



REVIEW REPORT

on the

TRANSITION TO EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT (TrEE) PROGRAM

JUNE, 1999

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SUMMARY

This is the first program review of Transition to Education or Employment (TrEE), a five year old program situated in the College Access Department.

Generally, students have been quite happy with the program, enjoying their time there, and leaving with a sense that they have some basic employment skills and also are better able to live independently. The employers' responses were also largely positive, in spite of their sense of being overwhelmed by the variety of programs and institutions seeking their support. The Review Committee was impressed by the general climate of openness to, and respect for, the greater challenge of living with disabilities demonstrated by members of the college and the community interviewed.

The Review Committee has identified several areas for change in the overall program structure, its curriculum, and its delivery and management. Specifically, it recommends that work placements be increased in length and that alternative models of work exposure be sought; that work-site coaching be done by both faculty; and that the classroom and field components of the program be better integrated. Admissions criteria need to be established along with recruiting, application and interview procedures. Communication issues, such as information-flow and closer collaboration between the TrEE and Vocational Skills Training programs should be addressed. And several recommendations affecting faculty professionalism are offered.

But preliminary to those changes and critical to the survival of the program, the Review Committee recommends the establishment of a clear set of goals and objectives and an identifiable target population. To assist in these tasks, and to act as a sounding board and source of support, information and feedback, the Review Committee recommends the re-focusing and involvement of the program advisory committee.

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TRANSITION TO EDUCATION OR EMPLOYMENT (TrEE)
PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE TrEE PROGRAM REVIEW

The review of the Transition to Education or Employment (TrEE) program began on October 19, 1998. A planning meeting with Susie Safford (Dean, Student Development), Heather Shand (Acting Director, Institutional Research and Planning) and Karen Grigoleit (Research Analyst, Institutional Research and Planning) was held to discuss program review procedures as well as the design of survey and focus group questions. Additional meetings were held with Iris Rich-McQuay (Chair, College Access) and TrEE program faculty members on October 27, November 3, November 26, and November 30, 1998 to finalize the survey and focus group questions.

The program review process was explained to current TrEE students and former TrEE/current Vocational Skills Training (VST) students on November 3, 1998. Focus groups were conducted with current students in class on December 4, 1998 and with former TrEE/current VST students on January 26, 1999. Using student lists generated from Colleague (UCC's student information system), in-depth interviews were conducted with former students.

Employer and Disability Resources Advisory Committee surveys were sent out on January 19, 1999. Surveys were sent out to TrEE program faculty and VST program faculty on February 8, 1999. Telephone communication was conducted between February 4, 1999 and March 1, 1999 to contact non-respondents. The cut-off date for all responses was March 10, 1999 and the TrEE Program Review Committee met on April 29-30, 1999 to analyze the data and formulate its report on the program.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Transition to Education or Employment (TrEE) program began in 1994 when it was recognized that a basic entry-level vocational program was needed. From the beginning the TrEE program has been base funded. From 1994 to 1996 the program was part of the Adult Special Education department. Then with the restructuring of the college and the Division of Student Development, TrEE joined the College Access Department. Since 1995, TrEE has also been offered in Williams Lake. Although the instructional staff maintain contact between the two campuses, the Williams Lake TrEE program is delivered in a manner that reflects the different needs and resources of that community.

At present, the TrEE program in Kamloops consists of one full-time instructor and one full-time instructional assistant. In the past the TrEE program has also accepted practicum students from the Human Service Worker program. Christina Cederlof, instructor, and Meghan Earley, instructional assistant, have delivered the program with the exception of a four and a half month period when Craig Cannings acted in the position of instructional assistant. As well, the program has had substitute instructors to fill in for professional development, vacation, and sick leave periods. These substitutes include Joanne Simpson, Rio Bates, Nina Chernoff, Lucy Poirier and Troylana Manson.

The TrEE program mainly attracts students who come directly from high school with little work experience and limited independence. Students will often have a learning disability, mental and/or physical disability, head injury and/or are currently experiencing mental illness.

The emphasis of the TrEE program is on vocational exploration and life skills leading to greater independence. With this in mind, the principal subjects offered are: work issues, field experience, communication, work experience and workplace academic skills. The students engage in vocational tours and job shadowing experiences in the autumn months. During the winter and spring students undertake three different work experiences in keeping with their vocational plan and goals. As a result, students have a total of five weeks of work experience prior to graduating from the program.

