

MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
15 April 1997

Chairperson D. Eidam called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m. in Chryst Hall, Room 210. All departments were represented except Art, Economics, Educational Foundations, Foreign Languages, History, Sociology and Anthropology, and Special Education.

Minutes

The Senate approved the 1 April 1997 minutes with one correction: "Women's Studies Curriculum Committee" replaces "Women's Studies Steering Committee" (p. 4191).

Reports

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson D. Eidam reminded Senators of the special meeting on 22 April at 4:05 p.m. in Chryst 210, and he distributed an annual fund progress report (Attachment A). He announced that Student Senate President P. Leahy was unable to attend the day's meeting and there would be no report from student senate. The chairperson also said the elections for the Women's Studies Curriculum Committee would be postponed until a list of eligible candidates was forwarded from the Provost's Office. Committee chairs were reminded to submit refreshment receipts for reimbursement to the chairman, and, to submit their annual activities reports by 1 May 1997 with an electronic copy to be sent to Senator M. Warmkessel. Item X, the introduction of "The General Education Revision Plan" document (Attachment D), was added to the day's agenda. Lastly, the chairperson announced the need to elect a new Senate chairperson in December 1997. He will not be a candidate.

Administrative Reports

Provost F. McNairy commended the Joint Faculty and Student Senate Conference Committee on the publication of its "Proposal for a Four Year Contract with Students" (see Attachment A, pp. 4196-4201, 1 April 1997 minutes).

Reports of Standing Committees

Academic Policies

Senator K. Bookmiller introduced and answered initial questions on the "Amendment to Academic Minors Policy" (Attachment B) which was placed on the 6 May agenda.

UCPRC

Senator R. Wismer introduced under the two meeting rule:

CHEM 381 Polymer Chemistry

CHEM 482 Polymer Physical Chemistry

MATH 471 Mathematical Modelling

OSHM 321 and OSHM 422 Environmental and Industrial Hygiene I and II

Under the one meeting rule, he introduced the Psychology Department's Proposal to increase credits from 30 to 33 in its three double majors.

University Academic Theme

Senator J. Piperberg, reported the committee met on 14 April and will meet again on 21 April to hear proposals for the 2000-2001 theme. He indicated the committee's choice would be announced at the 6 May meeting.

Academic Standards

Senator J. Piperberg announced the summer meeting dates had been set.

Special Reports by Faculty Senate Committees

Senator W. Dorman said he and Dianne Fleishman, Director of the Co-op Program, had attended a professional meeting on co-op education. The details of the activity would be in the committee's annual report.

Course and Program Approvals

The Senate approved the Option in Environmental Chemistry.

Business

CIRP

Linda Suskie, Assistant to the President for Special Projects, presented the results of the 1996 CIRP freshman survey. The survey is administered at orientation to students who voluntarily self-report the data. The results of the current survey are based on a 65% response rate and compare MU students' responses with those of other high school seniors admitted as freshmen to four-year public institutions nationally (Attachment C). Student respondents listed MU as their first choice for a higher education and that the university's good academic reputation; ability of graduates to get good jobs, low tuition; and, overall size were determinants in their selection process. Forty-five percent of the surveyed students indicated they planned to pursue graduate degrees. The incoming students also described themselves as:

optimistic about completing the MU degree with a B average

not planning to transfer

having a strong academic self-concept

spending more time studying (than freshmen nationally)

completing stronger curricula (than freshmen nationally)

coming from homes with incomes at or over \$50,000

showing or having shown signs of stress such as anger, depression, oversleeping, and feeling overwhelmed

drinking less (than freshmen nationally)

Suskie also indicated MU freshmen reported strong interests in coming to college to gain a general education and to become a more cultured person. Factors such as coming to college to make more money or to prove self-worth were of declining importance while MU's reputation for placing students in top graduate schools gained in importance among the respondents. Suskie concluded the presentation with comparisons of male and female students' responses to questions on topics including college plans, social activities, academic goals, etc. citing that women emphasized MU's academic reputation and graduates'

success rates as influences on their decisions; while men reported seeking the degree to be well-off financially, to be an authority in their chosen field, and to be able to start their own businesses. Senators followed-up with questions on aspects of the results and requested the report be made available electronically.

General Education Revision Plan

Chairperson Eidam recognized Dr. James Sheridan who presented the General Education Revision Plan (Attachment D), the subject of the special meeting called for 22 April. Dr. Sheridan thanked Judy Lintner for her support services, the General Education Task Force, and the Senate for its participation. While reviewing the parts of the proposal, Dr. Sheridan also acknowledged the role of Dr. Bonnie Duncan and those members of the English Department who contributed to the broader description of ways the "W" requirement can be fulfilled. A brief discussion of the document ensued; then, Dr. Sheridan announced the date of the open forum (4/28) and the referendum (4/30).

