.

One concern for MUB staff is the lack of focus for their many and varied leadership, management, and member recruitment programs. Their goals are to develop better strategies to integrate relevant aspects of the University's academic mission with experiences that build their skills, and provide opportunities to expand classroom learning that promote learning outcomes appropriate for each year students are enrolled.

### ***Weaknesses***

Though there are clearly numerous strengths and areas that contribute to the sense of community at UNH, there are also barriers to integrating student life and the benefits of community activities into the fabric of a UNH education.

### Common Intellectual Focus

There are numerous student organizations and academic institutes/programs or councils that sponsor community activities representing diverse interests and a variety of social/cultural activities. Unfortunately, too often the campus community as a whole is uninformed of happenings available. Beyond the lack of a communication infrastructure to inform the community of activities, there is also no over-riding common intellectual theme or thread that serves to focus or bring together the various aspects of the UNH community. The activities of the UNH community tend to occur in autonomous, unconnected occurrences with minimal linkage to the larger community. In many ways the UNH community is modeling what Putnam postulates in *Bowling Alone*, the lack of allegiance to the greater social community.

### Faculty Commitments

The UNH Faculty is a committed and invested faculty serving the teaching, research and service mission of this public sea and land grant university. The reward system (tenure/promotion/performance reviews) for faculty emphasizes the teaching and research priorities with service, to profession, the university and community the third area of review. All of these commitments result in significant time pressure for faculty such that even for faculty who would choose to engage in such community activities there is very little time or energy available for such pursuits. If faculty engagement in community activities is a priority at UNH, there needs to be a restructuring of the reward system that will nurture and support such endeavors.

### Lack of diversity

To assess the status of campus life as organized through events and clubs/organizations, the following information sources were used:

-Students of Color Project

The UNH community expects that UNH will be a place where are all community members feel safe and comfortable here and everyone can optimize their individual learning. But, all one has to do is look around: the classrooms, students walking across campus, faculty and staff offices. There is a lack of ethnic and racial diversity here. This has a two-fold effect. The first effect influences multicultural students at UNH. They see few students like themselves. This makes them feel isolated, like they must represent their race/ethnicity, that they must be champions of

diversity and educating the masses. This is not simply an issue of quantity of diverse students, but also the quality of the UNH experience for diverse students. Another result affects majority students. They lack an essential aspect of education because, for the most part, they interact with others that are very similar to them. Without exposure to individual differences and diverse ideas, perspectives and emotions are limited and growth of those perspectives and emotions is not optimized. Majority students will also be limited in learning how to interact with others different from them. Not only is this a shortcoming of a comprehensive education, but it can inhibit majority students' ability to operate in a global workforce. This lack of diversity and quality of experience for multicultural students negatively affects the integration of the campus community. Efforts need to be made to increase the ethnic and racial diversity of this campus.

The Students of Color Project is the first comprehensive project examining the college experience for students of color. This is only the first step. Similar studies should be undertaken for faculty and staff of color. Additionally, studies should be established to investigate the influence of diversity on majority students, faculty, and staff. It is also important to look more closely at, and analyzing, the recruitment and retention strategies. Although there are units (Office of Multicultural Student Affairs and the President's Commission on the Status of People of Color) are charged with addressing diversity issues, the programs and oversight they provide is not enough. There needs to be a great institutional commitment to this problem.

#### Off-campus students

Off-campus students, including those living in the on-campus apartment complexes – The Gables and Woodside Apartments, make up one community that is a weakness for UNH. The institution provides very few services, although they are increasing, for the approximately 6500 students comprising this population. There is not an initiative targeted specifically at developing this group into a learning community or even a composite of various learning communities. The current services include assistance seeking housing and education regarding what to know about living off campus such as legal issues, expenses, and landlord relations. Any integration that occurred while students lived in the residence halls is lost when they move off campus. While many students would argue that they do not need this integration once they move off campus, and many chose to move off campus so that they would have less structure, it seems that the college experience becomes deficient. There seems to be little to integrate the in and out-of-classroom experience. With the help of designated staff and resources, this group of students has the potential to reap educational benefits similar to those of residential students through targeted interventions. As the Boyer report found “commuting students must be integrated into university life by making their participation easy and attractive” (Boyer, 1998). Assessment should be key component in understanding this issue.

#### Shared Rituals and Celebrations

UNH lacks strong traditions that serve to unite its community. Although there are numerous activities and celebrations that are offered throughout the year and on a recurring basis (Thompson Founder's Day, State of the University Address, Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, May Graduation), there are few instances that galvanize the campus as a whole. The success of both the men's and women's varsity UNH hockey programs brings a sense of pride to the campus and beyond. Yet this success is not replicated in other arenas. Events and activities that serve to unite the student, faculty, staff and alumni are far too infrequent. Shared rituals and

celebrations tend to cultivate a sense of community and UNH is in need of such events that will attract a large portion of the university community. Students may feel a greater connection to the smaller more personalized communities of their residence halls, fraternities/sororities, academic majors, or student organization, but there is a need for greater allegiance to the community at large. There is a fondness and identification to the physical campus environment itself, as students, faculty, staff, and alumni all comment of the beauty and location of the UNH Durham campus.