ADMISSIONS DATA

Program Description

The Transition to Education or Employment (TrEE) program is a full-time, 10-month program. It provides students with a disability practical knowledge about future employment opportunities. Students divide their time between the classroom, field experience and work experience activities. Skills learned in the program can lead to further training or to an employment opportunity. The program is individualized to meet the students' needs and interests.

This program is also available in Williams Lake.

Admissions Requirements

- 18 years or older
- an identified disability that impairs learning (documentation may be required)
- an assessment and interview by department faculty
- must arrange own transportation to and from UCC and job sites
- ability to communicate, or a communication system in place

Attendance Policy

Student will attend 90% of the classes unless authorized by a physician. After five days absence, a doctor's note will be required.

Certification

Students who achieve 80% of the listed competencies in each of the courses and who demonstrate good attendance will receive a UCC Certificate. Other students who have shown good attendance, but who have not achieved 80% of the listed competencies will receive a non-credit Certificate of Completion.

Costs

See Fees section of the UCC Calendar for more information about tuition fees. Tuition is paid at the monthly Vocational rate. This is payable in two installments - September and January. Student should budget approximately \$150.00 for textbooks and other related course materials.

Program Outline

Fall Semester	Winter Semester
ASET 001 – Communication I	ASET 011 - Communication II
ASET 002 - Work Issues I	ASET 012 - Work Issues II
ASET 003 – Workplace Academics I	ASET 013 - Workplace Academics II
ASET 004 - Field Experience	ASET 015 - Work Experience I
Spring Semester	
ASET 022 - Work Issues III	
ASET 025 - Work Experience II	

Course Descriptions

See Course Description section in the UCC Calendar for detailed course information.

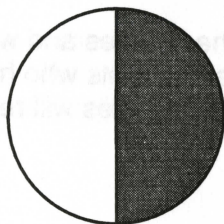
TrEE PROGRAM COMPLETION RATES

	<u>1994-95</u>	<u>1995-96</u>	<u>1996-97</u>	<u>1997-98</u>	<u>1998-99</u>
Enrolled	16	7	16	15	8
Completed	13	5	14	11	5
Completion Rate	81%	71%	88%	73%	63%

GENDER RATIO OF TrEE PROGRAM GRADUATES

1994-1998 Program Intake

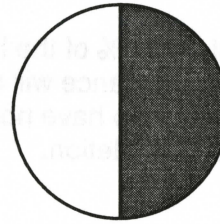
Female:	31	50%
Male:	31	50%
Total:	62	100%



□ Female
■ Male

1995-1999 Program Graduates

Female:	24	77%
Male:	24	77%
Total:	48	77%



□ Female
■ Male

ENROLMENT IN VST AFTER TrEE

Year	Number Enrolled in TrEE		Number Subsequently Enrolled in VST	Percentage
1994 - 1995	16	→ → → → →	9	56%
1995 - 1996	7	→ → → → →	5	71%
1996 - 1997	16	→ → → → →	6	38%
1997 - 1998	15	→ → → → →	8	53%
1998 - 1999	8	→ → → → →	4	50%
TOTAL	62	→ → → → →	32	52%

TABULAR SUMMARY OF RESPONSES
TrEE PROGRAM REVIEW

<u>Recipient</u>	<u># Sent</u>	<u># Completed/ Returned</u>	<u>% Response</u>
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Surveys:

Disability Resources Advisory Committee	12	8	67%
TrEE Faculty	6	5	83%
Receiving (VST) Faculty	4	4	100%
Employers	72	28	39%

	<u># in Group</u>	<u># Partipated</u>	<u>Participation Rate</u>
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Focus Groups:

Current TrEE Students	7	4	57%
Current VST (Formerly TrEE) Students	9	8	89%

Telephone Interviews:

Former Students	45	15	33%
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TOTAL	155	72	46%
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SUMMARY OF RESPONSES (Questionnaire and Interview)

FORMER STUDENTS

Former students expressed satisfaction with the class size (whether small or large). They shared the view that they benefitted from adequately individualized instruction (though, in a few cases, students expressed views that other students seemed to get less than adequate attention). Problems resulting from "difficult peers" were mentioned several times.

Students also referred to disruption resulting from "lots of substitutes." Students mentioned feeling bored with some of the coursework, and also with some of the work experience. Students seemed to value the work on interview skills, and clearly enjoyed the socializing (swimming, fund-raising, community kitchen).

