

The Advancement of Undergraduate Education

A Report by the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies

April 1972

In recent years there has been intense discussion of educational reform at the University of Pennsylvania. Several important documents attest to this discussion. In March 1971 the President and Provost published their "Proposals for Consideration by the University Community"; in April 1971 the Student Committee on Undergraduate Education published its report; soon thereafter came the undergraduate deans' "Inventory of the Liberal Arts". In October 1971 the Conference on Undergraduate Education brought our discussions into clearer focus. The fruits of this conference are currently being published. In January of this year, President Meyerson's important "Directions for the Mid-Seventies" was published and the Development Commission was established.

These statements have been accompanied by a good deal of action in many fields. Since 1968 or so, many of our departments have reformed and adapted their major programs, several combined BA-MA programs have come into being, and the College and College for Women have established the individualized major. Recently Urban Studies and Environmental Studies have achieved major status, and Black Studies has made a beginning with its first courses and appointments. With the establishment in the College of a system for independent study, such activities outside the major have become easier to pursue. In January of this year the College of Thematic Studies and the University Year for Action program enrolled their first students.

There has been a dramatic change in the emphasis put upon effective teaching. Evidence concerning the candidate's teaching ability must now accompany all departmental requests for reappointment and tenure. This year, much greater visibility is being accorded to the Lindback Awards for Distinguished Teaching. SCUE has developed a considerably more sophisticated course evaluation system, and several individual departments have developed their own mechanisms for establishing the quality of teaching.

A recent development in the area of undergraduate education is the appointment of a Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies. His principal task is to act on behalf of the Provost in the area of undergraduate education. He is charged with providing leadership and direction. It is his special task to initiate new undergraduate programs, strengthen existing programs, and coordinate those academic activities which cut across schools or take place outside their context. While such tasks can be identified quite specifically with the Vice-Provost, they are really the collective responsibility of the University—a responsibility taken very seriously by many of our deans, faculty members, students and others. The Vice-Provostship provides a focus for the efforts of such responsible people.

In what follows, a set of general guidelines, suggestions, principles and ideas for undergraduate education at Pennsylvania is set out by the Vice-Provost and his staff. It is really the collective work of many hands; many of these ideas have long been with us and some are even in operation. The general aim of the whole is to increase the flexibility of our programs while maintaining their quality, and to inculcate in our students a sense of commitment and dedication. The document is intended to stimulate discussion and set priorities. It should not be regarded as comprehensive. There are many areas of undergraduate education which go unmentioned here. We hope to turn to them in future reports. Such reports will deal with: Continuing Education, Evaluation Procedures, Advising, Pre-professional Education, and other topics.

A. THE CURRICULUM

1. Although our teaching resources are deployed almost exclusively along departmental lines, a large number of our students (almost all freshmen and large numbers of sophomores) do not have majors. Even those who do are engaged essentially in interdisciplinary study: major programs provide at most a focus for study ranging over a considerable number of disciplines. Unfortunately the instruction we currently offer is almost exclusively disciplinary: we do little to assist our students in drawing their education together into a coherent whole. Furthermore, many departments forget that the majority of credit units they award goes to students majoring in other disciplines. The institution pays insufficient attention to out-of-class instruction: all too often we define learning as taking place in classrooms between certain daylight hours, and we divide students' time into studying and leisure. These, of course, are false dichotomies.

2. Too frequently departments tend to service their majors, not students in general. But even in these terms they are not always successful. Many of our major programs lack genuine substance. They are without discipline or direction. Faced with student opposition to requirements, we have all too frequently removed the requirements without any attempt to replace them with rational persuasion, or an advising system, or extracurricular structures aimed at educating willing students. Lacking the power to force students into programs and courses, we have also given up on winning students over by reason and example—activities which should lie at the heart of our mission as educators.

3. Our occasional failure to acknowledge the interdisciplinary nature of undergraduate study in our modes of instruction has led to curious anomalies. Contact among departments on matters curricular, for example, is minimal. There is little attempt, except from above, to coordinate course offerings or appointments or programs along rational lines. This attitude of *laissez-faire* extends also to elective courses. The College for Women and The College have strict rules regarding the number of electives a student must take in order to graduate, and they forbid the departments, whose own requirements vary, to encroach on the electives. We are thus faced with a curious situation in which there are strict constraints on the ability of the institution to assist students in structuring almost two-thirds of their undergraduate work. Much of the present report is directed toward remedying this situation.

