FINAL REPORT

OF THE

TASK FORCE ON
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

The University of West Florida

May 1991
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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 "History of Science" has been replaced by a new course entitled "Paradigms of Science," which is less historical in emphasis and more concerned with current scientific paradigms and models.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 The separate laboratory course, Scientific Inquiry, has been withdrawn, since the Contemporary Science courses would have their own laboratories.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.
FINAL REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE

I. INTRODUCTION: Philosophy and Goals

Convened in the Fall of 1989, the Task Force on Undergraduate Education was charged by President Marx and the Faculty Senate to conduct an intensive review of the current requirements of our undergraduate programs. The Task Force was formed in response to a widespread perception that our academic policies, particularly those concerned with hour requirements, were confused if not actually contradictory, that the enforcement of our general education requirements was problematic, and that in general the University had never made the transition to conceiving of itself as a four-year institution.

Our deliberations over the last twenty months have convinced us that the best response to these concerns is to develop a new, cohesive curriculum for the benefit of all students, native and transfer, who pursue Baccalaureate degrees at The University of West Florida. This is not, please note, to disparage individual courses that are part of the present core. To achieve our goals we simply found it necessary to rethink course relationships and course contents from a blank sheet of paper.

In search of a rational and coherent curriculum design, the Task Force discussed what constitutes a sound liberal education; struggled to attain a reasonable balance between general education, major requirements, and open electives; reviewed State and UWF policies defining the Baccalaureate; and explored potential changes to the general education curriculum by considering new concepts in content and in format. Since attempts to rethink undergraduate curricula are at present going on in many universities, we first explored the appropriate literature. (A partial list of sources and documents used by the Task Force is included as Appendix C.) Realizing that a task of this magnitude could not and should not be produced in isolation, the Task Force then sought input and advice from a large number of sources across campus, discussed memoranda and position papers sent to us, and issued periodic reports to keep the University community informed of the direction and scope of its work.

The design of the curriculum itself occupied the great majority of the time of the Task Force during the last two years. Our intention has been not just to create a selection of courses lifted from various traditional categories ("one from Group A, two from Group B . . .") but to create a whole—a set of courses which reinforce, complement, and cross-reference one another so that graduates from The University of West Florida can attain

A. Specialized education in their fields;
B. An understanding of the fundamental concepts behind and the historical development of various branches of learning;
C. An appreciation for their own heritage and the heritage of other cultures;
D. Skill in using the tools essential to their livelihood, no matter how their fields evolve or what occupations they may in the end pursue; and
E. An ability to look upon their own field of specialization, the daily newspaper, and the details of their lives in a broader conceptual, cultural, and historical context.

Such goals few will dispute in the abstract. Differences, however, emerge and hard choices begin once one starts to consider course designs, requirements, and methods of delivery diverging from those to which we have become accustomed. We on the Task Force have had our share of differences and have debated a myriad of hard choices. Yet we have been able to disagree productively about what economists would call the trade-offs because the members are united in five basic conclusions which arose both from our study of the current literature and from our analysis of our own experiences at UWP:

1
A. That general education is the primary, not the secondary, task of a university;

B. That all students, whatever their fields of interest of the moment, should undergo a common experience in courses which lay a foundation for further study in the sciences, social sciences, business, education, and the humanities;

C. That the only way to adapt students to the uncertainties of change is to provide them with the tools of thought, with the ability to synthesize, and with a habit of contemplating the fundamental methods and history of various branches of learning;

D. That the key to making general education work lies in the creation of a tight core of courses that build upon one another because they are conceived not so much as "departmental" as "university" offerings; and

E. That the tools of thought must never be seen as the sole responsibility of specialized faculty (writing of English, math of Mathematics, computers of Computer Science) but as the responsibility of all.

Behind these unifying conclusions lies our definition of the educated person--another abstraction, perhaps, but a concept that took several weeks for us to formulate. We believed then, and continue to believe, that without a clear vision of what an educated person is, a university will all too easily succumb to the temptations to revert to business-as-usual rather than to accept the need for change. Our formulation can be expressed this way:

We believe the educated person seeks connections. He or she understands that the present does not recover the past, but realizes that the here-and-now makes more sense if its roots are known. The educated person is less likely to be overwhelmed by the abundance of information and technology available. Making connections between facts and concepts enables the educated person to adapt in a constantly changing environment. In this regard, David Broder (1989) noted "... increasingly employers realize that the skills developed by a liberal education, the higher order thinking that emphasizes critical reading, analysis, synthesis, communication and the ability and need to acquire new information, are the skills needed in today's fast-changing and interrelated economy." Furthermore, the educated individual preserves a sense of wonder about the world: learning possibilities have no end, and personal discovery of new connections inspires awe and humility.

The Task Force is convinced that a university education can best contribute to the development of educated persons by providing experiences that enable students to develop a sense of connectedness. Neither the chance selection of courses from broad academic categories nor even a narrowly focused curriculum which does not have connectedness built into the syllabuses will suffice. Students must be exposed to a coherent array of humankind's present and past achievements. Courses must be designed to come in a significant order, and the courses must build upon, reinforce, and cross-reference one another. While students are being exposed to these connections, they must also make use of the fundamental tools of language and mathematics and computing to analyze and then synthesize facts, concepts, methods, and beliefs. It is in the context of a personal synthesis of past and present, of great thoughts and the tools for thinking, that a student's specialized training should take place.

Finally, crucial courses must be taught in a way that promotes the development of an educated person. The best designed catalogue descriptions will not suffice; achieving the goals outlined above depends upon whether or not the offerings are taught in a manner that requires each student to apply analysis and synthesis as well as appropriate symbolic skills. During deliberations the Task Force became persuaded that only a broad-based body of dedicated faculty, a group cutting across the traditional organizational patterns of the university, can by their oversight ensure that individual
courses are taught in ways that contribute to a genuine educational whole. We are therefore proposing the establishment of a General Studies Colloquium to oversee the design and delivery of the Core Curriculum.

In the report that follows, the Task Force

A. Offers a Core Curriculum characterized by connections between knowledge of different kinds and based upon a careful consideration of how such knowledge is attained;

B. Describes strategies to incorporate the use of essential learning skills across the entire curriculum; and

C. Proposes the creation of a General Studies Colloquium to promote connections between courses and to foster pedagogical techniques that encourage both analysis and synthesis.