It is interesting to note that while agreeing with the general consensus that the coursework was "easy... really easy," one student later commented that her "confidence just went out the roof...it made me feel like I could almost achieve anything I wanted". Instructors were positively viewed as helpful, respectful, and "nice people," though "most of the time there was just one." The perception of an instructional team was not apparent to former or current students.

Perhaps the prevalent shared impression was that "it was too easy," and "we had done it all before." Students made these kind of comments about both the employment skills and the academic work. Others complained of "too much kids' stuff," referring to the "crafts and games." While these activities gave some students a sense of increased confidence, they did not instill realistic expectations of further employment or education.

In an interview, one student admitted that his current program at the Independent Living Resource Centre, felt "almost better than both my college programs" (TrEE and VST). Students seemed upset and disappointed to discover that people out in the community "didn't have any idea" what the TrEE certificate meant. These students had gone out to seek employment, feeling they had a valuable credential, only to learn that employers were not familiar with it. As one student put it, "I think there should have been more awareness in the community."

CURRENT STUDENTS

A focus group consisting of four current TrEE students revealed that they feel generally satisfied with their instruction. They agreed that feedback was sufficient and they had "enough one-on-one time" with their instructors.

Students did not seem able to articulate learning outcomes. For these students, the best features of the program were work experience, field trips, projects, socializing and recreational activities. They claim to have already known some parts of the program and complained that sometimes "it kind of gets boring."

While there were few distinct problems identified, and a shared view that "we all have different learning styles," there was a general sense that students would like a more clear and specific understanding of "what [their] careers are going to be."

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Disability Resources Advisory Committee (DRAC) was surveyed, and both the former and current Transition Planners were interviewed. The Transition Planner is also a member of the Community Resource Team (CRT); however, the Committee realized, through interviews, that neither the DRA nor the CRT is functioning as an advisory committee, or is aware it is supposed to. Further, the program faculty have no clear understanding of the role or mandate of either committee. It is hardly surprising, then, that the survey data from the Disability Resources Advisory Committee reveals a high percentage of "No Experience/Not Applicable" answers (as high as 75% for 2 of only 13 questions).

However, these are people with related expertise who were certainly keen to share comments on what they believe this program does and could do. They cite a lack of community and provincial input to the formation and continuation of the program. While commending the "caring staff," and valuing the college location, they point to "replication and duplication of Secondary School programming." There are several recommendations that the program have "a target population in mind," and focus more clearly on "individualized employment programs." Many of these respondents seem to consider TrEE and Vocational Skills Training (VST) as a single program.

EMPLOYERS

Initially, the Committee noted the high percentage of responses (up to 79%) in the "Not Applicable/Don't Know" category on the employers' survey. Yet interviews and written comments reveal that the reason for employers' lack of knowledge about the program may be threefold. In part, it suggests that the flow of information between the program and the employers is less than adequate. Employers feel unsure about the program objectives and curriculum. But there is also a factor of employer overload: too many agencies, too many programs, too many job-placements. And third, employers interviewed were quite clear that job-placements are too brief, with students barely having a chance to "learn to fit in," or to "get into the rhythm" of the job.

The few employers who provided ratings viewed the job skills of TrEE students quite favourably. Of note, respondents said that TrEE students "Meet" or "Exceed" expectations for their quality of work (79%), their good work habits (78%), their "willingness to take direction" (78%) and their ability to interact effectively with peers and co-workers (75%).

Based on their experience with TrEE students, 32% of employers indicated that they would hire a TrEE graduate; conversely, 36% said that they would not. When asked the same question, with the caveat that graduates received further training, 46% of employers indicated that they would hire TrEE graduates while only 15% said that they would not. However, comments suggest that eventual employment in some situations was not a reasonable expectation, due to the "specialized training" required for even entry-level jobs, or to "the type and scope of positions," or to students' problems with "anger management" or tardiness.

In their subjective comments, employers complimented students' general friendliness and willingness to help, but identified lack of independence and initiative as limitations. Various changes to the program were suggested, including: job coaching, more extensive job training, more reasonable expectations about the "reality" of employment, better assessments, and more emphasis on work-related communication and problem-solving skills. Many suggestions were for more specific training for specific work sites.