4. As for individual courses, the system is so constructed that we appear to favor the teaching of the same thing year after year. Courses and course descriptions must be approved months or even years in advance by a centralized committee mechanism. Departments may not offer courses without such approval. There are ways round such regulations, of course, but they are subversive of educational processes. One is to make course descriptions so general that while the teacher has some maneuverability the students have no idea what they are signing up for. Another is to include several courses under a single number, without listing them in the catalogue.

5. A first and important move towards eliminating these problems might be to make curriculum committees and committees on instruction mechanisms for review, rather than approval of course offerings, thereby leaving departments free to experiment and change without going through complicated procedures in advance. This, in turn, would make possible more precise descriptions of courses in the catalogue.

6. We shall take immediate steps to improve the undergraduate catalogue, making it easier to follow and also including in it special-interest sections bringing together the various courses in, say, Law and Society, Women's Studies, Afro-American Studies, or Drama. We shall explore the possibility of publishing the catalogue rather later in the year,

at the same time considering rather more extensive reorganization of our publications. It might, for example, be better to publish booklets to explain the undergraduate programs and the programs of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, while combining all the course offerings, graduate and undergraduate, in a single course catalogue. We have asked Dean Kenneth Rothe to explore the options in this area.

7. At a time of financial difficulties it is particularly important that we make the best possible use of the teaching resources at our disposal. In this connection several trends seem worthy of encouragement. First, we should work to eliminate needless duplication of course offerings at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Where such courses can be combined without sacrificing quality this should be done. Undergraduates should be allowed to take graduate courses when they have the necessary competence. Second, we should eliminate needless duplication *among* departments, developing effective service courses which can serve a wider range of needs, and making extensive use of cross-listings. Professor Richard Beeman is currently investigating the problem of course duplication.

8. We should establish course credit by examination in certain fields. Exemption from certain courses within a major or among distributionals could be acquired by examination, and examinations based on a reading list might also be developed in lieu of distributional requirements at least in the social sciences and humanities. We have asked the Educational Policy Committee of the College to establish a set of procedures for credit by examination and submit them to the College Faculty.

9. We must give attention to class size. Too many of our courses are in the intermediate range, too large for discussion, too small for genuine economy. More large courses and more small ones seemed called for. The Office of the Vice-Provost will shortly come forward with a set of recommendations in this regard.

10. The Vice-Provost has recently sent to the Educational Policy Committee of the College a recommendation for the accreditation of courses initiated and conducted by students. Such courses, based upon group learning and common interests, would dispense with traditional evaluation procedures and formal class sessions. Provision for such courses would constitute formal recognition of student initiative in certain aspects of our educational procedures.

11. The question of requirements—distributionals and the language requirement, for instance—is dealt with, indirectly at least, in later sections. In principle, requirements are educationally unsound, but a relaxation of requirements must be accompanied by a willingness to build alternative structures by persuasion rather than coercion.

12. In recent years, students' interest in language has declined. Ignorance of language is apt to breed a dangerous insularity, while knowledge of foreign languages broadens a student's horizons and makes him aware of linguistic and cultural relativity. We intend initiating a program to increase students' awareness of language, making foreign language an acknowledged presence in campus life. We hope to initiate a College of Thematic Studies in a foreign language, to bring cultural events to the campus, and to set up foreign-language residences. We have asked for the cooperation of the language departments in these activities and are currently establishing a special study group to work on a coherent plan.

13. One of the great resources which the University has only recently begun to explore is that of audio-visual education. We shall encourage teachers to make greater use of the equipment now available to them, try to educate them in its use, and seek ways of improving the resources themselves. The University lacks an adequate film library; it has no library of the spoken word; the lectures of visiting scholars are seldom recorded and preserved. These are activities in

which we might usefully invest some of our energies. Indeed the whole question of the use of television in education, in which the University has made some important advances, merits further exploration. The Vice-Provost has asked Professor Joseph Bordogna of Engineering and Mr. Eric van Merkensteijn of the Language Laboratory, to advise him.