In preparation for the 22 April meeting, which the Chairperson ruled must lead to an up or down vote on the plan pursuant to Senate and the Task Force's operating rules, a McLeod-Peters motion to end debate at 5:15 to allow time for the vote passed. The vote will occur earlier if debate ceases before 5:15 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for 6 May 1997, 4:05-5:45 p.m. in Chryst Hall, Room 210.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Schneller
Acting Secretary

Action Summary
15 April 1997

1. Course and Program Approvals

Senate approved the Option in Environmental Chemistry

On a McLeod-Peters motion, debate on the General Education Revision Plan must end at 5:15 p.m. to allow

2. time for the Senate to vote on the document on 22 April. Voting may occur earlier should the debate end before 5:15 p.m.

GENERAL EDUCATION REVISION PLAN
April 14, 1997

Task Force on General Education Curriculum and Its Resources
Historical Background

In spring 1995, APSCUF leadership and the university administration held a series of meetings to discuss the growing budgetary pressures on the university. These pressures resulted from shrinking support from the Commonwealth for public higher education, a consensus that public support will continue to shrink in the future, and the belief that the existing curriculum could be made more cost effective. It was believed that the current General Education Program contributed significantly to these pressures through a negative impact on the student/faculty ratio, a primary measure of educational cost. In addition, there were serious problems with implementation. The maximum class size for 'W' courses was increased to 30, the number of "P" sections was insufficient to meet student need, and students were having great difficulty getting the courses they needed for a timely graduation.

As a result of these meetings, three task forces were established in summer 1995: 1) the Curriculum Cost Analysis Task Force, 2) the Class Schedule Audit Task Force, and 3) the Data Development Task Force. These three task forces were charged respectively with determining the precise costs of the general education curriculum, determining the role in which scheduling practices negatively affected our educational costs, and analyzing the data and information needs of the university. The first two task forces reported their findings to the Provost at the end of the 1995 fall semester and the third task force reported to the Vice President for Finance and Administration in spring 1996.

At the fall 1995 convocation, the President, with the concurrence of APSCUF, announced two interim curriculum measures, which took effect immediately, to contain costs, to ease the burden on faculty who were teaching "W" courses with enrollments over 25 and to reduce some scheduling difficulties: 1) the perspectives requirement was reduced from two courses to one course for all students currently enrolled, and 2) the ten pages of revised prose requirement for 'W' courses was dropped and faculty could use whatever methods and measures they deemed appropriate to foster and evaluate the writing aspects of their 'W' courses.

Later in fall 1995, the current task force was established. The Task Force on the General Education Curriculum and its Resources consists of four faculty appointed by the APSCUF President, four faculty selected by Faculty Senate, a student elected by Student Senate, and two non-voting ex-officio members appointed by the President. The task force was charged with:

a) considering the reports from the three task forces above and the general education program review conducted by the General Education Review Committee of the Faculty Senate, and

b) meeting with various administrative and faculty bodies and individual faculty, and

c) issuing a report consisting of specific recommendations regarding the interim curriculum measures as well as other matters pertaining to general education specifically and/or to the university curriculum in general.

The attached report is the response to this charge. We have tried to preserve the goals and philosophy of general education at Millersville University. We believe that these recommendations are modest and feasible. They are preferable to having the administration impose a solution or to having outside parties dictate remedies to us.

Rationale for why revision of the General Education Program:

1. Simplify the General Education Program for the student and for the university. A simplified program will help plan for the appropriate seats and sections of courses and will reduce the number of curricular exceptions currently being processed. It will make advisement less of a number counting activity and provide more opportunity for advisor and advisee to focus on meeting the educational goals of the student. Furthermore, streamlining will facilitate timely graduation.

2. Maintain quality and control cost. In order to enhance quality and reduce costs, it is necessary to streamline and increase the efficiency of the current curriculum. One way that this can be accomplished is by using University resources more effectively to maintain small sections at the advanced undergraduate level while increasing class size at the introductory undergraduate level in certain courses. Certain curriculum requirements in the general education portion of the curriculum can be eliminated and/or modified in such a way as to ensure quality, but bring about important cost savings.

3. Develop a process for demonstrating to ourselves, our students, their parents, and other constituencies that the General Education Program does, indeed, deliver what it claims to deliver. The goals of the General Education Program are not stated in a measurable form. The way in which we currently show that students have met the objectives of general education is simply by verifying, before graduation, that they have taken the required number of labels. This is not sufficient to demonstrate that they have, in fact, acquired the skills which our general education program purports to deliver.

Time frame: Phase 1 will be developed and implemented by Fall 1997, Phase 2 by Fall 1999.

PHASE 1

1. Keep the current general education curriculum of 54 hours. Blocks G1, G2, and G3 (the liberal arts core) remain the same. Create a Block G4 in which ENGL 110, COMM 100, AW, HPE and one P course and one Elective are required (18 s.h.). A department may specify the AW and/or the HPE course for its majors. The elective in G4 may be a second P course or it may be a course normally counted in Blocks G1, G2, or G3. The elective should be useful for the hundreds of students who are undeclared or who change majors.

Rationale: Simplify the General Education Program for the student.