FACULTY

Program faculty shared many concerns about the genesis of the program, to wit that they had been "catapulted into the position" and then pressured to mask their struggles because they were "on probation." They expressed a great deal of frustration at coping with "difficult students" in the absence of institutional support. "Each year seems to be different," the instructor explained, with a great deal of time spent coping with individual behaviour problems in the class. The instructional assistant described the first years as "haphazard," and emphasized the sense of overload and frustration juggling the demands of establishing employer contacts and co-instructing. However, the general sense is that "things are better now."

The faculty survey results (which includes three faculty who have substituted in the program over the years), indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the existence of clear and explicit program objectives (though it is interesting to note that other groups surveyed do not share this satisfaction). This same group expresses far less satisfaction with program planning and organization, rating them 2.00 and 2.25 respectively on a scale of 4.00 – echoing, very likely, the first year of program development.

Instructors indicate confidence that their curriculum prepares students for work experience, though they are less satisfied that the courses follow a logical sequence. The learning process receives high marks from faculty, as do questions focusing on the balance of skills and behaviours emphasized in the program. The data also indicate dissatisfaction with departmental support and communication with others concerning the program. A related source of dissatisfaction, elaborated upon in interviews, was with the facilities and supplies available to the program, though further questioning revealed a general lack of awareness about the processes for addressing such concerns.

One faculty member mentioned that a major strength of the TrEE program is its post secondary setting. This strength is echoed in similar comments by employers and students. Limitations cited are lack of "job specific skills," "class size" and competition with the Vocational Skills Training program and private agencies for practicum placements. For changes, "team planning and support" between the instructor and instructional assistant are mentioned, as is the idea of partnerships with particular employers in the community.

RECEIVING (VST) FACULTY

Survey data and interviews with Vocational Skills Training program faculty revealed a relatively low level of satisfaction with the TrEE program. While TrEE graduates performed satisfactorily in some basic skills (specifically math, writing, job search, and computing), their performance in some specific job skills did not meet expectations. For example, good work habits had a rating of 1.50 on a scale of 4.00 and ability to interact effectively with peers and co-workers, willingness to take direction, and willingness to take initiative were each rated 2.25 on a scale of 4.00. Concerns also emerged around general skills of time management and stress management, rated 1.50 and 1.75 respectively on a scale of 4.00. Furthermore, VST faculty disagreed, unanimously, that TrEE "adequately prepares students for the workplace"; yet, perhaps this ought be balanced against the consideration that those students proceeding to the VST program have done so, presumably, for further training.

VST faculty emphasized an expectation that students should have learned to demonstrate competence, "not just talk about it." The VST faculty noted that TrEE students coming into their program should have more skill development in areas of problem-solving, listening, following

instructions. They should also be prepared with realistic notions of how individual skills match the realities of employment. VST faculty also commented on what they perceive as a disjointed program, in which classroom activity does not appear to "mesh" with work experience, and in which frequent faculty absences preclude a regular pattern of instruction. VST faculty expressed strong dissatisfaction with the current lack of co-ordination between the two programs.

1. Community Support

UCE and the employment community recognize the importance of transition programming for people with disabilities. Such a program provides a variety of opportunities both for these individuals to interact with potential employers, and also for the wider community to become more aware of people with disabilities. Students and employers share the concept that TIE is "an excellent opportunity to develop general employment skills" and to provide a bridge into further training and education. Furthermore, the work experience "allows students to make informed choices about what they would like to do - not just - with their lives."

2. Faculty

It is evident that the TIE faculty members, individually, are perceived as creative, caring, and respectful of their students. Students seemed generally to like their teachers, and to feel that learning experiences were pleasant.

3. Students

The program serves a student population which is remarkable for its openness to learn and its general acceptance of a diversity of abilities and learning styles. The Review Committee was impressed by the students' responsiveness and willingness to accommodate such a range of differences as articulated and demonstrated during interviews and focus groups.

STRENGTHS OF THE TrEE PROGRAM

The Review Committee has identified the following strengths in the Transition to Education or Employment Program:

1. Community Support

UCC and the employment community recognize the importance of transition programming for people with disabilities. Such a program provides a variety of opportunities both for these individuals to interact with potential employers, and also for the wider community to become more aware of people with disabilities.

Students and employers share the perception that TrEE is "an excellent opportunity to develop general employment skills," and to provide a bridge into further training and education. Furthermore, the work experience "allows students to make informed choices about what they would like to do – or not do – with their lives."

2. Faculty

It is evident that the TrEE faculty members, individually, are perceived as positive, caring, and respectful of their students. Students seemed genuinely to like their teachers, and to feel their learning experiences were pleasant.