B. THE BEGINNING STUDENT

14. It is seldom regarded as part of the faculty's role to insure that the very best students, from the most diverse backgrounds, are admitted to our university. But in reality the faculty can play an important part in recruitment and admission. Not only can they serve on screening committees but they can also combine their scholarly travels with recruiting work and perhaps even engage in educational activities in the high schools themselves. Our new Dean of Admissions, Peter Seely, has already begun to involve the faculty more extensively in admissions work. During the month of April he and the Vice-Provost will make a concerted effort to alert the faculty to the need for greater participation.

15. The faculty has a very special function to perform in advising incoming freshmen and steering them toward worthwhile programs. The same is true with respect to transfer students. This year the work of the Dean of Students' office will be augmented by our own efforts to coordinate freshman mailings, provide contact with department advisers, and organize special orientation procedures for transfer students. The Residence Office and individual residential projects will make a special effort to accommodate transfer students, and the Registrar will adopt flexible registration procedures. Professor Richard Beeman is coordinating our efforts in this field.

16. This year, the University will designate a far higher proportion of the entering class Benjamin Franklin National Scholars. Students so honored will not be segregated from the rest of the freshman class, but an informal academic program will be worked out for them in the first semester, perhaps with the cooperation of our Benjamin Franklin Professors. We have asked for the assistance of Professor Lawrence Klein in this regard. Professor Daniel Hoffman will chair a small committee to plan a more extensive academic program for future years. He will be assisted by Professor Ralph Amado, Director of the General Honors Program.

17. Just as we should make a special effort to welcome Benjamin Franklin Scholars to the University, so we should extend ourselves to make Pennsylvania hospitable to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The back-up services for such students could be made more effective. Certainly the departments should be much more directly involved in tutoring students in need of special attention, and the progress of such students should be followed carefully, so that help can be offered *before* serious difficulties set in. The summer programs for "pre-freshmen" and "post-freshmen" are an important part of these back-up services. The Vice-Provost has been active in the search for solutions to the problems of Black students and will continue his activities in this area.

18. A further report on Admissions and attendant questions will be issued in the Fall.

C. THE FRESHMAN YEAR

19. The student's attitude to the University is shaped during his first year here. It is during the freshman year that we must awaken in him the sense of commitment to learning which will make his time here intellectually profitable. Often away from home for the first time, alone in a place both new and overwhelmingly large, the freshman is looking for a role through which to identify with the institution. It is the special task of our dedicated and serious teachers and scholars to assist him, lest he be seduced by the anti-intellectualism which, while by no means dominant, is far too common on our campus. The Vice-Provost will continue to make the freshman year one of his special concerns.

20. At present most of our teaching is directed at the junior and senior years and towards graduate students. It is sometimes claimed that freshmen are not ready for small classes—that they need to gather basic knowledge in large classes first. But this claim is misguided, both because it fails to acknowledge the psychological ingredient in education—the question of motivation and commitment—and because it seems to assume that education is a process of teaching those already committed, not of winning over, persuading, and opening eyes. Adequate attention to freshmen and sophomores will require some realignment of our priorities. The fact that there are so many graduate courses, and even upper-level undergraduate courses with extremely low enrollment does suggest that small introductory courses and special programs for freshmen and sophomores are feasible given our present resources. The Vice-Provost is currently studying enrollment patterns and hopes soon to make proposals to deans and department chairmen in this regard.

21. This coming fall we shall initiate a program of freshman seminars. Limited to an enrollment of fifteen students each, they will provide courses of study specially designed to bring the freshman in contact with serious scholarly work. They will be taught by members of both the undergraduate faculties and the professional schools. Many will emphasize interdisciplinary study. In all cases the seminar leaders will also assist the students in adjusting to the University, by serving as advisers of first resort, able to direct students to others for specific help. It is hoped that they will win the trust and friendship of their students and help give them the sense of direction they need. With the help of the English Department, which has fused its freshman offerings with the seminar program, we shall be able to offer every freshman a place in one of the 120 seminars to be offered. Mrs. Patricia Meyers and Dean Kenneth Rothe are responsible for program coordination.

