

To the University Community:

Please consider SCUE's White Paper on the College of Arts and Sciences General Requirement. This paper is the product of intense research, debate, and above all, hard work. We have attempted to reconcile many rather disparate criticisms of the current system with a compromise which we believe will best suit students, faculty, and administration alike.

This issue has recently come to the forefront of discussion among SAS committees such as the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE) and the Curriculum Committee. SCUE applauds the efforts of the College of Arts and Sciences to review and revamp the General Requirement. Please realize that although much of what we discuss may echo what has recently been discussed in committee, this paper was conceived and written, in an earlier draft, before May of 1993. We hope that it helps to focus the University community on what the major deficiencies of the Requirement are. Moreover, we hope that our suggestions will be given due consideration. We feel that ours is a convincing case, else we would not have authored this paper.

If, after reading and considering this paper, you would like to make comments, please submit them to SCUE, 127 Houston Hall, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6306.

— Jonathan Pitt, Chair, and Michael Treisman, Vice-Chair,
The Student Committee on Undergraduate Education

White Paper on the College of Arts and Sciences General Requirement

December 1993

Introduction

Each year at the University of Pennsylvania, Convocation speakers trumpet Benjamin Franklin's legacy. Freshmen are told that while at Penn, they can expect to learn to become their own lifelong teachers. The fulfillment of that promise is inextricably linked to the requirements which structure students' educations during their four undergraduate years. The requirements for graduation would ideally ensure a well-rounded education which would expose students to a diversity of approaches and methodologies, thus enabling them to continue their pursuits of knowledge throughout their lives. The General Requirement functions as an integral means towards achieving this goal. For this reason, the Student Committee on Undergraduate Education (SCUE) formed the Subcommittee on the General Requirement.

Over the past year, the Subcommittee has undertaken an extensive investigation of the existing structure and implementation of the College General Requirement, with the goal of making recommendations for the Requirement's improvement. SCUE began researching this topic because we believed that the system was suffering from neglect. We later confirmed our beliefs by probing undergraduate sentiment on the matter. Most often, students complained that the Requirement represented an obstacle rather than a means towards an enriching education.

Before SCUE began its critique of the General Requirement, the Committee examined the history of the system from its inception to its current form. We spoke with numerous members of the faculty, administration, and student body, some of whom played a significant role in the development of the General Requirement's design. Those with whom we consulted include former Provost Michael Aiken, Dr. Ivar Berg, Dr. David Brownlee, and Dr. Kent Peterman. SCUE would like to thank these individuals, as we used the insight they offered regarding the present state of the General Requirement in order to formulate our own opinions on the future of the system. We also researched curricula at other institutions, ranging from major research universities to small liberal arts colleges. From this investigation, SCUE gained a broader perspective on the significant role a general requirement can play in undergraduate education. In addition, we obtained past faculty, administrative, and student reports on the General Requirement including *The CUE Subcommittee Report on the General Requirement* and the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the General Requirement. The Committee spent most of its time brainstorming and arguing among its members. The ideas we present in this paper reflect our thorough debate and review.

A university general requirement should reflect the character of the institution, and in so doing should orient students towards its strengths. At Penn, the General Requirement fails in the latter consideration. This paper will attempt to address several issues which remain unresolved since the Requirement's last critique in 1990. In our analysis, we shall first assess the philosophy and rationale behind the current system. We shall then argue for a change in the structure and implementation of the General Requirement. Finally, we shall examine topics related to the maintenance and future evolution of the Requirement. We should note that our method of argument requires that we raise, in the first part of our paper, significant problems with the Requirement which we do not resolve until the second part. We believe,

however, that this structure will enable the readers to distinguish between a proposal which may or may not be adopted in its entirety, and a set of problems we feel must be addressed under any model of the Requirement.

Critique of the Current System

This section shall address problems, limitations, and strengths of the General Requirement. First we shall demonstrate the need for a formal rationale of the Requirement by those involved with its maintenance. We shall then focus on the structure and the implementation of the current system.