3. Students

The program serves a student population which is remarkable for its eagerness to learn and its generous acceptance of a diversity of abilities and learning styles. The Review Committee was impressed by the students' perceptiveness and willingness to accommodate such a range of differences, as articulated and demonstrated during interviews and focus groups.

AREAS OF THE TrEE PROGRAM WHICH CAN BE IMPROVED **(WITH RECOMMENDATIONS)**

The Review Committee identified the following aspects of the TrEE program as being in need of improvement. **Recommendations are prioritized.**

1. PROGRAM MANDATE

The Review Committee believes that **the single greatest challenge the TrEE program faces is re-defining itself.** The prevalent perception is that the program changes year-to-year, depending on the characteristics of the students attending. While many (both within and outside of UCC) speak favourably of the program, none seems able to describe its goals and objectives, nor identify its target population.

The history of the program reveals that it was developed in an extremely brief time, responding to an opportunity for new program initiatives but pressured by a tight timeline. Faculty members were hired two weeks before the start of the program; there was no time for curriculum development of even the most basic nature, nor for consultation with other institutions; and no program advisory committee was formed to provide the guidance that, retrospectively, would seem to have been necessary. For its first year (1994-95), the program operated by permission of the Vice-President, Instruction and Student Services; not until April 1995 were a program rationale and course outlines submitted to the Educational Planning and Program Review Committee. The support at departmental and divisional levels that an emergent program might have normally expected was diminished because of extensive divisional and institutional reorganization in 1996 and 1997. TrEE faculty speak of feeling "catapulted" into their positions, and of the first years as seeming "haphazard." Certainly such a genesis may well account for the current sense of ambiguity. Yet, five years have passed, and solid program reconstruction and development would seem reasonable expectations.

It is the very strong view of this committee that until the program is directed by a strong and clearly discernible mandate, it cannot improve significantly. To assist in determining the program's mandate, goals, objectives, the Review Committee urges:

- (a) that the Program Faculty, in consultation with the Program Advisory Committee, articulate a definitive TrEE Program mandate;**

ACTION: Program Faculty; Program Advisory Committee

- (b) that the Dean, Student Development, clarify with the Program Advisory Committee its mandate and functions.**

ACTION: Dean, Student Development

Such a committee might share some membership with other related programs, but should be distinct in its membership, and very clear about the program it serves. The membership should be committed to providing support, vigilance, and feedback, as well as to acting as a sounding

board and strengthening links with the community, employers, and professional networks. As identity and visibility are essential to the continued well-being of the program, one of the first acts of the TrEE Program Advisory Committee might be to review this report and get the word out to prospective students, employers, counsellors, and professional networks about the changes taking place.

2. PROGRAM GOALS

While the program brochure claims that the TrEE program focuses on "practical knowledge about future employment opportunities" leading to the abilities to "make an appropriate career decision," and to "display good work habits," the program seems to have drifted from this focus to include a high degree of academic study, and other more general activities such as sports and cooking. Granted, these may be worthwhile activities to engage in, but given the overwhelming need for employment readiness, these are, in the view of this Committee, misplaced in such a program. The Review Committee recommends:

- (a) that the program should re-focus, to a stronger degree, upon the goals of student adjustment to independence and setting of realistic career expectations.**

ACTION: Chair, College Access; Program Faculty

Opportunities for literacy and for academic study abound in the high schools and in other college programs, not to mention those in the private sector. Receiving faculty and employers were clear that academics were "not what we need to see" from students leaving this program. While students may well expect education to be synonymous with academic work, the Committee feels that the TrEE instructors should demonstrate otherwise. The Review Committee recommends:

- (b) that academic studies in the program be re-cast in an applied context to respond to the newly articulated goals.**

ACTION: Chair, College Access; Program Faculty

Another repeated theme throughout the review process was the duplication or significant overlap of the TrEE curriculum with that of public secondary schools, private sector agencies, and other college programs. Student comments such as "we did it prior to being here, in high school" and "we did it before, so we all knew what to expect already," in reference to the job-shadowing and study habits segments, suggest that a systematic culling of the curriculum is required to eliminate components that have been covered elsewhere. Therefore, the Review Committee recommends:

- (c) that, as part of the work of redefining and focusing the TrEE program, careful attention be paid to differentiating its curriculum from what is taught in high school, in private agency programs, and in the Vocational Skills Training program at UCC.**