We ask every member of the University to consider the proposal to follow as a whole, not just in terms of how it will immediately affect his or her discipline or college or favorite course, and not simply in terms of the complex redirection of resources that such proposal would entail, but primarily in terms of the effect upon the education of our students.

If as a result of this report the university community adopts part or all of this new curriculum, all of us at UWF will need to rethink our departmental curricula and the way in which we counsel students and teach our courses. An examination of the Task Force minutes will show that our group, to the point at times of bogging down, has anticipated many of the complications that would result in staffing, funding, scheduling, monitoring, and governing this new way of conceiving our curriculum. No doubt experience will uncover difficulties that we have not thought of, but the problems that occasioned the charge to the Task Force cannot be ignored, and if the goal—the genuine education of our students—is right, solutions can be found.

II. THE PROPOSED CORE

A. PROPOSED COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The Task Force proposes a 49-hour core to be taken over the entire four years of residency. This core is divided into a 40-hour GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>hrs</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composition I &amp; II</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Perspectives I &amp; II</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Linked Humanities Courses</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Rule Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts of Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Course in Contemporary Science with lab</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspectives on Individual Behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspectives on Social and Political Behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And a 9-hour BaccaLAUREATE REQUIREMENT—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>hrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics and Society</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradigms of Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Course with non-Western linkage</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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In addition, we recommend that one two-hour "Academic Learning Strategies" course be required of all students entering UWF with freshman status.
See II.C, below, for annotated course descriptions. We propose that the Baccalaureate block replace the twenty-four-hours-outside-the-major requirement and the six-hours-outside-the-field rule which are currently in effect for Baccalaureate students.

In the interest of flexibility and to accommodate the hourly requirements in technical fields, the TFUE proposes that the University allow substitutions in several areas:

1. **Humanities Requirement** (Student Option)

   A student may substitute one course from an approved list of "Human Values" courses for one of the four linked humanities courses. Departments will be invited to propose "values" courses (for example: Ethics) for approval by General Studies Colloquium.

2. **Mathematics Requirement** (Departmental Option)

   A department may prescribe for its majors any two additional math courses beyond College Algebra in place of the single course Concepts in Mathematics.

3. **Science Requirement** (Departmental Option)

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

4. **Economics Requirement** (Departmental Option)

   A department may prescribe for its majors the two-semester sequence ECO 201-23, Macro and Micro Economics, as an alternative to the single Economics and Society requirement.

For sequencing of these courses for four-year students and for adaptations for transfer students, see II.E, below.

**B. TYPES OF COURSES**

A glance at the lists above, with their obvious groupings into humanities and mathematics and social science and science requirements, will reveal that we have by no means abandoned conventional categories. Nonetheless, no less important to our thinking are two alternative ways of grouping the courses proposed.

1. "Heritage" and "Understandings" Courses

   The courses listed below fall naturally into two fundamental categories: "heritage" courses, whose primary focus falls upon historical process as the matrix within which ideas, beliefs, institutions, and expressions come into being; and "understandings" courses, whose primary focus falls upon the contemporary state of knowledge in diverse fields. These labels—with which we are not particularly happy—correspond, roughly, to C. P. Snow's famous Two Cultures: one with "the past in its bones," one with "the present in its bones." A third group, "skills" classes, do not constitute a parallel conceptual category but are a collection of courses designed to ensure that students acquire the necessary tools for living in the university and in our society.

   Naturally, any such classification is inexact. Indeed, the more inexact, the better: no informed course in scientific paradigms of the 1990s can avoid being taught from a strongly historical point of view, and no course in economics can contemplate modern theory without a careful glance at the historical roots of that theory. Although the listed junior- or
senior-level course involving non-Western cultures is labeled an "understandings" course, courses meeting this requirement could easily be historically based. One of the conclusions of this study is that traditional academic categories, reflected in traditional academic structures, are perhaps the single greatest impediment to a fresh rethinking of the general education requirements of students.

2. Writing- and Computing-Intensive Courses

As part of our special initiatives concerning writing and computing across the curriculum, we propose that the syllabuses for each of the classes marked with a "<W>" include a number of formal written papers which must be executed on a wordprocessor and which must involve working with special support personnel. So long as the Gordon Rule is in effect, these courses must also satisfy those volume requirements for "English" certification. Courses marked with a "<C>" will make use of other capacities of the modern personal computer. These might include spreadsheet modeling, creating and retrieving databases, working with hypertext, telecommunicating, designing graphics, and indeed whatever seems appropriate to the courses in question.

C. ANNOTATED LIST OF PROPOSED COURSES

In the list below, courses proposed as meeting the general education requirements for the University are marked with a "<GE>; those proposed as meeting the additional Baccalaureate requirements are marked <BAC>.

Heritage Courses

Western Perspectives I & II <W> <GE> (2 X 3 hrs. = 6 hrs.)

A two-course sequence which

a. Explores the distinctive traditions of the Western World (I from its beginnings to 1648; II from 1648 to the present day), and

b. Compares them with other cultural traditions.

Special attention will be given to geographical, cultural, political, and scientific environments, with an emphasis on how the development of the Western world is part of a larger process of historical development. Weekly writing assignments and major papers that help students understand historical problem solving will fulfill Gordon Rule requirements.

This pair represents the integrative core of the Core: the common experience of historical process enabling students to contemplate their own special place in time and culture, so that they can better adapt to a rapidly changing and increasingly multi-cultural future. We recommend that Western Perspectives I and II be taken in sequence immediately upon arrival at UWF, since these are pre- and co-requisites for other courses in the Core. In order to ensure an awareness of the connectedness between aspects of our heritage, the syllabuses will be specially designed to cross-reference with other "heritage" courses.

Four Humanities Courses <W> <GE> (4 X 3 hrs. = 12 hrs.)

A set of four courses, two of which are concerned with fields in humanities during the period of time covered by Western Perspectives I and two of which are concerned with the period covered by Western Perspectives II. Although the specific courses are not rigidly prescribed, the student must choose from a limited set of offerings which have been specially designed by interested departments to parallel and cross-reference with one or the other of the Perspectives classes (which will be, of course, co- or pre-requisites).
In order to ensure breadth of historical and disciplinary experience, the humanities are divided (somewhat arbitrarily) into two categories, those for which the major mode of expression is textual (examples include literature, philosophy, and religion) and those which are primarily non-textual or performative (art, music, theater, dance). Students would be required to take one course from category one and one course from category two linked to each of the two Western Perspectives courses, for a total of FOUR Humanities courses, thus:

EARLIER PERIOD
1 historically based course in literature, philosophy, or religion (Hum-A I)
1 historically based course in art, music, or theater (Hum-B I)

LATER PERIOD
1 historically based course in literature, philosophy, or religion (Hum-A II)
1 historically based course in art, music, or theater (Hum-B II)

Students would be free to mix or match in any way they please, taking (say) "Great Books I" and "Great Books II" for their category one experience, or perhaps taking "Western Philosophy I" and "Great Books II." For category two, they might take (for example) "Ancient Art" and "Western Music," or they might choose to take both halves of the art sequence. They must simply fill in all four slots in the 2X2 matrix.