2. Up to four courses from the list of "Required Related" courses for a major may be counted in blocks G1, G2, and G3, consistent with normal distribution rules. One of these four may be counted as the elective in Block G4, in which case, only three may be counted in Block G1, G2, or G3.

Rationale: This will provide more flexibility for the student.

3. Require no specific number of courses with C or Q designations. This applies to all students enrolled in Fall 1997 and thereafter. Each C or Q course will retain its designation for the purpose of course approval, advisement, and assessment.

Rationale: Very few students have difficulty satisfying the CQ requirement. Many students take more courses with these labels than required. The committee believes that removing the requirement will not diminish the enrollment in these types of courses and students will continue to take the same number of C and Q designated courses even without the requirement. This will assist in meeting our goal of simplifying the general education curriculum.

4. Require every student to take at least one MATH course approved for the liberal arts core in place of the current QARC requirement. The QARC designation will be retained on courses (see Phase 2, #3).

Rationale: The current QARC requirement is really a MATH requirement. Of the 716 students graduating in May 1996, 708 (98.7%) students satisfied the QARC requirement by taking a MATH course, 7 students satisfied the requirement with a CSCI course and 1 student satisfied it with an ECON course.

5. Reduce the requirement of four 200-level courses in the liberal arts core to three.

Rationale: This permits one more 100-level course to count towards general education. In addition, it should make room for some existing large enrollment 100-level courses in student schedules. Students currently take two non-liberal arts core upper level courses, AW and P.

6. The University administration will work with each department to create a productivity plan that would both increase enrollments and preserve the department's quality of education. Each department's plan must take into consideration specific factors and

situations that exist within that particular department.

7. The requirement that each student take a minimum of four 'W' courses remains in effect. Until the next phase is implemented, faculty teaching 'W' courses are encouraged to devise and use strategies, singly or in combination, which will assure that these courses contain a significant and distinguishable writing component. Examples of such strategies include the following:

--traditional term papers, particularly when revised through drafts, peer review, or other activities designed to encourage the development of written communication;

--short papers designed to lead to a larger writing project;

--literature reviews, book reports, precisés of newspaper articles--especially when these are actively discussed and shared with others in the class;

--revised prose as determined by the instructor;

--portfolios that encourage the student, peers, and instructor to focus on the development of an aggregate body of work;

--shared interactive writing such as Internet discussion groups;

-- group writing projects such as web pages or writing which contains a public service component.

The above are examples only and are not meant to limit an instructor's ability to construct other strategies designed to lead students to more fully appreciate the writing process, a process which includes writing, rewriting, editing, and revision. Courses with a 'W' designation must continue to demonstrate the importance of writing in both individual learning and group communication. Rationale: This is in response to the increased class size in W courses and the lack of guidelines for what a 'W' course should be.

PHASE 2

The Task Force believes that an alternative approach to fulfilling the goals of general education is worth considering. The course designations W, C, Q and QARC were intended to ensure that certain kinds of learning experiences took place for all students. However, the Task Force believes that labels alone do not guarantee that the objectives of general education are indeed being addressed.

Universities are among the last organizations pressured to achieve economic efficiencies. Rather than a single event, the need to do more with less becomes an ongoing process.

Without the pressure of a profit motive, university staff tend to ignore the economic realities. The challenge for college faculty and administrators is to reduce costs carefully, in well thought out ways which will not erode quality. What is needed is the kind of cooperation and creativity that will allow for improvement while controlling cost. This requires agreed upon measures of cost and quality.

Many factors contribute to the cost of a college education and all need to be considered. The most significant of these is salaries for faculty, administration and staff. The largest contributor to cost is faculty, because of the nature of education. Measuring the true impact of faculty salary is complex but one way is to use student faculty ratio.

Quality is another complex issue. Measuring the results of a college education is a difficult task, partly because even those who provide it do not agree on its purpose. At Millersville, even the portion of that education which we hold in common, general education, is reason for considerable debate. The attempt to increase efficiency has revealed the lack of clear definition of what the general education curriculum is designed to achieve. An important first step is to restate the goals of general education in measurable form. Currently, the best indication of what outcomes are intended are the labels required on certain general education courses. Unfortunately, these labels create a complex system of distribution requirements. These requirements complicate the advisement process and, more importantly, they limit a student's choices in ways that may reduce the value of their education.

Using clear definitions of the expectations for general education, the faculty can design courses which will allow for the measurement of the general education goals. Rather than a system which places greater value on some general education course (by means of assigning special labels), any course that is approved for general education should make a significant contribution to the general education of students. To achieve this goal the faculty must first restate the goals of general education in clear and measurable form.

A criticism leveled at the current general education curriculum is that it is too prescriptive, too inflexible, and too complex. It presents difficulties for students and advisors who are trying to negotiate it and it presents difficult staffing and scheduling problems in a time when resources are scarce.

Members of this task force have extensive teaching experience and they have participated in the course approval process at several stages in hundreds of cases. We came to the realization that any general education course is likely to have its own unique combination of W, C, and Q components. As an alternative to designating courses as either W, C, or Q, courses may possess these components in some combination.