ACTION: Chair, College Access; Program Faculty

Several times, the Committee heard the program activities explained as "social stuff and life skills." Employers complained that students expect to have fun in their job placements, one

even commenting that the student placed with him seemed "extremely happy" when no work was found for that student. Certainly, and especially in a full-time program, enjoying one's time in the classroom is important and desirable; yet linking enjoyable activities to learning outcomes and reinforcing realistic employment expectations would seem to be preferable functions of the program. The Review Committee accordingly recommends:

- (d) that the social components of the course, those seen to be "fun" and relaxing, be refocused to address the newly articulated goal of career exploration.**

ACTION: Chair, College Access; Program Faculty

3. CURRICULUM

Because the course objectives for the program are too vague, they provide little guidance to the instructors as to curricular activities. The instructors, in fact, admit to following course objectives "only loosely," and in scrutinizing the lesson plans, the Committee was challenged to see the connection between the classroom activities and the course objectives. The Committee's assessment is that course outlines need to be re-written in line with the reconstructed program goals, and that learning objectives need to be driven down to a much more specific level than at present. Classroom and field activities need thereafter to be recalibrated to the new learning objectives. The Review Committee recommends:

- (a) that the learning objectives of the program be re-developed in line with the goals outlined above, and be much more detailed than at present;**

ACTION: Program Faculty

- (b) that classroom activities and materials be derived from the learning objectives, and be clearly relevant to the purpose of ensuring a smooth transition to employment or to further education; and**

ACTION: Program Faculty

- (c) that the Dean, Student Development, take whatever steps are necessary to accomplish the tasks identified in Recommendations 3(a) and 3(b).**

ACTION: Dean, Student Development

Workplace components of the course were greatly valued by nearly all students surveyed. According to the employers and the faculty, however, this component of the program would be greatly enhanced -- and also more effectively managed -- by curtailing the job shadowing component, by lengthening the duration of work placements, and by exploring other models of work exposure. The Review Committee endorses the recommendation that:

- (d) the work exposure components be extended to a minimum of three weeks each, and that the program faculty explore alternative models of work exposure.**

ACTION: Program Faculty

Employers stressed the need, from their perspective, for on-site job coaching, and for increased instructional supervision and support during work placements. Therefore, the Committee strongly recommends:

- (e) **that in the interest of maintaining co-operative ties with employers, both TrEE faculty members provide on-site coaching during the work placements.**

ACTION: Program Faculty

Two employers interviewed were clear that they were volunteer organizations, and, while they welcome work placement students, they **do not hire**. Undoubtedly there is value in such experiences, evident by the fact that some students did continue to volunteer in those places; however, the Committee feels it is critical that students understand the lack of employment potential in such organizations. A related concern, and the more serious problem from the Committee's viewpoint, was work placement at senior and day-care centres, where employment requires higher credentials than most TrEE students might realistically attain. The Review Committee recommends:

- (f) **that the employment placements be reviewed for their future employment potential for TrEE graduates, and that students exiting the program have a clear and realistic sense of the potential range and limitations of their employability.**

ACTION: Program Faculty

The Review Committee also noted that the TrEE program has in some respects devolved into a two-track program, in which the classroom component and the field component do not complement each other. It recommends:

- (g) **that, in response to the newly articulated program goals and course objectives, the faculty re-integrate the classroom and field segments of the program so that they better complement each other.**

ACTION: Program Faculty

4. ADMISSIONS: STANDARDS AND PROCESS

The goal diffusion addressed in Section 2 has spawned other problems. Because there is no identified target client population beyond the general category of "the mentally challenged", the program has become the repository of students with a wide spectrum of capabilities and behaviours. TrEE faculty voiced the frustration they have faced in trying to accommodate the program's heterogeneous clientele, while "difficult peers" were a repeated concern of students. One parent admitted, outright, that his son (a former student), should not have been in the program due to the limiting nature of his disability. While attempting to respond to all the needs of all disabled individuals may seem, at first consideration, a noble ambition, delivering "a little of everything" to all and sundry can hardly result in a strong, effective pre-employment program.