22. One of the aims of the freshman seminar program is to involve the resources of the University as effectively as possible in freshman instruction. It is also hoped that such a program will enhance the reputation of the University among high school seniors—a hope which is based on the assumption that our best recruiters of quality students are in fact our freshmen. Other measures being taken to improve the quality of the freshman year include Colleges of Thematic Studies and residential options for freshmen, to be considered below.

D. THEMATIC & INTENSIVE STUDIES

23. The first single-semester intensive program called the College of Thematic Studies is currently in operation, under the direction of Dean Peter Conn. A program along similar lines will be proposed for next spring. In addition the University will offer freshmen and sophomores four other thematic programs of a more ambitious kind, which will draw together the resources of the Wharton School, the Schools of Engineering and the College. In cooperation with Professor John Brainerd, we have developed a two-semester sequence of courses and seminars in Systems Study. The four-credit program will be available to forty students. A one-semester program in Transportation, available to twenty-five students, has been developed by Professor Benjamin Stevens. Its curriculum is structured round problem-solving—the focusing of a number of disciplines on a single set of problems. The University's well-known Energy Center will offer a one-semester seminar program in Energy Management, culminating in a three-week field trip. This program will be directed by Professor Iraj Zandi. Finally, the Wharton School, drawing also on the skills of the College, will offer a seminar program in the Business Culture, an attempt to relate the world of business to the general culture of the United States. The programs in Transportation, Energy and the Business Culture will all involve visiting speakers and other outside activities and they will all take place in the spring semester. It is the hope of the origi-

nators of Wharton's program, Professors Thomas Schutte and William Gomberg, that it will form the basis of a more extensive program of freshman seminars in the Wharton School.

24. Its activities this year have made the University of Pennsylvania a pioneer in the area of thematic studies. It is our intention to continue such activities in the future. We are, however, very aware of the fact that the impulse for these activities has come from the central University administration or from the schools rather than from individual departments. In principle it is better that new educational programs emerge from departments than that they be superimposed on existing structures by the Provost or the schools. In the future we shall encourage departments to develop their own Colleges of Thematic Studies in cooperation with related departments. We also hope that patterns of intensive study will appear within individual disciplines. A given department might, for example, offer a four-credit one-semester program of seminars, courses and independent study on a special topic within its discipline.

25. Also under investigation, principally by Deans Charlotte Fiechter and Peter Conn, is the possibility of a C.T.S. in Europe—a summer program perhaps drawing on the teaching resources of both Pennsylvania and a British or Continental university. Yet another suggestion calls for accredited course work overseas in the summer followed by a C.T.S. in Philadelphia in the fall. A C.T.S. on the City, or the Renaissance, or International Business might take such a form.

26. A Bicentennial College, with an intensive one-semester program (and summer programs) using the historical and social resources of Philadelphia and culminating in special programs in 1976 has also been proposed. Such a College would be staffed by faculty from our University and would be open to our own students, students from other institutions and students from overseas. We have asked Dean Charlotte Fiechter to examine the feasibility of this project, and we hope to move soon to the establishment of a preparatory committee, perhaps with the special assistance of our Departments of History and American Civilization.

27. The Bicentennial College would probably involve help from other institutions. Indeed the general area of inter-institutional cooperation at the curricular level offers many opportunities. We currently have a reciprocal course credit arrangement with certain neighboring colleges, but there is great scope for the expansion of such exchanges, both to extend and to conserve our communal resources. The Vice-Provost has asked for the general help of the Committee of Undergraduate Deans in this regard. Professors Frank Bowman and John Wideman are currently investigating the possibility of cooperation in programs for study abroad.

28. Another means of maximizing our resources as well as diversifying our faculty is to make far more extensive use of the scholars from overseas. One or two of our departments, realizing that British universities have a different calendar from us, occasionally invite scholars to spend six weeks here and teach intensive courses. These visits have been limited to eminent scholars, but there is a pool of middle-level resources in other countries which could readily be tapped for intensive instruction, or the offering of special supplementary courses. We could make best use of our visitors by housing them in residential projects (e.g. College House) on the campus. The Vice-Provost has established exploratory contacts with two British universities in this regard.