The steps recommended below are not intended as major changes in the overall purpose of general education. They are intended to make approval of gen. ed. courses easier.

1. The general education curriculum should reflect and implement the mission and goals of Millersville University. The Faculty Senate, by whatever means it deems appropriate shall identify the knowledge, skills, and perspectives every student should gain as a result of a

general education. This will allow the Faculty Senate to review and revise the mission and goals of general education and create objectives which are stated in a measurable form. Accompanying these goals shall be a compilation of ways to write gen. ed. course proposals and descriptions. This shall include ways to incorporate writing, communication, and quantitative components as well as other goals that may be included in the gen. ed. curriculum. Faculty Senate shall develop an assessment program which will evaluate whether the General Education Program is meeting its intended outcomes.

Rationale: The goals of general education have not been reviewed since the mid-1980's. The Middle States accrediting agency has mandated the outcomes assessment process.

2. Once the goals of general education have been restated, each department shall review its approved general education courses and restate their objectives. These restatements shall be reviewed and approved by a mechanism developed by Faculty Senate. Departments will be encouraged to propose additional courses for inclusion in the general education program, and to consider whether some courses should be dropped from the currently approved list.

Rationale: This is intended to be a relatively simple process for existing courses. Emphasis will be on the general education goals and how they are addressed in each course.

3. Eliminate the requirement that students take a prescribed numbers of courses with the C, Q, W, or QARC designations. Retain these designations for course approval, advisement, and assessment purposes.

Rationale: This will relieve students and advisors of the onerous task of satisfying gen. ed. requirements in their present form. Furthermore, we can identify where and how gen. ed. goals are achieved. By continuing to require general education courses to address the goals as reflected by the C, Q, QARC and W designations, the overall purpose of general education is maintained. The vast majority of students will get an appropriate combination of C, Q, QARC and W learning experience in the process of meeting the prescribed distribution requirements. The Academic advisor can provide appropriate counsel to the student in individual cases.

4. Other existing rules and requirements of general education will remain in place.

PROPOSED CURRICULUM STRUCTURE:

12 credits	12 credits	12 credits	18 credits
G1 - Hum & Fine Arts	G2 - Science/Math	G3 - Social Sciences	G4 - Fundamentals and Electives
Art	Biology	Anthropology	ENGL 110
Comm. & Theatre	Chemistry	Business	COMM 100
English	Computer Science	Economics	AW
Foreign Language	Earth Science	Geography	1 Perspective
Humanities	Mathematics	Gerontology	HPED

Music

Nursing

History

1 Elective
(may be a P or any G1, G2, G3
course)

Philosophy

Physics

Political Science

Psychology

Social Work

Sociology

Task Force on General Education Curriculum

Dr. James Sheridan, Chair Mr. Colin McLeod

Dr. William Dorman Dr. Alice Meckley

Dr. Albert Hoffman Dr. Charles Scharnberger

Dr. Terry Madonna Dr. James Stager

Dr. Joseph McCade Ms. Dawn White

Dr. Robert Wismer

Attachment A
Faculty Senate Minutes
1 April 1997

To: Provost Francine McNairy and Faculty Senate
Joint Faculty and Student Senate Conference Committee
(Joel Piperberg, Bill Dorman, Joe Lynch, Richard Kerper)

From: Chris Mulvihill and Sue Wong)
Albert Hoffman, Dean of School of Science and Mathematics
James Stager, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Re: Proposal for a Four Year Contract with Students

Date: April 1, 1997

The Joint Faculty-Student Senate Conference Committee along with two members of the Dean's Council has been asked to prepare an official statement regarding Millersville University's ability to enable students to graduate with a baccalaureate degree within a four year period. In so doing, we have addressed the following issues:

BACKGROUND

Graduate Rates at Millersville University and Other Universities

Data for freshmen entering as full-time undergraduates between 1988 and 1991 indicate that between 31.8 and 39.7% of those students graduated within four years. This number rises to 61.9-65.1% within five years for the 1988 through 1990 cohorts and 66.0-69.0% within six years for the 1988 and 1989 cohorts. These figures, at first glance, may seem low, but they compare favorably with similar statistics from other institutions. For example, the State System Research Office has determined that 4 year graduation rates of the 1990 and 1991 cohorts for the State System Universities average 27.8% and 26.0% respectively (6.4% - 44.4% for the 1990 cohort; 9.9% - 41.9% for the 1991 cohort). The 4 year graduation rates for Millersville University in the 1990 and 1991 cohorts were 39.6% and 39.7%, second and third, respectively, out of the fourteen State System Universities. MU also compares favorably with national rates compiled from 125 public and 39 private institutions (292,104 freshmen in 1990 and 283,763 in 1991). For the 1990 and 1991 cohorts, the national averages of students graduating within four years were 27.5% and 27.3% respectively. For the 1990 cohort, these figures rise rapidly at MU (61.9%), within the State System (51.5%) and nationally (48.6%) when the rates are determined for students earning their degrees within five years. The range in State System Universities for graduation within 5 years is 22.0% to 66.1% (MU ranks third in the System). Most of the increase in the fifth year at MU occurs after the first semester of that year suggesting that students graduating in the fifth year need to finish at most one semester of academic work, sometimes substantially less. Data are not yet available for graduating rates within five years for the 1991 cohort or within six years for either the 1990 or 1991 cohort.