Therefore, the Review Committee recommends that once the program goals and objectives have been redefined:

- (a) the TrEE Faculty develop a clear, unambiguous set of admission criteria and an interview process which will result in a more homogeneous group of students; these must be objective, consistent, quantifiable, and justifiable; consultation with faculty in similar programs at other institutions in the province will provide the faculty with some guidance in this task;

ACTION: Program Faculty; Chair, College Access;
Dean, Student Development

- (b) that an accompanying recruitment strategy (how, when and where to advertise, which agencies to contact) be devised in consultation with the Program Advisory Committee [see Recommendation 1(a)] and with the UCC Transition Planner;

ACTION: Program Faculty; Program Advisory
Committee; UCC Transition Planner

- (c) that a comprehensive application package be developed in consultation with faculty in similar programs at other institutions and with the UCC Transition Planner, and be distributed to program applicants so that they are informed of the expectations and objectives of the program and what paperwork they must submit to complete their applications; and

ACTION: Program Faculty; UCC Transition Planner

- (d) that the task of sorting applications before forwarding them to TrEE Faculty for scrutiny and action be transferred to Admissions staff in the Registrar's Office, where it is customarily done.

ACTION: Program Faculty; Chair, College Access

5. PROFESSIONALISM

It was evident to the Review Committee that a disparity in roles and responsibilities has resulted in tension and poor communication between the two faculty members in the program. While there has been some effort to mend the breach, the Review Committee interviews revealed evidence of failed communication between the instructor and the instructional assistant and of a relationship fraught with tension. The Review Committee feels it is imperative that the instructional team demonstrate healthy communication and cooperation in their professional relationships, and recommends:

- (a) that both TrEE Faculty commit to resolve the conflict between them, and enlist the assistance of their Chair, Dean or an external facilitator to assist them.

ACTION: Program Faculty; Chair, College Access;
Dean, Student Development

Until such a time as the working relationship of the instructional team has improved substantially, the Review Committee recommends:

- (b) that program meetings be scheduled, and presided over, by the Department Chair every two weeks; should the working climate improve as a result of conflict resolution, program meetings might be reduced to monthly, or be subsumed by regular department meetings.**

ACTION: Chair, College Access

Such meetings would focus on students' progress and problems, on issues such as extending the work placements, on interview sessions and student orientation, and on reviewing curriculum and coordinating activities. They would also provide opportunities for the Chair (or Dean) to share information about budgetary matters, departmental initiatives, or divisional governance. It was quite clear from the interviews that the program faculty would gain from such a two-way information flow.

A major source of frustration and tension between the two faculty has been the lack of formal job descriptions. While the instructor can find some guidance on her duties by consulting the Collective Agreement, Sections 9.4 and 9.5, the document is less helpful on the duties of instructional assistants. As a result, the instructional assistant's workload in the early years of the program was ill-defined. The fact that she instructed three days a week on top of her field placement duties made for a very long 35-hour week in comparison to the 20 hours taught by the instructor, and this apparent inequity may have generated a sense of injustice. The Review Committee was apprised of the progress made since 1997 by the Chair, College Access, and the Divisional Roles and Responsibilities Committee in adjusting the instructional assistant's workload, but she is still without a formal job description. The Review Committee recommends:

- (c) that the Student Development Division's Roles and Responsibilities Committee finalize the job descriptions and delineation of tasks to be performed by the TrEE instructor and the instructional assistant, distribute them, and review them within a year.**

ACTION: Dean, Student Development; Chair, Roles and Responsibilities Committee

While there is ample evidence of the TrEE faculty's pursuit of professional development opportunities over the past five years (both have completed the Instructional Skills Workshops and BC Instructor's Diplomas; the instructor has been awarded an M.A. in Leadership and Training from Royal Roads, and the instructional assistant has completed a Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education through the University of Victoria), the Committee felt that more emphasis might be laid on networking at the provincial and local levels to draw upon the support systems available in the special education field. The Committee recommends:

- (d) that the Dean, Student Development, and the Chair, College Access, encourage the TrEE Faculty to engage in activities beyond relevant professional development, such as attending provincial articulation meetings, and networking with local professionals**

and organizations so that faculty members improve program visibility, as well as their own grounding and contacts in the field.