Weekly coordination between the instructors of these classes and the Western Perspectives instructors will be essential in order to ensure constant, intense, and productive cross-referencing. This integrative linkage is all important and requires that the content of these courses be closely coordinated with the historical periods served by the two Perspectives courses. Specific humanities courses which meet the linkage requirements will be reviewed and designated as such by the General Studies Colloquium.

Within the humanities core, some students may wish to substitute for one of these linked humanities courses one course from a list of approved courses which focus upon questions of values. Some students may elect a course that offers opportunities to apply the tools of analysis to issues that carry grave moral consequences; others may wish to consider the origins and development of value systems. To support this option, departments are invited to propose new or existing courses for approval by the General Studies Colloquium for inclusion on this list.

Understandings Courses

Perspectives on Individual Behavior <C> <GE> (3 hrs.)

A survey of current theory which views human beings as products of the interaction between their own reasoning and language abilities, biological and genetic heritage, and environmental context. Emphasis will be placed on the interaction of these three components in producing unique individuals capable of complex thought and action.

Perspectives on Social and Political Behavior <C> <GE> (3 hrs.)

A survey of modern theory concerning the social and political systems created by human beings and the influence of those systems on human thought and action. This course will be taught by contrasting Western and selected non-Western cultures to help make explicit the extra-individual influences, social and political, that affect our behavior.
**Concepts of Mathematics < C> <GE> (3 hrs.)**

A course designed to provide an overview of the various facets and methods of mathematics, historical as well as contemporary. Great figures and great ideas will be emphasized; rote exercises will be downplayed. This course is intended to help students understand mathematics as a way of thinking, as an invention of humans in their attempts to model the world and to solve problems. The course will introduce a sufficient range of concepts from geometry, number theory, calculus, statistics, and so forth—along with their applications—to merit Gordon Rule "higher math" designation. Prerequisite: College Algebra.

*At departmental discretion, any two mathematics courses beyond College Algebra can substitute for this requirement.*

**A Course in Contemporary Science < C> <GE> (4 hrs.)**

One from a list of courses, with associated laboratories, approved by the General Studies Colloquium. These courses would be designed to introduce students not majoring in the field to the present-day conceptual, experimental, and social implications of the discipline. The Contemporary Biology course outlined in our preliminary report might well be a model for departments proposing courses for inclusion on the list.

*At departmental discretion, a two-course laboratory science sequence can substitute for this requirement and for the Paradigms of Science requirement.*

**Paradigms of Science < C> <BAC> (3 hrs.)**

A course which attempts to increase scientific literacy through an understanding of the models, formalisms, and assumptions lying behind various fields of science at their present stage of development. Seeing science as a product of its age, the course demonstrates that science is not simply a matter of fact but a product of the human imagination, an evolving conversation with nature subject to radical shifts, old habits, overweening authority, and unavoidable blindness. By examining the accomplishments of such figures as Aristotle, Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, and Einstein, as well as the accomplishments of contemporary revolutionaries in fields such as particle theory, plate tectonics, and gene structure, the course explores the intellectual excitement and limitations of those scientific paradigms that arise from and yet inevitably transform our culture.

*At departmental discretion, a two-course laboratory science sequence can substitute for this requirement and the Contemporary Science requirement.*

**Economics and Society < C> <BAC> (3 hrs.)**

An overview of economics taught largely from a historical point of view. The goal is not a mastery of technical economics but an understanding of economics as a way of thinking, describing, and choosing. The course is built upon the fundamental assumption that no one can be an informed citizen—or even a capable reader of the daily newspaper—without knowledge of the basic concepts of the field and its graphical and statistical modes of expression.

*At departmental discretion, the two-course sequence ECO 2013-23, Micro and Macro Economics, can substitute for this requirement.*

**Junior- or senior-level course with non-Western linkage < W or C> <BAC> (3 hrs.)**

One course from a list of courses approved by the General Studies Colloquium which incorporate significant non-Western cultural coverage. The course may be in-major or out; may
survey a culture or cultures, or address non-western religions, philosophy, literature, history, education, art, or business practices; may have a historical or contemporary focus. The non-Western Baccalaureate course will reinforce through specific applications the multi-cultural perspective encouraged in Perspectives on Social and Political Behavior and Western Perspectives I and II. All departments are invited to submit courses for approval.

Skills Courses

Composition I & II <C> <GE> (2 X 3 hrs. = 6 hrs.)

The traditional two-semester beginning composition sequence. The first course will stress mechanics, rhetorical design, and voice; the second will move into larger expository structures, require library use and documentation, and involve readings in and writing literary works. The first course will employ writing assignments directly linked with the assignments in the Western Perspectives I course. The second course need not be taken in the second term on campus; indeed, when the Writing Across the Curriculum program is fully in place, considerable benefit would be derived from taking this during the sophomore year. Formal papers in both courses will be written using a wordprocessor, and as rapidly as possible these courses need to be taught in computerized composition classrooms.

Gordon Rule Math <C> <GE> (3 hrs.)

The standard "higher" math course taught to satisfy the Gordon Rule. Just what course—college algebra, calculus, statistics, or differential equations—will depend as now on the student's needs and prior training. Although this course, along with the composition courses described above, is the most conventional offering of the set, we hope that every effort will be made to reexamine the delivery so that the place of mathematics in the history of ideas is emphasized.

Academic Learning Strategies <C> (2 hrs.)

A course designed to help first-time-in-college students adjust to the academic demands that will be made of them within a university environment. Topics covered include theories of learning, learning strategies and study methods for various kinds of papers and tests, library resources and skills, computer and other support facilities on campus, and the importance of both analysis and synthesis to academic performance. Required of all students entering the University as freshmen, this course is not part of the General Education Requirement and therefore is not technically a part of the Core.