A number of factors may contribute to the seemingly low four year graduation rates. Interestingly, a significant number of students are unaware that a course load of at least 15 sh/semester is required to graduate within 4 years (8 consecutive semesters). This is, in part, due to the well-known definition of a 12 sh load as a full-time load. Some students apparently believe that a schedule of 12sh/semester, ince it is by definition a full-time load, will give them a sufficient number of credits to graduate in four years. In addition, about 33% of our students change their majors and if the change occurs too late, it may delay graduation. Other factors include the transfer of students to other institutions, leaves of absence or the departure of students from the University for personal or academic reasons, low cumulative GPAs and others.

Many times, the extension in time normally required to earn a degree is due to a decreased academic load during one and often multiple semesters. Decreased academic loads are often consciously chosen by students because of their desire to maintain the best cumulative GPA possible, their need to work to support the cost of their education, or because of health-related issues; such students have been recognized as exemplars of a recently recognized type of student behavior called extenders. These students have been placed in two separate categories: vocational and collegiate extenders. Vocational extenders have more elevated levels of financial need and loan indebtedness. They often state that they must work to meet their expenses and they tend to have lower cumulative GPAs. A significant number of these studets attend MU and some appear before the Academic Standards Committee when their cumulative GPAs slip too far. Collegiate extenders often take a lighter credit load because they want more free time. they will sometimes drop one or more courses during the semester because their course work is too difficult and/or because their grade is poorer than they would like. Both of these two similar behaviors lead to graduation dates being pushed beyond the normally expected four year date.

Degree Programs Enabling students to Graduate Within Four Years

For the 1993-94 academic year, the following programs on average allowed students to graduate within four years: History (4.03 years), Music Education (3.97 years), Elementary Education (3.93 years), Political Science (3.91 years) and Anthropology (3.71 years). All other programs averaged over four years.

Despite the above averages, it appears that most of the degree programs at MU can be completed within four years. In some cases, the ability to finish the degree within this window depends upon the propoer sequence of courses being taken in a timely fashion and the absence of remedial courses.

The School of Science and Mathematics Within the Biology Department, the following programs can be completed within four years if the student begins with MATH 160 (Elementary Functions) and CHEM 111 (Introductory Chemistry I) and does not fail any courses or take courses that do not fulfill requirements: the BA, BS and BSE in Biology, the BS (Molecular Biology Option) and the BS (Ecology Option). The Nuclear Medical Technology (122 sh minimum), Medical Technology (123 sh minimum), Preoptometry

(124 sh) and Prepodiatry (124 sh minimum) options are competitive at the clinical/entry stage and thus entry cannot be guaranteed.

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences A survey of the departments in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences indicates that all but two programs (the Art BSE and BFA programs [132 sh minimum]) can normally be completed within four years.

The School of Education The Department Chairs of the School of Education have stated that a number of dual majors could not be completed within four years (Psychology - Special Education, Psychology - Sociology, Psychology - Philosophy, and Technology - Education, for example). They also feel that some teacher education programs are likely to take longer than four years (BSE-Social Studies, BSE-Chemistry and the BSE programs in Art and Music and others may fall into this group of majors).

Degree Programs From Which Students Typically Do Not Graduate Within Four Years

For graduates during the academic year 1993-94, the following programs on average required significantly longer than four years: Educational Technology (5.37 years), Music (5.28 years), Meteorology (5.07 years), Economics (5.02 years) and Industry and Technology (4.95 years). Together, these majors accounted for 7.0% of the graduates for the 1993-94 academic year. For freshmen entering Millersville between 1981 and 1991, the ITEC program averaged the fewest students graduating within four years.

The School of Science and Mathematics Two programs within the Biology Department require more than 8 semesters for the completion of the degree: the Respiratory Therapy program and the Marine Biology option. The Respiratory Therapy option requires 5.5 years with the inclusion of the clinical portion of the program. The Marine Biology option requires one summer at Wallops Island. This, however, can be completed within 4 calendar years if the student goes to Marine Science Consortium at Wallops Island sometime before the Senior year.

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences The two programs within the School of Humanities and Social Sciences that cannot routinely be completed within four years are the Art BSE and BFA degrees. Both require 132 sh which amounts to an additional (ninth) semester of classes.

Strategies Employed By the University to Facilitate Graduation Within Four Years

The University employs a number of strategies that help to facilitate the graduation within four years of students who take an appropriate number of credits each semester. Among these strategies are:

The University supplies each student with an advisor to explain the graduation

1. *requirements and assist the student with the process.* It is the student's responsibility to meet with his/her advisor regularly and adhere to the requirements. Often students do

not fulfill this responsibility.