29. We shall propose shortly to one of the University's departments that it establish a tutorial term—a semester of study centered on tutorial sessions with a faculty member or faculty members, supported by extensive independent study. It is our hope that eventually a tutorial term will become a regular option in most majors. We are also moving to establish a tutorial term outside the context of the major. We hope that this fall a pilot group of five students will work intensively on an interdisciplinary project with a single faculty

member. Using current course offerings as resources, they will audit whatever courses, or parts of courses, they require to complete their project successfully, but all their course credits will be assigned to the tutorial.

30. Among other recent curricular proposals is that of a great books program, somewhat similar to the well known program at St. John's College. Such a program might eventually grow out of the General Honors program, or it might form the focus of a new College, which would accept students for shorter or longer periods and be structured essentially around tutorials. The University's recent announcement of an expansion of the group of Benjamin Franklin Scholars suggests the possibility that their particular needs might form the focus of a "great books" college (which would not of course be confined to Franklin Scholars). This will no doubt form one of the concerns of Professor Hoffman's committee, already mentioned.

E. THE MAJOR

31. Faced with the lack of commitment of so many of our students, we are sometimes inclined to suggest that students so wishing should have no major at all, merely collecting the necessary credits and then graduating. Less radical reformers suggest majors in general studies, or so empty their departmental majors of structure that they are tantamount to general majors. But in an institution as large as Pennsylvania, and in an educational climate where so little attention is given to providing structure, we would be wrong to surrender to the forces pressuring us away from structured study. We do not need more requirements, whether in the major or outside it, since requirements are too frequently educationally counterproductive, but we do need to provide our students with a set of alternative structures leading to the degree.

32. Where major programs lack prescribed structure, we should suggest several alternative courses of study and publish them in the undergraduate catalogue. We might develop several different tracks leading to major certification in a given field. Departments could also investigate combined major programs involving the taking of, say, six credits in one department and six in a related department—of course in accordance with a logical pattern.

33. We should investigate the possibility of extended majors—intensive courses of study which cut into the electives and which might possibly be interdisciplinary in nature. Related to this proposal is the whole question of early specialization, whereby we might waive distributional requirements and cut into electives to provide specially selected freshmen with individualized programs focused on single disciplines or groups of disciplines.

34. Also worthy of investigation, perhaps in the context of proposals for thematic study, is the so-called temporary major—an interdisciplinary major built round a group of students and remaining in existence only for the length of time these students take to pass through an institution. We hope to propose a concrete plan in this respect shortly.

35. A related proposal, arising from the Conference on Undergraduate Education, calls for "mini-majors"—course clusters in particular areas, possibly leading to interdisciplinary majors, but not necessarily so. The scope for providing coherent links among groups of courses even within the existing curriculum is considerable. We might, for example, establish a four-course program in Victorian Studies, consisting of three courses and a tutorial and extending over a full year. Successful completion of the sequence would be recorded on a student's transcript. Perhaps completion of two further sequences, for example in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, would qualify the student for major certification in Cultural Studies. Completion of clusters in, say, political science, sociology, and history could lead to a major in Social Sciences, or clusters in political science, philosophy and his-

tory could lead to a major in Philosophy and Politics. Of course, such majors would require an adequate advising system and a sense of cohesion. The mini-major concept can also be used for a coherent organization of distributional requirements, or for a "minor" supplementary to the major. A workgroup on Renaissance Studies, consisting of representatives of the Departments of English, History, Romance Languages and Art History, has begun investigation of a program in this area, and no doubt other groups will follow.

36. There has been a good deal of discussion concerning the establishment of course offerings or majors in new fields. One of these is law, where our present offerings are sparse. Whether we should move to a major in Law and Society or stop short of so extensive a program remains unsolved, but more courses in the legal area, offered either through the Department of Business Law or through the Law School, would enhance our undergraduate program. A committee of the Department of Business Law, at our request, is currently working on a proposal for an undergraduate chair in law. This committee is chaired by Professor Paul Wohlmuth. Professor Beeman is exploring the possibility of establishing a chair in Film, working from a proposal drawn up by the Annenberg School. A committee of the Annenberg School is currently studying the establishment of a major in drama. We have asked Dean Jean Brownlee to look into the development of a program in Women's Studies.

