

ISSUES OF CONCERN REGARDING WOMEN'S ACCESS FUNDING, 1981
WOMEN'S ACCESS ASSOCIATION

1. Provincial Review Committee on Women's Access Programmes

We see an urgent need for a central person or group to monitor the status and progress of Women's Access Programmes, once renewed funding is allocated. The functions would include:

- assisting colleges and institutes to **set up** effective projects
- organizing **specialized training** for coordinators and Advisory Board members
- providing information, advice and resources to assist new and ongoing coordinators**
- to **evaluate yearly** the status and progress of all Women's Access Programmes, and to **advise the Ministry** of issues needing official attention.

A full proposal outlining the duties and makeup of this Committee is being developed by Marsha Trew, and will be forwarded to the Ministry as soon as possible.

2. Training

Women's Access is a new specialty within the Adult Education field--no one has a degree or graduate training in it, and few are experienced in working with women in an educational setting. It follows therefore that, while the coordinators will be the best possible qualified candidates, they will have to learn many things on the job and through professional development activities. College colleagues and available PD in Adult Education, Counselling, etc. can provide limited assistance. We urge that the **Provincial Women's Access coordinators be encouraged and funded to develop their own professional development activities**, to share accumulated expertise with each other, and to **maintain a strong provincial network** of specialists, much like the College Articulation Committees. A proposal for such a project was sent to the Ministry of Education (Dr. Fisher, Assistant Deputy Minister) in May; so that the new coordinators might meet in the fall of 1981.

--we suggest that, as Women's Access Funds were not allocated at the beginning of the budget year 1981-82, a percentage of the April to July allotment to Colleges be set aside to pay for training.

3. Funding

We urge that both grant and matched funds be directly applied to initiate or extend Women's Access activities in the colleges and institutes, and that the position created shall be **wholly concerned with Women's Access**. We would like to see the colleges commit themselves to this project on an ongoing basis before accepting any funds from the Ministry, so that the original intent of the Policy will be followed. We suggest that the Provincial Review Committee establish criteria for continuation of funding, eg:

- that funds are applied to **initiate or extend WAR**
- that an **Advisory Board is functioning**
- that evidence of college commitment is **maintained**.

4. Funding Delay

We suggest that, as Women's Access Funding was not made available at the beginning of the fiscal year and therefore will not be fully used by salary costs, the unspent funds (approx \$5000 --

grant funds, and \$2500 of matched funds) be set aside for training of the coordinator in specialty skills and for startup costs of the new programme, such as books, journals, promotion, research outreach. If the Provincial Review Committee is established, it would use these funds to organize and run its professional development activities this fiscal year.

5. Personnel

We suggest a broadening of the terminology used in the last Policy papers, so that Colleges can develop the most appropriate model of Access activities. The present designation of "Women's Access Counsellor" restricts the models available, and may cause confusion with regular counsellor positions which include a certain amount of "access activities" as a matter of course. The term "Coordinator" allows for a broader application, and may include counselling, programming, instructing and other functions appropriate to the institution's needs. In addition, the term "Coordinator" acknowledges the need for certain organizational commitment to a wide range of goals, responsibilities, and an extensive time period for implementation.

We bring forward these issues for your consideration, in the hope that certain foreseeable problems will be avoided, and that the Women's Access Programmes will be provided with as much support and assistance as possible.

Women's Access Association
June, 1981.