Prior to preregistration, deans, department chairs and scheduling committees attempt to predict the needs for seats in their departments' courses based upon enrollments in prerequisites, numbers of majors, faculty complement, data from the Registrar, information

2. *from the Admissions Office and the enrollment projections team and other historical information.* They assign faculty to teach the courses indicated by the predicted needs and arrange the schedule with as few conflicts within and between departments as possible.

After preregistration, additional sections for courses that are oversubscribed can be opened as long as funds, adjuncts or regular faculty members are available. If unforeseen course conflicts arise, changes are made, when possible, to eliminate these conflicts.

3. Occasionally, if courses are undersubscribed causing their cancellation, students who require those courses can obtain them through individualized instruction. Required courses are offered as often as possible, in many cases at least one section or more during each semester. Such courses are also offered during the summer or winter sessions.

- In recent years, the enrollment limits on certain courses have been raised to make room for more students, a strategy which some consider to be potentially counterproductive since a lower faculty-student ratio is considered by many authorities to be a positive indicator of quality.*
4. For example, in certain courses (Writing courses and Perspectives courses), a small class size was considered to be an essential part of the classroom/educational experience. The size of these classes has now been increased making them more accessible to students which altering the experience for the students in terms of faculty:student ratio.

- Adjustments to the General Education requirements have been made in the past and are*
5. *presently under consideration.* One result of such adjustments would be to make it easier for students to fulfill graduation requirements within four years.

It would appear from the information above that the strategies presently employed have been successful, but some further improvements in the system could boost four year graduation rates even further.

RECOMMENDATIONS

What Can Students Do to Maximize Their Ability to Graduate Within Four Years?

To facilitate graduation within four years, a student must satisfy a number of requirements and adhere to a relatively rigid schedule. Much of what a student must accomplish may seem obvious, but it does not hurt to state it for the record. Failure to adhere to any one of the suggestions listed below could result in a delay of the graduation date beyond four academic years from the beginning of the freshman year.

1. *A student must be enrolled in course work at Millersville for 8 consecutive Fall and Spring semesters and, as a general guideline, complete no fewer than 60 semester hours of applicable course work with passing grades by the end of the second year (24 calendar months), 90 hours by the end of the third year (36 calendar months) and 120 (or more*

hours in the case of some majors) by the end of the fourth year. It is recommended that students enroll in and pass 15 semester hours of classes each semester.

The student should successfully finish a minimum of 30 semester hours of General Education Core courses by the end of the second year, including core courses that also

2. *meet major requirements (required-related courses).* All remaining General Education requirements must be fulfilled by the end of the eighth semester. Obviously, a student's major requirements should be completed by the end of the eighth semester of study.

The student should begin a recommended plan of study toward the major/option in which s/he plans to graduate no later than the start of the third semester of study and thereafter

3. *make adequate progress toward completing the major.* Adequate progress should be defined by each major department in a statement provided at the time the major is declared or any other time. Specific majors may vary in this requirement. Generally, the Sciences require an earlier commitment.

Students should be notified that once a major has been chosen, a change in major may delay graduation pushing it beyond four years. It is likely that shifts to different options

4. *within the same major will not push graduation beyond four years unless the requirements for the two options are significantly different.*

Each student should read the relevant sections of the University catalog and departmental handbooks, adhere to the general credit and enrollment policies and minimum major requirements stated therein and meet with his/her assigned advisor at least once per

5. *semester; the student should avoid taking courses that are in conflict with that advice.* If the policies are unclear to the student, s/he should consult with his/her faculty advisor or Academic Advisement as soon as possible for clarification thus minimizing the chance that s/he will take courses that are in conflict with major and General Education requirements.

Before registration, the student should compile a list of courses that s/he would like to take and that would fulfill requirements so that if one course is not available at registration, another one on the list can be substituted. After meeting with his/her

6. *adviser, the student should register as soon as possible after his/her assigned registration time to maximize the chances of getting the courses s/he needs.* If the student does not get a desired course, s/he should place his/her name on a waiting list for the course and watch for openings in the courses regularly after the registration period has ended. It is important that the student not register for and take courses that will not fulfill graduation requirements. While such courses are undoubtedly valuable for the information and concepts they convey to the student, too many of them will take the place of courses that do fulfill requirements and will thus delay the student's graduation date.

Students should note that remedial courses do not count toward graduation requirements and that taking such courses can contribute to a delay in graduation date or may necessitate taking a Summer or Winter session course.

7. *Students should keep documentation that requirements have been satisfied (e.g., advising meeting attendance, advising records and instructions, degree audit sheets, etc.) and*
8. *regularly monitor their progress to catch any potential problems before they are difficult to correct.* The DARS report should facilitate this process.

