

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES
President's Board Room
January 27, 1992

PRESENT: Dr. E.F. Carlisle, Chair; Deans J. Buffer, G. Clough, D. Egger, J. Marchman, R. Purdy, S. Ritchey, N. Spencer, R. Sorensen, C. Steger, L. Swiger, J. White, M. Ogliaruso; Drs. R. Daniel, J. Hoerner for K. Eschenmann, L. Geyer, D. Morris, M. Murray, B. Reed, C. Shoulders P. Sorrentino for N. Simmons, J. Taper; B. Sgro, Dean of Students, D. Bousquet, Admissions, W. Dean, University Registrar; C. Burch-Brown; B. Haddican, M. McGuire, M. Stegura, SGA.

ABSENT: Drs. H. Doswald, P. Feret, M. Lewis; E. Fox, SGA.

VISITORS: E. Guertin, J. Williams-Green, J. Shepherd, P. Knox, S. Brooker-Gross, J. Craig, R. Jones, G. Haugh, G. Hammond, J. Dudley.

1. Call to Order and Announcements:

Dr. Carlisle called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. The Agenda was approved as distributed.

3. The Minutes of the December 9, 1991 meeting were approved as distributed.

4. Course Criteria Committee Report - J. White

Dr. White offered for first reading the January 27, 1992 report.

A motion was made and seconded to approve for second reading the December 9, 1991 report. The motion **carried**.

Courses approved effective Spring 1993:

- ESM 1054 Introduction to NDE Engineering

Action on Curriculum Checklists:

- Biochemistry (Agriculture and Arts & Sciences) Class of 1993
- Forestry and Wildlife, Class of 1993, all options

5. Report of the University Forum on Liberal Education - Members, University Forum on Liberal Education

A motion was made and seconded to receive the report of the University Forum on Liberal Education (UFLLE). During open discussion, Carol Burch-Brown, chair, briefly described to the Commission the process through which UFLLE solicited feedback about the initial draft of the report during Fall 1991. Numerous meetings were held with faculty, colleges, department heads, college curriculum committees, and other groups to discuss the recommendations. The Forum also received considerable written response. All suggested changes were considered by the Forum. After carefully reviewing the feedback received through this process, the Forum outlined possible revisions which were presented for response to the colleges. The final report and recommendations, Burch-Brown stated, thus draw together input from across the university to create a more responsive and truly university-wide program of liberal education. The Forum attempted through its recommendations to "set in motion an approach to the liberal education program which would assure its vitality" and provide the core curriculum with a workable place in the governance system, through which positive change could occur. She concluded by noting that the report was intended to be a "living document," subject to continued improvement as it is used. With no further discussion, the motion **carried**.

Dr. Carlisle thanked UFLE for its extraordinary commitment to preparing this report. He added that this is the kind of faculty involvement that provides the necessary intellectual leadership to enable the university in the formation of a liberal education program.

6. Resolution 91-92.A, Revised University Core Curriculum, First Reading - Members, University Forum on Liberal Education

A motion was made and seconded to offer for first reading Resolution 91-92.A, Revised University Core Curriculum. Dr. Carlisle detailed the procedures to be followed for discussion and subsequent voting on the resolution.

- Each of the ten points of the resolution will be discussed separately during first reading.
- Each of the ten points of the resolution will be offered for vote via separate motions, with any accompanying amendments.
- A final vote will take place on the entire resolution.
- Amendments to the parts of the resolution must be offered by a member of CUS and provided in writing prior to the meeting at which the amendment is offered. (Refer to page one of the UFLE report) Deadline for submission of amendments is Tuesday, February 4, 1992, 5:00 p.m. All amendments should be directed to Wanda Dean for distribution to the commission.