D. COMMON THEMES AND ACTIVITIES

The best-designed list of courses will not fully achieve the goal of coherence unless the courses are integrated both conceptually and methodologically. Conceptual integration occurs whenever information and ideas from classes can be used as a foundation for discussions and assignments in other classes. For example, aspects of Greek culture treated in a "perspectives" course can reinforce an art class discussing Greek architecture. The course descriptions above have been designed to promote conceptual integration; the system of exchange among the General Studies Colloquium (see section IV.A, below) is the primary mechanism proposed for promoting day-to-day cross-referencing and reinforcement.

However, educated persons must possess more than just knowledge, no matter how insistently reinforced. They need to master the tools for acquiring knowledge so that they can perform well in classes and continue their education within a rapidly changing environment. Core courses must therefore be designed in ways that reinforce the basic tools of thought.

Two very important threads running through the proposed curriculum are Writing and Computing Across the Curriculum. These initiatives reflect broad institutional commitments that
would require special funding. They are detailed in section III, below. Two other crucial themes that should run through the Core syllabuses, library research and evaluating for synthesis, deserve examination here.

1. **Library Research**

A common thread joining all courses and all disciplines is the activity of learning how to learn further. Whatever we teach in courses is at best partial and certainly will become obsolete; we teach foundations upon which additional knowledge is built and by which additional knowledge is organized. Thus the prime repository of information, the library, is more than any other single institution the very center of the university.

The Task Force proposes that library training and library work be an integral part of the Core curriculum. We suggest the following:

   a. Training sessions for LUIS and an overview of the various library facilities should be made a part of orientation week. Transfer students should be compelled to undergo library orientation during their first weeks on campus. A flag in the student academic record could be used to monitor attendance.

   b. First-term courses should involve library research projects designed in conjunction with the Library staff to increase the students' familiarity with library materials and to expand their knowledge of contemporary information technology.

   c. Academic Learning Skills should contain a strong library training component that asks students to carry out exercises using various facilities. Perhaps some of this training could be area-specific. The goal should be to develop students who are comfortable with the library and whose natural response when confronted with new demands is to turn first to library facilities.

   d. Library faculty should act as consultants in designing the syllabuses of other Core courses. Few if any of these courses should be without some sort of library activity which is designed not just to support each particular course but to complement the activities in other Core courses.

2. **Promoting Synthesis**

Information is not knowledge unless it is brought together, restructured, and used by the individual learner. Though no curriculum can ever carry out this final act of understanding for a student, a curriculum can be designed to reinforce and reward it. We all know, unfortunately, that students often go through an entire college career without learning how to form complex but relationally rich schemata or cognitive structures which allow them to solve new problems and to transfer their knowledge to new domains. These cognitive structures, a product of integrative reasoning—synthesis—include such things as the discovery of complex relations within and across subject matter domains, model or theory building, and so forth. We must therefore teach not just analysis but synthesis.

There are two major ways to teach the student how to synthesize information. The first is to teach integration by developing courses that stress inter-relationships among concepts and by providing a connected curriculum such as the proposed Core. The second follows from the first; namely, to evaluate students' learning using testing methods that compel the student to employ synthetic reasoning. Testing methods that reward rote learning deceive students by implying that education stops with the facts.

Appendix B describes several methods of evaluation which foster meaningful as opposed to rote learning. These include (but are not limited to) integrative term papers, conceptual
essay tests, and concept mapping. These evaluation tools are particularly useful in generating synthetic reasoning or thought processes because they promote performance through integration rather than through rote memory. Synthesis is fostered if synthetic reasoning is the only way for a student to earn a good grade.

We propose two methods for promoting synthesis in the curriculum:

a. The General Studies Colloquium would be charged with developing various methods of teaching and evaluating which are known to nurture synthesis. The General Studies Colloquium should share their findings with members of the general faculty through collegial interchange and through formal faculty mechanisms.

b. Ongoing development of faculty is necessary in order to initiate a program to teach and evaluate integrative reasoning skills. Workshops should be used to aid interested faculty in designing their courses with the primary purpose of stressing the interrelationships among course concepts and in using term papers, essays, and concept maps to help students integrate knowledge. We trust that the general faculty will be encouraged to use these techniques. Only through cooperation by the entire faculty will synthesis across the curriculum become a reality.

E. STUDENT PROGRESS THROUGH THE CORE

The following figure lays out an ideal progression of a four-year student through the program. Please note that this figure displays a course of study making the maximum use of the interrelationships between Core courses. No actual student is likely to take courses in precisely this sequence. Nonetheless, the figure exhibits

1. Our persuasion that general education should span a student's entire four years;
2. Our desire to leave room in the first two years for both electives and for specialized preparatory courses; and
3. Our belief that cultural and conceptual contexts are the foundation upon which all other course offerings should be built.

For adaptations for transfer students, see II.D, below.
### F. INTEGRATION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

Nearly sixty percent of all students entering UWF in 1989-90 were transfer students. Admissions has developed evaluation procedures for these students. The Florida Administrative Code specifies that every student must satisfy an institution's approved General Education Requirement, which for transfer students is usually certified by the A.A. Degree. Students transferring to UWF without this degree must therefore in any case meet UWF's General Education requirement. In our proposal, this requirement is identified as the indicated 40 semester hours normally taken during the first two years.

It is worth observing that, from the first day that the UWF lower division was added, the University has never complied strictly with this rule, using instead a generic 12-12-12 rule as a substitute for course-by-course check-off against the existing general education core.

In practice, an incoming transfer student without the A.A. would satisfy the same 40 hours of general education required of entering freshmen, with credit for equivalent courses at other schools being allowed as part of the admissions/transcript-evaluation process. On completing the prescribed courses, they would be certified as having met the UWF general education requirements and would be permitted to enter the upper division.

The proposed Core includes an additional 9 hours normally taken at the junior or even senior level. These—not part of the general education portion of the Core—would be required of all UWF students, transfer or not, A.A. degree or not:

- *Economics and Society*
- *Paradigms of Science*
- *Non-Western Perspectives*

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**Optimum Progression Through the Core**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRESHMAN</th>
<th>SOPHOMORE</th>
<th>JUNIOR</th>
<th>SENIOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **CALD**
- Western Perspect I
- Humanities A I
- English Composition I

- Western Perspect II
- Humanities A II
- Humanities B
- English Composition II

- Concepts in Mathematics(*)
- Behavioral Individual Behavior
- Contemp Science with Lab(*)
- Economics (*)
- Non-Western Perspectives

(*) Substitutions possible

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The proposed Core includes an additional 9 hours normally taken at the junior or even senior level. These—not part of the general education portion of the Core—would be required of all UWF students, transfer or not, A.A. degree or not:

- *Economics and Society*
- *Paradigms of Science*
- *Non-Western Perspectives*
The annotated course descriptions detail possible departmentally-based substitutions for the first two of these courses.

