FINAL REPORT

OF THE

TASK FORCE ON
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

The University of West Florida

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PREFACE TO THE FINAL REPORT

The Task Force on Undergraduate Education published its Preliminary Report in January 1991, distributing copies to all faculty and to appropriate administrators. Each individual faculty member was invited to one of six public hearings in order to respond and to offer suggestions for improvement. Twenty-five percent of the faculty attended one or more of these hearings. In addition, the Task Force received position papers from nearly forty faculty members. Videotapes of each of the public hearings can be reviewed at the Instructional Media Center, and a collection of all written materials is available at the Reserve Desk in the Library.

This Final Report of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education incorporates many changes in response to the observations and suggestions offered. We on the TFUE believe that the proposal is considerably stronger as a result of the hearing process. Among the changes included in this report are the following:

SPECIFIC COURSE REVISIONS

1. "Western Civilization"

   The Western Civilization sequence has been renamed "Western Perspectives" I and II, and the course descriptions have been broadened to underscore the interaction with non-Western traditions. The Western vantage point of these courses should not be considered apart from the General Education requirement of a "Perspectives on Social and Political Behavior" course rooted in non-Western experience and the Baccalaureate requirement of a course focusing on some aspect of a non-Western culture or cultures.

2. Science—General Requirements and Accommodation to Technical Fields

   a. The Science Block

      (1.) "History of Science" has been replaced by a new course entitled "Paradigms of Science," which is less historical in emphasis and more concerned with current scientific paradigms and models.

      (2.) The requirement of Contemporary Biology has been relaxed in favor of a generic requirement of a course in a contemporary modern science, with associated laboratory. The several science departments of the university would be invited to propose courses—which certainly might include Contemporary Biology, augmented with a lab.

      (3.) The separate laboratory course, Scientific Inquiry, has been withdrawn, since the Contemporary Science courses would have their own laboratories.

   b. Accommodation to Technical Fields

      A department may prescribe for its majors any two-semester sequence of a science with laboratory as an alternative to the Contemporary Science/Paradigms of Science pair.

3. Mathematics—General Requirements and Accommodation to Technical Fields

   The core mathematics requirement continues to be

   a. One course satisfying the Gordon Rule, such as College Algebra or Calculus I, plus

   b. Concepts in Mathematics (which will have College Algebra as a prerequisite).
A department, however, may prescribe for its majors any two additional mathematics courses beyond College Algebra in place of the single course Concepts in Mathematics.

4. Economics--Accommodation to Technical Fields

A department may prescribe for its majors the two-course sequence ECO 2013-23, Macro and Micro Economics, as an alternative to the single Economics and Society requirement.

5. Social Science or "Behavior" Pair

a. The names and descriptions of Perspectives on Individual Behavior and Perspectives on Social and Political Behavior have been altered to improve transferability.

b. The focus of the second course was broadened to include explicit coverage of political behavior in Western and non-Western cultures.

c. The second of the "behavior" courses (see below) has been declared a General Education and not a Baccalaureate requirement.

6. The Linked Humanities Requirement

In order to provide flexibility in the humanities block, a new category of "Human Values" courses has been defined. A student may substitute one from this list of courses for one of the four linked humanities courses. Departments would be invited to propose "values" courses (for example: Ethics) for approval by General Studies Colloquium.

PROGRAM REVISIONS--The General Education/Baccalaureate Mix

The upper-division Baccalaureate requirement has been reduced from four courses to three: Paradigms of Science, Economics and Society, and one Non-Western Perspectives course. The first two of these courses are candidates for departmental substitution as described above.

PROGRAM DELIVERY

1. The Faculty Group Responsible for Oversight

The Task Force has rethought its description of the group charged with offering and maintaining the Core Curriculum and designates the group to be the "General Studies Colloquium" rather than the "Core Faculty." We believe the revised name better reflects

a. The ongoing and quite informal dialogue that must be present among the faculty during the continuing design, implementation, and evaluation of the program;

b. The continuing need of all faculty to be productive professionals in the threefold requirements of teaching, scholarship and service; and

c. The temporary nature of all memberships in this group.

The TFUE reiterates the need for released time assignment as the means of making possible continuing productivity during this period of extraordinary responsibility.

2. Library Involvement in the Core

A library member has been added to the General Studies Colloquium. This member will assist in the design of all courses and provide advice about and encouragement toward incorporating the use throughout the Core of that most central of all resources on our campus—the library.