37. A field in which there is need for rapid development—a need recognized to the full by the University—is Afro-American Studies. The precise shape of the program in Afro-American Studies will depend on the availability of faculty and on the faculty members' particular skills. Above all, the cooperation of departments in the recruitment of personnel will be essential. Shortly to be presented to the faculty of the College are the first non-departmental course offerings in Black Studies.

38. Two new majors have recently been approved by the College—Environmental Studies and Urban Studies. Both areas represent not so much new strengths as realignments of existing university resources. No less than four departments of the University, for example, are concerned with Urban Studies at the graduate level and several others include urban specialists among their faculty members. It seems only logical to extend this concern to the undergraduate level. In this context we should remember that Urban Studies is not the same as community work. Education may well involve problem-solving, but it is principally concerned with preparing the student and developing his capabilities, not simply with sending him out to work for degree credit. Education and *praxis* are separate and distinct—a distinction rather clearly recognized in the current Urban Studies program. Our support for the Urban Studies program will be extended and strengthened considerably in 1972/73, to allow for an influx of new majors.

39. We shall shortly present to the relevant Committees on Instruction a new program for the training of secondary school teachers. Developed by the Graduate School of Education, it offers a combined B.A. and M.S. in four years. Students will major in the field of their choice, but their final year will be spent also in intensive training through so-called "mini-courses" (*ad hoc* courses of short duration) and a teaching internship.

40. The department to which a student belongs, or with whose subject he feels special affinity, should be much more than an organization providing him with credits. The physical layout of department offices and other facilities should encourage easy contact between students and faculty members. Each department should have its own student club, either for undergraduates alone or for all students, and where such clubs do not now exist efforts should be made to establish them. In some instances students may lack the sense of organization necessary to get a club started. In that event the

department itself should provide the impetus. Such clubs should organize academic and social events and also contribute to the day-to-day running of the departments.

41. Departments should also take an active interest in the way their students live, encouraging them to organize academic and intellectual activities in residences, and encouraging faculty members to live in residences. Initiatives of this kind will increase the impact of the department's own discipline on the campus at large.

F. RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

42. There is a great deal of interest, particularly on the part of students, in breaking down the traditional separation between classroom study and residential living. This is a wholly admirable development. It is important that the departments develop ways of responding to it.

43. Among the projects currently running, College House has proved particularly attractive. We see in this project a chance to make permanent a pattern of residential living which may have a decisive influence on the character of this University. We hope to bring the educational parts of the College House program under the control of the academic sector, coordinating them through the office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies. But at the same time we shall try to increase the autonomy of College House until it is ready to become a permanent college.

44. Hill House has also had its special program this year. We shall strengthen it next year by leavening its freshman population with upperclassmen, expanding its educational program and increasing its resident faculty. A smaller number of Hill House Fellows will be linked more intimately with its programs, and some of the Freshman Seminars will be taught in the building. It is our hope that this residence too will eventually achieve collegiate status, though with a more shifting population. We have asked Professor William Whitney to assist in the development of next year's program, and we have called on Mrs. Margo Marshall to coordinate our efforts with respect to Hill. An able committee, under the chairmanship of Professor Burton Rosner, has already selected the graduate student staff.

45. In principle we have reservations about the separate accommodation of freshmen in special residences. While it may ease the transition from high school to college, it fosters a certain immaturity which may ultimately hinder a student's adjustment to academic life and his sense of intellectual commitment. To test some of these assumptions, a project involving eighty students, half of them freshmen, will operate next year in Harnwell House, under the supervision of Professor Gerald Meyers and Mrs. Patricia Meyers. The project is an important test case also for another reason: it will establish the extent to which it is feasible to run structured residential projects in the high-rise residences.

46. In Stouffer Triangle a new living-learning project will open in the fall. Somewhat similar in intent and direction to College House, it will house three resident faculty members including a resident Master. Mr. Michael Neiditch, of College House, has been serving as principal organizer and liaison with the Office of the Vice-Provost. He will shortly be succeeded by a resident manager, Mr. Ira Harkavy. A committee to select a Master has been established under the direction of Dean Charlotte Feichter and Mr. Randolph Ivy.

47. A proposal for a residential project for Black students is currently under consideration. The project calls for the creation of a living-learning environment for some eighty freshmen and sophomores, with graduate-student counsellors and resident faculty members. Conceived at least in part as a means of bridging the gap between the all-Black environment of home and high school, and the largely white environment of the University, it is aimed not at segregation but at effective assimilation.