III. LEARNING TOOLS

Writing skills and computing skills are indispensable to students. It is a goal of the Core curriculum that these skills be integrated into coursework at every level, so that they are not simply practiced in the abstract but rather serve as tools to assist in the entire learning process. The writing component, referred to as "Writing Across the Curriculum" (WAC), is in widespread use at many institutions. All of the courses in the proposed Core curriculum include significant writing experiences. These experiences may include term papers, daily journal exercises, and other writing challenges provided by the instructors. Training and ongoing support would be provided to the instructors in workshops and in the UWF Writing Lab.

The corresponding "Computing Across the Curriculum" (CAC) component integrates modern computer applications as learning aids into as many of the Core courses as is feasible. Short courses in wordprocessing applications would be made available to students several times in a semester, including classes during freshman orientation. The goal is to replace the "Take this course in wordprocessing, because you'll need it someday" approach with "The first draft of this Western Perspectives term paper is due in two weeks, and I want you to use a wordprocessor. If you need a short course in a wordprocessing program for a PC or a Mac, one begins tomorrow."

In the following portion of this report, a rationale for these two components of the Core curriculum is presented, along with detailed plans for implementing them in non-Core as well as in Core coursework.

A. WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

1. Rationale

Several years ago, Emig (1977) presented a cogent argument supporting the position that "writing represents a unique mode of learning-not merely valuable, not merely special, but unique" (p. 122). This assertion provides the foundation for the many Writing Across the Curriculum programs currently in operation (Fulwiler & Young, 1989). In addition, a properly implemented WAC program promotes another essential goal for writing: to present knowledge. When writing is viewed as a means both to discover and to present knowledge, the fallacious division between writing "content" and writing "form" can be transcended. Diverse faculties can embrace writing as a means of enhancing the learning of course content. At the same time, they can promote the minimal characteristics of writing meant to be shared with readers other than the composer: deliberate order, clarity and simplicity, conventional spelling, acceptable usage, and standard grammar.

2. Goals and Methods

A fully developed Writing Across the Curriculum program must be implemented in stages over several years. The first stage in implementing the program is for the General Studies Colloquium to identify, design, implement, and evaluate appropriate writing tasks in each to the Core courses. Further steps in implementation would require that

A. A program of faculty training, assistance and evaluation be developed which will encourage faculty to introduce writing in all courses where such activity is appropriate.
B. One or more writing-intensive courses be designated in every major. In these courses, writing would be a major means of promoting and assessing learning.

We propose three major programs to achieve these goals:

A. Intensive training experiences for the General Studies Colloquium and other interested faculty before and during the first year of implementing the Core curriculum.

B. A faculty development program for all disciplines supported by the General Studies Colloquium.

C. A "Writing Fellows" program to provide assistance to faculty who assign writing tasks involving long papers which must be carefully revised and edited before completion.

The "Writing Across the Curriculum" program would not replace but complement the traditional two-course sequence in beginning composition. The requirement of additional specialized writing courses would of course remain a matter of choice for the individual departments.

3. Preparing for the Program

The General Studies Colloquium and other interested faculty will participate in an intensive training program before and during the first year of implementing the Core curriculum. A consultant from the University of Vermont or Carnegie-Mellon or some other institution where WAC is well established should be brought in to assist the faculty to identify and develop appropriate writing experiences and to explore ways to respond to students' writing.

The Task Force also endorses Ms. Mamie Hixon's proposal for a Writing Fellows program. (See Appendix A.) Individuals designated as Writing Fellows would be trained to work with students engaged in discipline-related writing tasks. While reading student papers for appropriate use of mechanics would be a task of the Writing Fellows, an equally important responsibility of the Fellows would be to assist students during the drafting and revising stages of the writing process. We suggest, therefore, that Ms. Hixon's proposal be modified to include greater emphasis upon the training of the Fellows to interact with students during all stages of the writing process.

The funding of the Writing Fellows proposal, as well as the initial and follow-up WAC workshops, must be a major priority of the Provost. We are also persuaded that sufficient publicity for the WAC program and active support by the deans and chairpersons will be needed to realize the potential of writing as both a learning tool and a means of communication for our students.

4. Implementation

Initially, the WAC program should be implemented in the Core courses. Faculty who teach these courses, as well as individuals who are already interested in using writing as a learning tool, would participate in the initial WAC workshops. These faculty also would be assigned Writing Fellows who would attend the WAC workshops with the Core Faculty.

A cadre of experienced WAC faculty would then be identified from the initial workshop participants to develop WAC workshops for other faculty. Over a period of time, all faculty would have opportunity to participate in these faculty development activities.
The Writing Fellows program can be expanded as the demand for it grows. At some time in the future when WAC becomes a widespread feature at UWF, we may need to establish criteria for assigning Writing Fellows to courses.

B. COMPUTING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

1. Rationale

The routine use of the personal computer is perhaps the single most striking difference between the society and business of the 1990s and those of the 1970s. This tool has achieved its status because it increases personal productivity enormously and provides personal access to wide ranges of services, information, and analysis that were simply nonexistent a decade ago. One of the goals of the UWF Core Curriculum is to incorporate these new powers into its courses. The advantages of writing as a learning activity have been described earlier, and the use of wordprocessing programs invites multiple drafts and revisions—an essential component of critical thinking.

But wordprocessing is only part of this new technology. Spreadsheet modeling has become an important part of many classrooms, and database applications offer students experience in the assimilation and understanding of large data sets. Application programs aside, the personal computer opens up learning environment possibilities unknown a decade ago, among them hypertext, telecommunications, multimedia and CD-ROM. Merely having home access to the LUIS card catalogue of the State University System has significantly increased learning opportunities available to students. In order to use these opportunities to their best advantage, students must come to regard the personal computer as a routine partner in the learning process.