***Recommendations:***

Addressing the issue of enhancing a sense of community at UNH is a difficult and pervasive issue. It requires a commitment from all levels and a belief that creating a sense of community is a value worth the investment of time, energy and resources. Contributions to this sense of community must be recognized and valued on the same level as research and teaching for the faculty, and this requires acknowledging these responsibilities through tenure and promotion. The student body appears more cognizant of the importance of community membership and the learning that occurs beyond the classroom. With guidance and support, this student investment can be nurtured to create the well-rounded educated citizen we wish to emerge from a UNH undergraduate education.

1. Create a centralized communication infrastructure for co-curricular activities. This clearinghouse would develop a communication strategy and implementation plan for communicating the varied and disbursed happenings that occur at UNH. Devote personnel resources for developing and updating a university wide website that reports daily/hourly updates of happenings/events on campus. Any UNH resources allocated to programmatic happenings on campus must participate in this “Happenings at UNH” calendar and all other colloquiums/lectures/cultural events are encouraged to participate. There is also a need to have accurate mail and email addresses for students both on and off-campus to support the dissemination of information to students. This could simply mean adding a required field for current mail and email address to the registration process. The current process for providing and maintaining current mail and email addresses is ineffective.
2. A committee of students, administrators of student and academic life, staff and faculty plan themes for large-scale campus activities; develop and implement a university-wide conversation on the topics in classrooms, the residence halls, and other campus venues. As the Undergraduate Experience Committee for the UNH Academic Plan (2002) articulated developing these activities requires coordination and communication. The report suggests a coordination of event scheduling would allow longer range planning for major events, better incorporation of those events in the curriculum, where appropriate, and eases the pressure of finding funds. Central planning adds coherence to planning large-scale events and provides the necessary promotion to assure success. This committee supports their Action Plan to establish a University-wide dialog that: a) begins with new students first days at the University, b) plans events around a theme that can be incorporated into the curriculum and is identified at least one year in advance, and c) uses the centralized clearinghouse to announce thematic happenings throughout the year.

3. Create and build the student life culture from the initial days on campus through the senior year. This requires integrating the academic and social life of students. It is important that these activities support and enhance each other. We must discourage programming that detracts from students' engagement in both aspects and support programs that encourage the community desired. Examples of such initiatives include: postpone pledging until students are in their sophomore year to enable the first year student to explore the possibilities, expand intramural and other recreational opportunities, extend the programming after midnight on Saturday and Sunday mornings in the Memorial Union, through Campus Recreation offerings and outside (weather permitting), develop new or more theme residence halls (or floors) around academic and other issues. These recommendations are also supported by the Undergraduate Experience Committee for the UNH Academic Plan (2002).
4. Initiate a year long program for first year students that builds on the First Year Integration Program. A model for this program, First year Interdisciplinary Seminar Institute, has been developed by the Undergraduate Experience Committee chaired by Mary Rhiel. This program should include all first year students and utilize teams of faculty and staff to develop small learning communities that will allow students to explore issues and concepts while building relationships with other students, faculty, and staff. A fuller description is available in the Undergraduate Experience Committee report.
5. Increasing the diversity of students, faculty, and staff is only one piece of addressing the lack of diversity on campus. The feeling of isolation of multicultural students must also need to be tackled. There needs to be an institutional commitment to diversity, rather than a dependence on specific offices and programs (e.g., Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, Connect) to deal with this important issue. Improving diversity also needs to be an integrated effort among campus offices. The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, Athletics, Admissions, academic support services, and other offices on campus need to continue to collaborate efforts in order to improve the climate on campus for multicultural students. All offices on campus must take the initiative to build partnerships rather than depending on just one or two to begin the discussion of diversity.
6. There seems to be an obvious disconnection between students living off-campus and the UNH community. While other recommendations made in this section may help to dissolve that disconnection, but the issue needs to be explored further. The university needs to find out what off-campus students want and need to make them feel more connected and satisfied. This is assumed that they feel disconnected and unsatisfied. A comprehensive study of off-campus students would provide the answer to these and more questions.

**IMPORTANT PIECES OF THE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE THAT ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THE HEART OF THE DOCUMENT**

There are important issues that influence the undergraduate experience that we felt should be included in our report, but were not at the center of it because in the case of a disconnected student voice, the other issues were more important or in the case of alcohol and other drugs, the issue is already on the top of the agenda. Whatever the reason these issues were not placed in the main report, they are nonetheless important for consideration.