48. The administrative pattern sketched out for College House will hold good for other residential projects: their academic programs will be put under the control of the academic sector. Our hope is that eventually there will be many colleges and similar projects across the campus, each with its own distinctive character and flavor. Ideally such "character" should not be confined to a single discipline or field, though this should not preclude language projects, for example.

49. An essential element in most residential projects is the availability of faculty members. We shall encourage faculty members to live in the residences by special arrangements and by working to increase the number of faculty apartments in the buildings. We shall establish a special committee to oversee residential projects and review new proposals. Its membership will consist of members of the Residence staff, faculty members and students.

G. THE ROLE OF THE FACULTY

50. It is a truism that the faculty provides the largest educational resource on the campus—but the implications of this observation are seldom faced squarely. At present, a faculty member's first responsibility is to his department, and within his department his first responsibility is to teach courses offered by his department. His department has principal, almost exclusive, control over his time, his energies and his future at Pennsylvania.

51. There would be nothing wrong with such departmental control over faculty if departments were prepared to recognize fully their obligation to nurture and improve the over-all educational situation in the University—not just the classroom situation, but the educational aspects of residential life, extra-curricular activities and so on. This is regrettably not the case. We are not suggesting that departments move into the business of providing entertainment and summer-camp counselling, but that the "summer-camp" atmosphere on the campus be reduced with the aid of the academic disciplines themselves.

52. There are many faculty members who ignore the pressures of departmental work, by taking on interdisciplinary courses or courses in other fields, by entering the university administration in academic functions, by living in undergraduate residences, or by supervising non-departmental independent studies. If they are junior faculty members, as many of them are, they may suffer for this ordering of their priorities. The fact remains, however, that if junior faculty members were not prepared to live in student residences the quality of residential life would decline, and if junior faculty members were not prepared to assume administrative or committee responsibilities, the academic atmosphere of the University would be seriously impoverished.

53. It is essential that we move as soon as possible to attract to Pennsylvania faculty members willing to participate in new educational programs, broadly talented, and able to engage in educational activities at the peripheries of, or outside, their own disciplines. The Vice-Provost will work to insure that in the recruitment of faculty members the criterion of versatility is applied along with other more customary criteria. Once on campus, a faculty member should receive adequate recognition for work outside his department.

54. At the same time, we should move to eliminate inequities from department to department in teaching load. Statistics developed by the University administration show wide variations in this area. The Vice-Provost's staff accordingly intends developing a plan for standardizing the teaching load across the campus, at least in the undergraduate schools, and for including other types of teaching within the assessment of the teaching load. This will probably require formal increases in the teaching load in many departments. Extra teaching time so generated might be put at the disposal of individual schools for the development and staffing of interdisciplinary programs and similar activities, with the proviso that such time could

be returned to the departments if there was no need for it at the school level. The Vice-Provost hopes to present a detailed proposal to the academic deans shortly.

55. Under this plan, the assessment of teaching load would be based not only on in-class departmental teaching but also on the supervision of dissertations and independent studies, courses taught outside the department, services of an educational nature to student residences, and so on.

56. Recognition of non-departmental work should include broader opportunities in tenure decisions for reports and recommendations from outside departments, and for the initiation of reappointment or tenure procedures at the school level in exceptional cases. The recent report of the McGill Committee on Faculty Appointment and Promotion Policies and Procedures proposes significant steps in this direction. It may be that we should also develop mechanisms for the initiation of such procedures by properly constituted interdisciplinary groups.

57. The term "interdisciplinary studies" has of late become a rallying cry for many members of the University community whose notion of "disciplinary studies" is either jaundiced or non-existent. But this should not cause us to ignore the importance of breaking down some of the barriers which currently isolate us within disciplines. When the University was smaller and its ways less compartmentalized, communication across the disciplines was perhaps greater than it is today. We shall work to reduce these barriers in every way we can. We shall encourage faculty exchange among departments, team teaching, and so on. We shall encourage the development of interdisciplinary seminars and colloquia for faculty members, such as already exist in some areas. We shall work to promote such exchange in the context of the Faculty Club, an organization which currently stands at the very fringes of faculty life instead of at its center. We shall call for the establishment of a special working group to consider this last possibility.