2. Goals and Methods

The UWF "Computing Across the Curriculum" (CAC) requirement is designed to enable every UWF student (a) to recognize academic situations in which the use of standard computer application tools is appropriate and (b) to have routine facility with those tools. These goals can be achieved not by requiring the completion of specific computer courses but rather by including computer applications as integral parts of most, if not all, Core courses. The writing requirement described above would be accomplished in part with wordprocessing programs chosen either by the instructor or the student. Perhaps some instructors will even require term papers and other writing assignments to be submitted on diskette. As many courses as possible would have other computing requirements built into them, perhaps including spreadsheet modeling, telecommunications, database retrieval, or other appropriate activities. Courses requiring such computing facility are annotated in the course listings.

Students would gain this computing facility through a multi-step approach:

a. They would be clearly advised of the computing requirements during their freshman orientation and in the Academic Learning Strategies course.

b. UWF would offer a non-credit one-day workshop on each of several popular wordprocessing applications as part of each orientation session. These courses would be repeated during the first weeks of each term. Student success in completing Core course assignments would depend partially on their facility in using this technology.

c. Additional non-credit short courses should be scheduled regularly in non-wordprocessing applications, such as spreadsheet or database applications.
Completion of the appropriate short course, or passing an equivalent skills test, might be a prerequisite for enrollment in courses holding the <C> designation.

d. Students who prefer to acquire these skills at a more leisurely pace can be invited to enroll in a 1000-level credit course similar to CGS 3570: Micro Packages.

Extensive faculty training in computer applications must be offered prior to the introduction of the Core Curriculum. Individual faculty teaching Core courses cannot ignore their responsibility for the computer skills of their students.

3. Equipment and Support

Major investments in equipment and training are necessary for the implementation of this program. For the purposes of this proposal, we can only assume that sufficient personal computer hardware can be made available. The Task Force believes strongly in the need for a variety of opportunities and environments, and it recommends that both Macintosh and IBM compatible hardware be supported in order to provide UWF students with facility in, and access to, both major platforms. Equipment should be provided at multiple locations on the campus.

IV. DELIVERY OF THE CURRICULUM

A. General Studies Colloquium

1. Rationale and Responsibilities

Maintaining a cohesive and integrated curriculum will require ongoing discussion, development, and oversight. The Task Force therefore believes it essential to establish a General Studies Colloquium composed of faculty who will teach some—but by no means all—of the Core courses. The major responsibilities of the General Studies Colloquium would be

a. To identify and coordinate connections among the ideas and themes in Core courses, whether taught by members of the General Studies Colloquium themselves or not;

b. To make these linkages explicit so that cross-referencing and reinforcement characterize the entire curriculum;

c. To generate new ideas for course materials and content;

d. To act as a curriculum development committee and oversight body for the Core; and

e. To develop and promote effective pedagogical and assessment techniques.

These activities will require that faculty involve themselves in extensive background reading and that they meet frequently to engage in formal and informal discussion sessions with colleagues. In effect, the General Studies Colloquium would become what Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, has called a community of scholars who generate "a new generation of scholars through the powerful and demanding task of teaching" (quoted in Watkins, 1990, p. A11).

Members of the Colloquium would retain their positions in academic departments, but they would receive 50% assignment to General Studies, to include teaching the lead sections of their courses. Productivity generated in their Core courses would of course return 100% to
their home departments. The General Studies Colloquium, on the other hand, would not constitute a regular academic department, or a college, or even a division. Instead it would be a university body reporting directly to the Provost. The Colloquium would be an ongoing discussion group, a faculty seminar. This placement outside the ordinary chain of command is perhaps the most graphic sign of our conviction that general education is no more the special responsibility of a single department or college than writing or mathematical skills are the sole responsibility of English or of Mathematics.

In practice, the Colloquium would consist of colleagues chosen to represent the entire teaching faculty in accepting special responsibility for General Studies. They would decide the content of courses, negotiate with other faculty and with departments for their delivery, and oversee their implementation and evaluation. Curriculum course approval would proceed through the regular committee structure.

2. Composition and Term

In the long run the General Studies Colloquium should assume responsibility for recommending its own membership and its replacement procedures—subject of course to checks and balances of administrative and Senate concurrence. However, to form the first Colloquium, the Senate should accept applications in the form of syllabuses and statements of course philosophy from faculty interested in teaching the following courses or institutions:

- Western Perspectives
- Humanities A group
- Humanities B group
- English Composition
- Concepts in Mathematics
- Paradigms of Science
- Contemporary Science
- Individual Behavior
- Social and Political Behavior
- Economics and Society
- Course with non-Western linkage
- Library

The twelve faculty selected would constitute the Colloquium, with three-year, staggered terms, initially drawn by lot. The first task of each would be to develop the course(s) proposed. Each representative of a General Studies course or General Studies area would serve as the communication link to other faculty members teaching the General Studies course(s) in that area.

3. Method of Selection

As sketched above, we propose that the original General Studies Colloquium be selected by a committee appointed by the Faculty Senate. This Senate committee should actively seek faculty members who are committed to general education and who have strong reputations for excellent teaching. They must be willing to work day to day with other members of the Colloquium as well as with other faculty teaching General Studies courses to ensure that the courses are taught in ways that support the goals of the General Studies Core. The Senate committee should make its recommendations in consultation with deans and the Provost.

4. Administrative and Physical Plant Requirements

The Colloquium should elect a leader to report regularly to the Provost and to handle the necessary administrative chores. Because this group is neither a college nor a division nor an academic department, administrative paperwork should be kept to a minimum. Because the Colloquium leader is neither chair nor a head nor a director but rather a spokesman for a confederacy of equals, the position should rotate often and, specifically, the Colloquium leader should not be assigned the responsibility for the evaluation of his or her peers.
A conference room or similar space should be designated for the Colloquium’s use. We envision this room to be a place where faculty may gather formally and informally to discuss matters related to General Studies. We hope that a suitable room can be found in a central campus location. The room should also be used to house books, a computer terminal and printer, and other supplies and materials which the group may require. The Colloquium should also be assigned an office with secretary and student assistants, as needed. Faculty members of the Colloquium should retain their offices in their “home departments.”

5. Job Descriptions and Rewards

Membership on the Colloquium should be a rewarding, though demanding, experience. Designing new courses, coordinating with other faculty, working with Writing Fellows and computer support personnel, and maintaining ongoing discussions of ideas and pedagogical techniques while keeping contact with students will consume an extraordinary amount of time. Nonetheless, with released time from one course per term, the Colloquium faculty will be expected to maintain scholarly and creative activity as required by their respective academic discipline.