Dr. Carlisle opened the floor for general discussion, inviting visitors as well as members to participate. Dean Sorensen commended the Forum for the depth of its discussion with the colleges, noting particularly its thoughtfulness in answering inquiries from the College of Business. Dr. Carlisle then led the commission through a discussion of the resolution, providing opportunity for discussion or comment concerning each point. Margaret Murray referred to questions that had been raised by members of Faculty Senate about the feasibility and meaningfulness of a one hour requirement in the arts. Burch-Brown responded that the Forum had taken seriously these concerns and had revised the recommendation in several ways. The proposed area would include three hour as well as one hour courses, thereby incorporating the existing Arts and Sciences requirement in the Arts. She pointed out that colleges can increase the minimum requirement if they choose. Further revisions were made to allow for a broader range of course options, including the incorporation of arts-oriented segments in other courses. She added that the Forum hopes that the flexible structure will provide a framework for Colleges to collaborate on creating appropriate courses for this area. She pointed out that these might not be only in the traditional "high art" mediums but might include applied areas as well. Burch-Brown also noted that the Collins Report had identified the omission of a requirement in the arts as a serious flaw in their proposal for a core curriculum, recommending that this be addressed at a later point. Now, ten years after that initial recommendation, the university is in a position to respond. Dr. Marchman added that members of the College of Engineering had expressed a number of objections to the initial draft of the proposed area, but these concerns seem to have been satisfactorily addressed in the later revision, particularly with the inclusion of the experiential and performing dimensions of the arts.

Dr. Shoulders shared the concerns of some of his colleagues with respect to the addition of the Writing-Intensive course requirement. Specifically, he noted that the reward system of the university does not presently recognize the additional duties that may be involved with offering these courses. Paul Sorrentino responded that there are a number of effective ways to integrate writing without creating an undue burden for faculty members and that it is important to provide appropriate educational opportunities for faculty in this area. He mentioned a successful and relevant initiative in faculty development at Virginia Tech from several years ago, which was sponsored by the State Council on Higher Education. Burch-Brown agreed that extensive faculty development will be needed to assist faculty in incorporating student writing in non-traditional ways. The Forum has therefore recommended a long implementation period of eight years to assure a firm base for faculty and departments. Dean Sorensen commented that the College of Business recently held a successful workshop on writing for its faculty and considers writing to be an important area of the curriculum.

Dr. Spencer observed that increasing the amount of writing is perceived by some faculty to have a negative effect on course evaluations, which may undermine faculty participation. Burch-Brown observed that we must influence the institutional culture as a whole with respect to writing. For example, as writing is integrated more fully across the university and is emphasized in our university publications on undergraduate education, students will come to see it as more integral part of their education. Dr. Geyer suggested that concerns about the faculty reward system should be routed to the Commission on Faculty Affairs, where discussions of

this topic are taking place -- rather than allowing it to be the basis for a decision against establishing a university writing program.

Dr. Marchman and Dean Ritchey voiced concern over ambiguities in the wording of the sixth point of the resolution, which addresses "depth study" in the core curriculum. Various suggestions were made to clarify the wording. Burch-Brown referred to page twenty-three of the report as describing the intent of the Forum. These guidelines describe the circumstances and conditions in which the designation or restriction of core course options by colleges and departments will be considered appropriate under the new plan. Elizabeth Guertin asked whether colleges could specify certain core courses as required on their own or if these designations are to be forwarded to the university core committee. Burch-Brown responded that the requests are to be forwarded to the university committee. Dr. Carlisle noted that until an amendment of the point is offered to clarify the language, members will not be able to determine if their questions are answered. Professor Burch-Brown and Dr. Marchman agreed to meet to revise this part of the resolution.

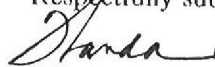
Dr. Shoulders asked whether the guidelines for implementation which are included in the report are an implied part of the resolution. Dr. Carlisle responded that the specifics of implementation can be handled in several ways. They can be brought for a vote or members of CUS can work with the core committee to develop a detailed plan. Various matters pertaining to implementation were referred to, including the need for staged integration of new requirements. Burch-Brown pointed out that the Forum has amassed a great deal of information about the core curriculum -- in more detail than what appears in the report -- which can be conveyed to the new committee as it develops a detailed program of implementation.

Dr. Ogliaruso asked if existing core courses would be re-evaluated to justify inclusion in the new core before the transition begins in Fall 1992. Burch-Brown responded that the guidelines developed by the Forum (p.22) call for these courses to be integrated initially. Departments will thus have the opportunity to work as needed with the courses in the new framework of goals and criteria during the first phase of the plan. However, all core courses will be evaluated for continued retention in the core on a periodic basis. Burch-Brown pointed out that waiting to evaluate all existing courses by the new criteria before making the transition would delay the process very significantly.

Dean Clough asked for further explanation of the recommendation regarding an on-going program of faculty development related to the core curriculum. Burch-Brown responded that faculty development is an essential part of maintaining a good program of liberal education. She said that the new Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching will be an important resource for faculty development projects related to the core curriculum.

7. Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Wanda Hankins Dean
University Registrar