To insure graduation within four years, it is important that each student earns a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 per semester so that an overall cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 can be maintained. As a corollary to this, a student should earn grades of C or better in all course work required for the major and have a cumulative GPA of 2.00 in all major course work attempted. While this is not a requirement, it will help the student

9. maintain a suitable cumulative GPA. Students should also be aware that some majors/options may have more rigorous requirements for retention in the major. for these majors/options a cumulative GPA of 2.0 may not be sufficient to continue with the junior/senior years of a program. Furthermore, students should remember that failing grades are very likely to delay graduation since they often require course repeats and thus additional time.
10. *The student should notify the University in writing through the graduation application of his/her intent to graduate at the proper time.*

What Can the University Do to Increase the Number/Percentage of Students Graduating Within Four Years?

When compared nationally and with other State-System universities, Millersville University has done a good job of creating an environment that facilitates graduation within the normally accepted four year period. However, there is room for improvement. While the student is ultimately responsible for the progress of his/her academic career, it is the responsibility of the University through its policies and offerings to maximize the number/percentage of students who can complete the baccalaureate degree in four years. It is the belief of the committee that a number of strategies will make it easier for students to finish their education in four years, perhaps elevate the percentages somewhat and eliminate some confusion that exists in some members of the student body. Such responsibility largely encompasses properly staffing the University with a sufficient number of faculty members to satisfy the demands of the student body and offering the appropriate number of courses to satisfy those demands. Many faculty members feel strongly that this should not be accomplished by increasing student-faculty ratios to the extent that learning suffers.

Recommended Student Schedule-Planning Aids

- The University should improve the information students are provided to assist them in planning their academic schedules and consequent improvements in academic advisement. There should be clear statements in the University catalog about majors/options that routinely take longer than four years to complete. Sample schedules for each major/option demonstrating the kinds of strategies students can use to*
1. complete the major within four years should be prepared and distributed. These schedules could be prepared on a semester-by-semester or year-by-year basis. Each department should determine which type of sample schedule works best with each major. It should be emphasized that such sample schedules are examples and not required. The major purpose of these schedules would be to demonstrate that a four year degree is possible and how it can be done.
 2. *Advisors should be assigned to get the best fit between the discipline of the advisor and the most likely major for the student. When possible, undeclared students should also be*

paired with an appropriate advisor in their most likely major. The University should continue to improve academic advisement and review academic policies that may be responsible for slowing down student academic progress without eliminating rigor within the program, e.g. changes in the General Education curriculum, changes in major requirements, etc.

3. *The University should widely publicize the fact that a minimum of 15 sh/semester is required for a student to graduate within four years.*

4. *We should add to the University catalog a statement, perhaps in the form of a code, indicating when each course will normally be taught (in the Fall, in the spring, in both semesters or in the summer/winter sessions). This should be done as soon as possible. It will help students to develop a long-term plan for their academic careers.*

5. *Students and faculty may be unaware that soon after preregistration closes, registration reopens and remains open until the day before the first class of the next semester begins. Better publicity about this might help students clean up their schedules in a more timely fashion.*

6. *Pamphlets (Do You Want to Graduate in Four Years?) should be prepared for distribution to the student body listing the things that students must do in order to assure they graduate in a timely fashion. Included in the pamphlet should be lists of behaviors that can delay graduation: low credit load, dropping courses, failing courses, courses that do not fulfill requirements, delayed entry into prerequisite courses, D's in prerequisite courses, late declaration of majors, etc.*

7. *Students should be told that internships and co-ops can sometimes delay graduation.*

8. *The University should emphasize a large majority of C's can lead to academic difficulty. While a C is a respectable grade and is considered to be indicative of satisfactory work, higher grades are needed to balance grades below a C.*

Registration-Related Recommendations

1. *It may be useful to conduct a separate survey indicating what courses students intend to take two semesters in the future (for example, registration in Spring 1997 for classes students intend to take in Spring 1998). Such advance information may help department chairs to plan more accurately when they are putting together their schedules. An added advantage of this approach may be that students will plan their schedules farther in advance than they presently do.*

2. *The role of waiting lists should be clarified for both faculty and students.*

3. *The University should provide courses as needed. For example, if the need for a required related course or a course within the major becomes evident during registration, resources should be obtained and made available to provide another section or sections of the course if necessary. The University should also strive to offer remedial, prerequisite and core courses during the Summer and Winter sessions to provide an opportunity for students to "catch up" if they should fall behind by failing a course or if they are unable to obtain such courses during the Fall or Spring semester.*

4. *The 16 credit registration limit at Registration should be lifted for students who are dual majors with cumulative GPAs of 3.0 or higher.*

5. *Students should be allowed to register for null courses. Since students often register for*

courses they do not intend to take when the courses they want are unavailable at registration, it is difficult to make appropriate adjustments by offering new sections and canceling courses that are undersubscribed. Null course registration should lead to better enrollment management information making it easier to effect appropriate scheduling adjustments. Students could then change their registration later once compensatory changes have been made.