B. FUNDING AND SUPPORT

It is not, the members of the Task Force believe, our primary duty to work out the mechanisms for supporting the proposed system, beyond the mechanism of the General Studies Colloquium itself. We can only remark that success will require as much flexibility and inventiveness on the part of the academic administration as on the part of the Colloquium. Difficult funding choices will need to be made. Old ways of thinking about course delivery and financial support must be rethought. The academic administration will need to take the lead in persuading departments to reconsider their curricula and their staffing choices. The administration will surely be required to seek special outside funding to make possible our WAC and CAC initiatives, with the attendant demands for graduate assistantships in the Writing Fellows program and for computer hardware and computer support personnel in both programs.

We would be less than candid if we failed to admit that the Task Force spent many, many hours worrying that the University might be tempted to embrace our proposal "on the cheap," either (a) by purchasing computer hardware without providing matching, long-term support for that hardware or (b) by attempting to bankroll the staffing of Core courses out of the resources of individual departments. Considering the history of this university, the latter is of very great concern indeed. A destructive tension between the demands of the Core and of the departments will inevitably arise if resources are withdrawn from academic units without full and adequate compensation. Nothing could be more fatal to the acceptance of the proposed curriculum than the all-too-common past practice of withdrawing productive members from departments, with only adjunct support—if that—to take their place.

Special funding will also be needed for the Writing Across the Curriculum initiative and for the proposed Academic Learning Strategies course. WAC has no hope of being more than a token gesture without the hands-on support of the WAC associates; and the student initiation into the university setting and the teaching of learning strategies cannot be entrusted to paraprofessionals or to personnel without requisite backgrounds. On the other hand, with the development of proper training programs, both assignments could provide support for graduate assistants. Again, things just cannot be done on the cheap.

Continuing administrative leadership and support will also be needed in mediating between the "home" departments and the faculty chosen for the General Studies Colloquium. The administration must also ensure that members of the Colloquium are not displaced during their special service to the University as a whole. The office of the Provost, to whom the Colloquium would report, must be willing to champion the Colloquium as an institution standing
outside the normal channels of a rather traditional academic structure. Unconventional courses
and unconventional structures will require unconventional thinking and careful nurturing from
deans and from vice-presidents and even from the President.

Since the Core extends for four years, and since the very idea of the Core insists that courses
build upon and cross-reference one another, special problems will be presented by A.A. transfer
students, who would not be required to match our 40-hour General Education requirement on a
course-by-course basis. The consequent need for feeder institutions to revamp their course
offerings and their counseling efforts will demand creative, insistent, and politic efforts at
articulation on the part of our upper administration.

V. PROGRAM EVALUATION

Continuing evaluation of the effectiveness of the proposed curriculum is crucial to its long-term
health. Identification of specific evaluation strategies would be one of the first challenges facing the
General Studies Colloquium. We recommend strongly

A. That any evaluation be in terms of the description of the educated person and the list of
goals given in the first section of this report; and

B. That the success of the Core not be judged on the basis of isolated course evaluations or
merely on the level of facts recalled.

Furthermore, we recommend that, for purposes of evaluation, the Core be regarded as an academic
program in its own right and that it be subject to the same periodic external review process now
applied to discipline-based programs. This process should involve, at a minimum, a self-study
document to be produced by the General Studies Colloquium and visits by and a report from
qualified external consultants. One of the primary duties of the members of the Colloquium
themselves would be an ongoing, informal review of the Core as a whole and of the success of
individual courses in achieving the synthesis and cohesiveness that are the Core's reason for being.

VI. CONCLUSION

The weaknesses in our policies and curricula that occasioned the charge to the Task Force are by no
means unique to UWF. Across the nation study groups such as ours are concluding that the old
departmentally dominated curriculum, with its steadily diminishing set of randomly chosen electives,
has failed to educate students adequately. Calls for new definitions of the relationship between
teaching and scholarship, new balances between education and training have moved from the
Chronicle of Higher Education to the morning news and to the weekly news magazines. Whatever
the diversity of offered solutions, everyone who thinks much about the subject of American higher
education seems to agree that more of the same is not enough.

The Task Force is persuaded that UWF has a singular opportunity to act upon this common
recognition. We are small enough that initiative and leadership can make headway against the
natural tendency of organizations to maintain the status quo. Though our mix of programs is very
far from that of a narrowly focused college, our size has given faculty in diverse fields years of
experience in working with and trusting one another. The Task Force itself is a case in point: none
of us thought of ourselves as representing the special interests of Education or Business or the
sciences or the humanities; we were faculty trying to define the needs of students by (most often)
lamenting to one another the limitations of our own educations. Moreover, UWF is fortunate in
having an administration which is publicly committed to many of the ideals that have driven our
proposal. In other words, if any diverse public university can focus its curriculum successfully,
UWF ought to be able to do it.

Indeed, the Task Force believes that the presence of the General Studies Core in the context of our
diverse professional programs could well become that special something that makes our university
unique. As Chancellor Reed remarked during his recent visit to our campus, UWF might well assume a special role as the liberal arts alternative to megaversities to the east—"liberal arts" not in the old St. John's or New College model, but "liberal arts" in terms of building specialized training on an intellectually liberating core.

Change, of course, is uncomfortable; and we are suggesting nothing less than fundamental change. Our major programs would need to be rethought, and almost certainly reduced, in the light of the materials covered by and the hours dedicated to the Core. Old habits of thinking about professional identity and about departmentally based course delivery must be overcome. Hard choices concerning the allocation of resources must certainly be made. In response to those who retort that "it can't be done," we can only say, first, that there would remain much to be accomplished in the University for those unsympathetic with the vision of the Core, and, second, that one of the primary jobs of education during the remainder of this century and during the next will be the preparing of students to adapt to change, and that therefore the process might well be begun by adapting ourselves.
APPENDIX A

PROPOSAL: WRITING FELLOWS

Mamie Webb Hixon

PURPOSE:

The Writing Fellows is a peer tutoring program in which eligible undergraduate [and graduate] students are selected to evaluate the writing of their peers in various disciplines.

SELECTION OF FELLOWS:

1. Fellows are selected annually by a screening committee consisting of faculty with training and expertise in evaluating students' writing.

2. Current fellows are invited to participate in the subsequent selection process.

3. Students wishing to serve as writing fellows apply to the English Department by writing a letter of application in which they include:
   a) why they want to be a fellow;
   b) how they would manage their time if chosen; and
   c) what editing and/or grading experience they've had.