58. When generally contented with its institution and intellectually alive, a faculty teaches better. This is one reason why we should increase contact among faculty members. Certainly the improvement of teaching should be one of our first priorities. A committee under the direction of the Vice-Provost is already working to improve the operation, and increase the number, of awards for outstanding teaching. Such awards are currently available on a university-wide basis and there are a few at other levels (school or department) as well. There should be more restricted awards, for particular schools or subject areas or areas of expertise and there should be a variety of procedures for the selection of awardees (e.g. selection by faculty committee, selection by student committee, selection by vote, etc.).

59. The University is already working to involve more teachers in the graduate and professional schools in undergraduate education. A significant number of new freshman seminars, for example, will be offered by faculty members from these schools. This lessening of the traditional division between graduate and undergraduate teaching is likely to be salutary for both. Indeed, the notion that younger and less experienced students are less desirable to teach has done untold harm to undergraduate studies and should be resisted in all its manifestations.

60. We shall encourage new types of teaching, experimentation with new formats for courses, and so on. The Vice-Provost will report regularly on such developments in the *Almanac* and encourage others to learn from successful experiments.

61. From time to time one hears talk of the "inbreeding" of the Pennsylvania faculty. Compared with many other institutions, and thanks to policies discouraging such inbreeding, Pennsylvania's problems in this area are relatively small. However, it is good for our faculty members to spend time away from the institution teaching at other schools. We will foster

faculty exchange with other institutions, both for these reasons and also because such exchange helps to diversify and invigorate our faculty resources. One very obvious area for such exchange is the College of Thematic Studies, for which we might borrow a certain number of faculty members from another institution for one semester, loaning it some of ours for a similar C.T.S. program at the other institution in the following semester.

62. One of the main criteria in tenure cases and in cases of reappointment is quality of teaching. We are often told that there exist no adequate ways of assessing excellent teaching. This contention is an exaggeration. A department is as capable of assessing the teaching ability of one of its members as it is of the objective assessment of the quality of his scholarship—provided it is prepared to develop adequate mechanisms for so doing. Such assessment is best carried on at the department level, since the particular type of teaching employed in a given field may be different from that in another, and because the department is best acquainted with the subject matter in question and the teaching assignments of its faculty members. There should be significant, but not exclusive, contribution by students in this process, and opinions should also be sought from outside departments. The notion that students are best able to assess teaching and faculty members' scholarship is at best an oversimplification, and it can encourage departments to undervalue teaching ability.

63. The assessment of teaching ability for these purposes should be distinguished from the compilation of statistics on teaching and courses through standardized evaluation sheets. Such statistics can be very useful as guides for students in choosing courses, and the development of a standardized form for the gathering of such statistics should receive high priority. We welcome the initiatives of SCUE in this regard, and will continue to work closely with its organizers.

H. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The formal position of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies in the academic administration remains somewhat unclear, and the following can be regarded as a tentative proposal for its regularization.

64. The Vice-Provost will work principally through his assistants and through special work-groups created to work on specific projects for a specific and limited period. Up to the present, he has had close contact with the Committee of Undergraduate Deans. While such contact should continue, a small advisory or consultative body might be established to work closely with him and assist in his work. Both the work-groups and this committee should normally include students.

65. The short-term aim of the Vice-Provost's Office is to establish the following: an educational experiment of some kind in every department, mechanisms for effective evaluation of teaching in every department, a foundation proposal or a proposal for the Development Commission from every department.

66. In this last, and in other respects, the office will work in cooperation and interaction with the Development Commission, serving as one of a number of channels for proposals, especially those aimed at increasing the financial base of undergraduate education. It also stands ready to cooperate with the various faculty-student committees at school and university level, recognizing that the improvement of undergraduate education at Pennsylvania, like the improvement of the University as a whole, is dependent upon the full cooperation of all parts of the University community.

67. The reports and recommendations of the Conference on Undergraduate Education will form a set of guidelines and priorities for the coming months. In the fall we shall issue a progress report on the present document and (with the assistance of Professor Ralph Amado) on the CUE reports.

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