SUMMARY

The above issues were considered as a first step in investigating the feasibility of a four year degree commitment to our students, similar to that imposed on state-affiliated schools in Iowa. It is the judgment of the committee that we can accomplish the goals of the four year commitment without entering into a contractual agreement that would require additional bureaucracy to monitor and may cause unforeseeable problems. It would be difficult to administer and monitor and might lead to student frustration resulting from attempts to adhere to a detailed set of rules. Furthermore, the Committee believes that it could create as much bad will as good will and could conceivably be counterproductive. In its first year at the University of Iowa, this program experienced 50% participation by freshmen; at Iowa State University, only 146 entering freshmen enrolled in the program's first year. There was a small increase in the number of credits taken per semester by enrollees relative to non-participants (14.16 compared to 13.58), both of which are below the 15 credits per semester required for graduation within 4 years. There was a higher cumulative GPA within the group of participants; better students may be more likely to participate.

We feel that increased effort in heightening student awareness of what is needed to ensure graduation within four years will improve graduation rates without much added cost or bureaucracy. This will serve to clarify the process and give students more guidance on what they need to do if they want to graduate within four years and should foster a decreased level of frustration with the system without the added risk and difficulty of a contract.

We have come to realize while investigating the issue of a four-year commitment that a number of matters that we have considered impact the above issue but also affect the day-to-day activities at the University and problems that often exist. We, therefore, recommend that the University embark upon a study of issues related to registration and scheduling and the distribution to students of information related to those topics in the hope that the associated procedures can be streamlined and made more efficient and workable for everyone.

Attachment B
Faculty Senate Minutes
15 April 1997

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Academic Policies Committee
DATE: April 15, 1997
RE: AMENDMENT TO ACADEMIC MINORS POLICY

Motion:

To replace the current wording of Item 12 of the Academic Minors Program Criteria on p. 70 of the Governance Manual

12. Students are prohibited from choosing any minor in which the courses needed to fulfill the requirements for the minor would duplicate one or more courses in their major department and are counted by the students in their major.

With the following new wording/policy:

12. In the selection and completion of an academic minor, the following rules will apply:
- a. Students who choose a minor containing courses from their major may not duplicate more than one course in the completion of both their major and their minor.
 - b. In defining the term "Major" in 12a., required related courses are excluded.
 - c. No student may minor in his or her major.

Rationale:

#1 Item 12's current wording was designed to close a loophole in a previous *GM* which would have allowed a student to major and minor in the same program ("a Mathematics major minoring in Mathematics", see *APC memo to Faculty Senate concerning Academic Minors Policy, 11 October 1991*).

#2 It is the present APC's conclusion that the existing policy is unduly restrictive. The "dual counting" of one required course in the major and minor should not be interpreted as a violation of the spirit of the minor program.

#3 The proposed policy also provides a framework for the several interdepartmental minors (African-American Studies, International Studies and Women's Studies) which now exist at the university.

#4 The proposed wording in Item 12c. retains the original intent of the existing Item 12.

Academic Minors Program

Program Criteria

The following conditions are established for departments offering minors:

1. A department shall establish its own policy regarding which courses shall count toward an academic minor subject to the following limitations:
 - a. There shall be a minimum of 18 credits from courses in the same department.
 - b. Courses that count toward a minor are also eligible to be used to satisfy the current University-wide General Education requirements subject to normal distribution requirements.
 - c. At least two courses should be at the upper-division level (300-400). Exceptions may be requested upon evidence of program depth.
 - d. No course needed for the minor may be taken Pass/Fail.
2. Although a department may require its majors to complete a minor in another department, it cannot compel another department to offer a minor, nor may the department requiring a minor stipulate the required courses in the minor area.
3. Courses counted as a minor can also be used to satisfy the required related portion of the curriculum record form, where appropriate.
4. A student selecting a minor must fill out an Intent to Minor form with the student's academic advisor and obtain approval from the department offering the minor. A copy of this form will be forwarded to the Office of Academic Advisement and the department offering the major.
5. Satisfactory completion of a minor (or minors) is shown on the student's academic transcript.
6. Each department offering a minor shall designate a coordinator to act as liaison with other departments and/or students needing advisement.
7. Departments developing minors shall submit the proposal for the minor through the regular approval process.
8. A minimum QPA of 2.0 in the minor is required for successful completion.
9. One-half or more of the work required for the minor must be completed at Millersville.
10. When minors are proposed that require related courses outside the minor department, the other departments involved will be consulted regarding appropriateness and availability of the required related course prior to senate approval.

11. The word option shall be used for the variety of terms previously referred to as concentrations, tracks, emphasis areas, or areas of interest within the majors and minors.
12. Students are prohibited from choosing any minor in which the courses needed to fulfill the requirements for the minor would duplicate one or more courses in their major department and are counted by the students in their major.

Attachment C
Faculty Senate Minutes
15 April 1997

Who is the Millersville Freshman?

Results of the 1996

Cooperative Institutional Research Program

Survey of Entering Freshmen

Focused Listing

On the lines below, list 4 or 5 words or short phrases that define what a "Millersville freshman" means to you.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Reflections on the Presentation

When I get back to my office, what will I say, if I have a chance to speak to my colleagues, about the Millersville freshman?

Should I consider adjusting my area's approach with Millersville freshmen? If so, what modifications might I explore?

Adapted from Angelo, Thomas A. & Cross, K. Patricia. (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
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