ACTION: Dean, Student Development; Chair, College Access; Program Faculty

6. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

While the 1997 Student Development divisional reorganization seems to be working well in most respects, the separation of the TrEE and Vocational Skills Training Programs into two departments may have put some strain on communications between them. The two programs do not seem to "talk to each other" regularly and exchange the kinds of information that affect their students, curriculum and work-site networks. As both programs are doing the same kind of work, it seems advantageous to develop a shared culture of communication and information exchange. The Review Committee accordingly recommends:

- (a) that the program faculty re-establish and re-inforce the lines of communication between the TrEE and the VST programs with a view to improved information exchange.**

ACTION: Program Faculty

The Committee heard employers admit that they were "not sure which program" various work placement students were from. They do not distinguish between the Transition to Education and Employment Program and the Vocational Skills Training Program, nor do they have time to read the information given to them. The Review Committee concludes that since there is no "brand distinction", and much competition between the two programs for work placements:

- (b) the TrEE and Vocational Skills Training Programs should establish a co-ordinated approach for managing work placements and communicating program information with employers.**

ACTION: Dean, Student Development; Divisional Management Group, Student Development

More information, more accurately and professionally presented, would better serve the interests of the program, and certainly be more valuable to its students. Information needs to flow in a consistent and organized fashion from the referring agencies to the program faculty; from the faculty to the employers; from the employers back to the program; and from the program to receiving programs such as Vocational Skills Training and ABE Fundamentals. For this to occur, TrEE faculty must first identify the kinds of information needed; then templates have to be set up at each "gate" to capture and record the information required at that stage, and protocols established to ensure that that information is forwarded to other stakeholders. This has not been the case; for example, there is currently no requirement that program applicants submit assessments from other agencies they may have been with, and while the

instructional assistant forwards assessments of students moving from TrEE to Vocational Skills Training, these are not reaching the VST instructional assistants. Accordingly, the Review Committee recommends that:

- (c) the TrEE faculty schematize the program's information flow patterns, identify the data required at each "gate" or node, create forms and instruments for capturing these data, and ensure that formal protocols are established for transmission of data to other departments, programs, employers and agencies that might benefit from them.**

ACTION: Program Faculty

Finally, the Review Committee feels that efficiencies could be realized in the use of the instructional assistant's time were she to have access to an automobile for her field work. Currently, she uses public bus transport to visit the program's field sites, but in some instances, where these are located on the North Shore or the Indian Reserve, a round trip may entail as much as two hours—time lost to instructional activities. In addition, as a result of the provisions recommended for on-site coaching [see Recommendation 3(e)], the instructional assistant will require greater mobility than previously. The Committee recommends:

- (d) that the instructional assistant secure access to an automobile for the purpose of field visitation, and that she be reimbursed at the going UCC rate for mileage incurred in the course of her duties.**

ACTION: TrEE Instructional Assistant

APPENDIX A METHODOLOGY

The data were collected in the following ways:

- 1) To initiate and organize this research, two meetings were held with the TrEE faculty members and their Chairperson to determine areas to be addressed in the research, to finalize the research tools, and to arrange focus group meetings. Consultation on the design of the surveys, focus group questions and interview questions took place with the following:

Susie Safford, Dean, Student Development;
Iris Rich-McQuay, Chair, College Access;
Christina Cederlof, Instructor, TrEE program; and
Meghan Earley, Instructional Assistant, TrEE program.

- 2) Surveys were administered to TrEE program faculty, employers, and Disability Resources Advisory Committee members.
- 3) A focus group with four of the seven current students was conducted by the two research analysts from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, one as moderator and the other as recorder of the data. The instructor remained present during the process of obtaining consent from the students only, to ensure that the elements of the agreement to participate in the research were conveyed to, and understood by, the students. Immediately following the focus group, the researchers reviewed the events of the group and recorded fuller notes on the data. The same process was used to conduct the focus group with eight of the nine students in the Vocational Skills Training program who were formerly in the TrEE program.
- 4) A list of former students generated from Colleague (UCC's student record system) was reviewed and edited by one of the faculty members for accuracy. Of the fifty-four former students, nine were current students in the VST program and, as such, already part of a focus group. As a result, there were forty-five former students who could potentially be contacted. The same research tool used in the focus groups was used for the in-depth phone interviews, with a few modifications. Questions addressing their activities since being in the program were added and the order of the questions was adjusted to allow for better flow of the interviews. Phone interviews were conducted over a period of five days, at various times of the day, depending on when individuals could be reached. Those who could not be reached during the day were contacted in the evening or on the weekend.
- 5) "Descriptive Data" on the TrEE program's objectives, course outlines, etc., were solicited from the TrEE program faculty. Data on annual graduation rates and gender ratios were provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.
- 6) The following people associated with the program participated in the review process or were interviewed:

Community Employers
Current and Former Students
VST Program Faculty
Current and Former UCC Transition Planners

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