### Alcohol and other drugs

As with many campuses, alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs are a major issue at the University of New Hampshire. While the majority of UNH students do choose to use alcohol in a low-risk way, as the Social Norming Campaign demonstrates, high-risk alcohol and drug use is an issue nonetheless. Many students would argue that the party scene and alcohol and drug use creates a community. They meet people and make friends at parties. This is only a perceived sense of community. The relationships in this community are often loose and transitory, focusing only on the next beer or the next party. The negative effects related to high-risk substance use detract from the educational mission of the institution. While, not the majority, some students miss class, perform poorly on exams/papers/projects, and have memory loss as a result of drinking. There are also secondary negative effects. Loud noise, damage, sexual assault, and violence negatively affect bystanders. Additionally, the public image associated with the substance use at UNH can influence the town/gown relationship as well as any other external outreach efforts. Alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs serves to disconnect rather than integrate the college experience.

Many projects and programs have been established, and will continue, to deal with this issue. Some of these projects and programs include educational outreach in the form of interactive programs, alcohol assessment classes, and brochures; counseling by trained alcohol and other drug counselors, hall directors, and psychologists; policy development and enforcement; and through cultural change promoted by the Social Norming Team. This group of professionals and students seeks to decrease the amount of alcohol consumed by accurately reporting the amount consumed by students. Research demonstrates that students misperceive how much alcohol is consumed by their peers. In an attempt to be “normal” they consume alcohol in an amount consistent with these misperceptions. Theoretically, students will consume less alcohol if they have accurate perceptions regarding alcohol consumption. This approach is beginning to be used with tobacco and other drugs.

Under the guidance of the Office of Health Education and Promotion, assessment in the area of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs has been a perennial project. Assessment generally focuses on usage and consequences. To date, little assessment has been done recently concerning the effectiveness of these various prevention methods. A new evaluation of the alcohol awareness class and a comprehensive review of the social norming campaign will begin to shed new light on these primary prevention methods.

Sources:       New Hampshire Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Survey  
                  The National College Health Assessment  
                  Prime for Life Evaluation (will be administered January 2002)  
                  Social Norming Assessment (Spring/Summer 2002)

### Disconnected Student Voice

One of the weaknesses at UNH is the disconnect between three vital groups on campus: the student body, student government, and the administration. The fundamental problem is the breakdown in communication between these groups. Ideally, the system should work so that student body talks to its government who in turn talks to the administration and vice a versa. However, it seems that while the administration and the government have developed a functional, though questionable, line of dialogue, the student body and its government are lacking that relationship. The Student Body President, Vice President, and Senators have shifted their focus to negotiating with the administration rather than collecting information from their respective constituencies. The most prominent and respected Senators may have prominence on the floor of the Senate, but are relative unknowns to the student body. If UNH cannot nurture a more fluid relationship between these three loci of power, the friction that exists between administration and student will continue.

#### *Recommendation*

Establish a committee of students to conduct further research on the relationship between the student body, student senate, and the administration. There is concern that senate is not effectively representing the voice of the student body. One component of the study should focus on the budgetary approval process of senate. Under the current system, many administrative units that derive some or all of their revenues funds from student fees (e.g., Athletics, Campus Recreation, Health Services) must present their budget to the student senate for approval. If the student senate does not effectively represent the student voice, the integrity of this process is jeopardized. To ensure the integrity of the budgetary approval process of programs and service at UNH, than it must be determined that student senate is an effective representative student government. A study of the structural setup of senate paired with a comprehensive surveying of the student body to locate points of disconnect between students, student senate, and the administration. The results of this study will help senate determine the strengths and weaknesses so that they can be as representative of the student body they can be and maintain the integrity of the budgetary approval process.

### Service Learning

Interest by students and faculty in connecting what they are learning in class with practical problem solving of complex human and environmental issues is growing steadily. The Partnership for Social Action staff work with faculty in establishing, maintaining, and growing service sites around the state that connect with their specific classes; and assist students as they reflect on their experiences. Final projects and class presentations on their experiences also help students understand what they have learned through their service. Students make substantial contributions to non-profit agencies, schools, civic boards, and individuals. This intentional connection of classroom theory to providing service also builds on the value of educating for citizenship, and expresses the University's commitment to service as a part of its mission.

### Student Identification/Loyalty

Student loyalty describes the entity to which a student feels an identity with. This identity is important because it can influence the type of learning that occurs and affects the integration of the entire undergraduate experience. For some students they identify with the university. Another proportion of the UNH student population has an affinity to the Greek system. Athletes are

extremely loyal and identify with their team. There is a large group of students who identify more closely with their major, especially those in science, math, WSBE, and theatre and arts. Student organizations provide the basis of identity for another group of students. The University of New Hampshire, expects that students will identify with some part of the university as it theoretically has an impact on student learning and alumni connections.

Beyond anecdotal evidence, there is no assessment being performed to investigate the existence of student identification and loyalty and the extent to which it influences integration of the college experience. Further examination would provide information that can be used to validate the benefits of university identification and differential outcomes dependent on the entity of the identification (e.g., institution, student organization, major) as well as suggestions as to how to improve student loyalty/identification.