The applicants submit 3 writing samples and at least two letters of recommendation, one from a previous writing professor.

4. Applicants are interviewed by the screening committee

5. Applicants indicate their availability to enroll in a one-credit hour practicum on peer tutoring. [A one-year assistantship in the Writing Lab in addition to recommendation by the Lab Director will substitute for the practicum.]

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FELLOWS:

1. Each fellow selects any course across the curriculum in which students write papers.

2. Each fellow reads only 1 to 3 papers per student each term. [Each fellow grades all papers assigned during the term.]

3. Each fellow serves as the first reader of the students' papers. [Each fellow serves as the mechanics grader of the students' paper and provides students with a numerical weighting of errors chart for each paper.]

4. Each fellow meets with the class prior to a writing assignment being scheduled [, or the fellow meets with the professor.]

5. Each fellow writes detailed commentary about the style, organization and form of the paper only. Each fellow grades only the mechanics (specifically grammar, syntax, capitalization, spelling, punctuation, diction, and documentation format) of the papers, leaving the evaluation of content to the professor. It is also the professor who assigns the final grade and determines how to enter the mechanics grade into the students' records. The fellow may provide correction symbols only, or he/she may attach either an errors checklist or a weighting chart (with appropriate numerical deductions) to each student's paper.
6. Each fellow should return papers to students, [professors] and prepare and post a student conference schedule. Peers may opt to confer with writing fellows or not to.

WRITING FELLOW'S STIPEND:

$400 a semester [amount to be determined by the number of students and the number of papers per student; the $400 a semester at Brown University, for instance, is for 3 papers per student].

TRAINING OF FELLOWS:

Fellows enroll in a Teaching Composition Practicum. [Fellows enroll in a one-credit-hour Peer Tutoring and Grading Practicum (pass/fail) the semester prior to their being in the program. A one-year assistantship in the Writing Lab along with a recommendation from the Lab Director will substitute for the practicum.]
APPENDIX B

EVALUATION METHODS THAT FOSTER INTEGRATIVE THOUGHT

Bruce Dunn

Two traditional methods, term-papers and essay tests can be used effectively to compel the student to use integrative processes. Both of these traditional methods, however, require proper use and constructive feedback by the instructor.

**Term Papers.** The value of a term paper for nurturing integrative reasoning depends on the assigned topic. Clearly, some topics require more integration than others. They can range from the relatively narrow "write a paper describing the latest research findings concerning phenomenon X," to relatively broad "write a paper comparing the approaches of X and Y and evaluate the effectiveness of each." Clearly, through the judicious choice of topics and proper feedback, students can be "taught" some of the processes underlying integrative reasoning.

**Essay Tests.** The use of essay tests per se does not guarantee that students will be compelled to conceptualize rather than "regurgitate" memorized information. Many "essay-test" questions are, in fact, trivial, e.g., "What are Person X's four points concerning economic growth?" This is obviously an extended and slightly more difficult version of the multiple-choice question:

Which of the following points are Person X's concerning economic growth?

a. Point 2  b. Point 1  c. Point 3  d. Point 4  e. all of the above.

For a traditional essay test to be useful in generating integrative reasoning, integrative questions or instructions need to be given. For example, "Compare and contrast the theories of Person A, B, and C. Make certain that you stress the similarities as well as the differences in their theoretical positions." Obviously, an answer to this essay foil would require that student to utilize both analytic and integrative thought processes to construct an answer.

Two other methods have been examined (and used) by some of the Task Force members both of which appear to be particularly useful in fostering integrative reasoning. One is a modification and integration of the traditional multiple-choice and essay testing procedures (developed by Dr. Terry Prewitt of The University of West Florida) and the second is a technique termed **Concept Mapping** developed by Dr. Joe Novak and his colleagues from Cornell University and used extensively by several UWF faculty members.

**Scaled Multiple Choice and Extended Essay Method**

This method presents the student with a multiple choice question from which s(he) is to select the "best" answer of a set of correct answers based on his or her reading and the class discussion. All answers are more or less correct (thus the idea of a scaled-multiple choice). Some points are awarded for the student's selection of the "best" answer, but the majority of the points are assigned for justifying their answer in essay format.

In the scaled-multiple choice and extended essay method the multiple choice question serves as a starting point from which the student is asked to trace the development of his or her thought process, but guided exercises may also be used. In the extended essay component, the student is asked to start with a knowledge structure as s(he) knows it, and then be able to expand on it using other sources, and finally to critically evaluate his or her revised knowledge structure.

An advantage of this method is that it increases the students' awareness that education is for the process of finding out information and solving problems, and gives him or her practice in doing so.

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Concept Mapping

Concept mapping is based on Ausubel's assimilation theory of cognitive learning (Ausubel, 1968; Ausubel, Novak, & Hanesian, 1978) which recognizes that prior knowledge held by the individual plays a key role in new learning. Concept-mapping was chosen as one of our methods of "promoting integration through evaluation" because it can tap or measure the student's conceptual (as contrasted with rote) memory processes. Thus, it is an excellent evaluation tool for measuring and scoring integrative reasoning.

Briefly, concept maps are two dimensional, external representations of a person's internal knowledge structure(s). Concept maps represent a person's knowledge structure in a hierarchical form, with the most general, most inclusive concepts at the top and most specific, least inclusive concepts at the bottom. Concepts are defined as a perceived regularity in events or objects, or records of events or objects, designated by a label. Concepts are related to one another in the form of propositions, which represent statements about how some piece of the universe appears or functions.

Concept maps are more than a mere hierarchical arrangement of concepts because the technique of concept mapping allows the student to describe relations that are common across different knowledge domains, and allows him or her to express specific relations between low-level concepts and higher-level concepts (that is concept-mapping is recursive). The structure of concept maps is dependent on the instructional context or topic to which they are applied. Therefore, the structure of maps having similar concepts can vary from context to context depending on which questions are asked. It is also important to remember that concept maps represent a given individual's cognitive organization of knowledge. Thus, the strength of concept maps from a pedagogical point of view is the ability to measure a particular person's knowledge structure about a given topic in a given context (Novak & Gowin, 1984). (Further elaboration of the method both as a teaching and evaluation tool can be found in Novak & Gowin's [1984] book, Learning How to Learn, published by Cambridge University Press.)
APPENDIX C
LIST OF WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED


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