The Need for a Rationale from the University

An essential aspect of the General Requirement, which encompasses over one fourth of a College student's education, is the clarity of its educational philosophy. The General Requirement must have a coherent philosophical foundation in order to provide undergraduates with a logical understanding of its goals. The rationale for the Requirement should construct the framework through which courses may be chosen to fulfill the Requirement. From a student's perspective, a General Requirement devoid of this foundation is reduced to a mere arbitrary assortment of courses.

Our research demonstrates that students and faculty members have a poor understanding of the General Requirement's goals. *SCUE appeals to the faculty and administration responsible for the institution and maintenance of the General Requirement to present a clear philosophical justification and explanation of the system to the University Community.* The statement of rationale should address the following three questions:

1. What are the guiding principles behind the General Requirement system?
2. What is the role and purpose of each sector?
3. What are the characteristics and attributes which a course must possess in order to fall under a given sector?

Providing such a rationale, however, seems a difficult task, owing to the great degree of divergence in opinions of Arts and Sciences faculty. In 1990 a CUE Subcommittee distributed a survey to SAS faculty which solicited their opinions on the General Requirement (See Appendix A*). Question number five asked whether the courses that satisfy the Requirement should be broad or narrow in their subject matter. Of one hundred thirty-one (131) respondents, forty-five percent (45%) indicated that courses should be broad in scope, while forty-three percent (43%) held that they should be narrow. These results demonstrate the division of faculty sentiment which the format of the General Requirement must attempt to resolve. In a later section of this paper, we will outline a plan which incorporates this consideration.

Assessment of the Current Structure

Any attempt to break knowledge into seven distinct categories is, by its nature, artificial. Thus, the sectors of knowledge "created" by the General Requirement are, and should be understood to be, hypothetical constructs. As such, the current breakdown possesses the potential to be a functional

* Appendices referred to in this report are available for examination at the Rosengarten Reserve Desk or at the SCUE Office, 127 Houston Hall/6306.

and viable means of structuring the Requirement. The existing structure's most prominent deficiency is its inability to address the need for both breadth and depth in subject matter. *A more coherent system, given the views of the faculty and students, might incorporate the opportunity for undergraduates to take courses which concentrate on a specific area of knowledge.* This system would provide students with in-depth exposure to a given subject or to various methodologies.

The notion that the General Requirement should encompass breadth and depth—viz., that students should be able to take upper level, in-depth courses in addition to courses of a more introductory nature—is controversial to be sure. We believe that one way of framing the argument is to explain that the Requirement should seek to achieve two different kinds of breadth in students' education. In introductory courses, students are generally exposed to a wide range of information from a specific field. Narrowly-focused courses, however, offer a different kind of breadth. As the actual expanse of subject matter narrows, the purview of a course tends to include many more viewpoints and methods through which to analyze the material. In other words, what one loses in breadth of information, one tends to gain in breadth of viewpoints. Enabling students to take in-depth courses as part of their General Requirement fulfills an important educational role, in addition to allowing undergraduates to enroll in a more challenging and advanced selection of courses.

Having explained our viewpoints on the structure of the General Requirement, we shall now explicate an additional, although apparently overlooked goal of the General Requirement: to provide a common intellectual experience among students in the College. *Ideally, the Requirement would, in part, provide for some intellectual common ground among students from diverse backgrounds.* This provision would allow intellectual experiences to spill out beyond the classroom to a greater extent than presently occurs. The current structure of the General Requirement does not provide any such common experience, owing to the large number, and disparate nature of, the courses appearing on the sector lists.

Although it may appear that we have argued simultaneously that there are too many and too few courses offered for students in the General Requirement, we shall attempt to reconcile this seeming contradiction in our proposal for a new model.

Assessment of the Current Implementation

Clearly one of the most troubling aspects of the General Requirement is the apparent inconsistency between the stated educational missions of the Requirement and the process by which courses are placed on the sector lists. Students are told that the selection of courses on the lists represent "a blend of educational means and goals that is suited to Penn's particular intellectual climate and instructional capability."¹ Often, however, recommendations from departments suggesting that specific courses appear on the sector lists are motivated not purely by educational considerations. Because a General Requirement course will tend to increase enrollment, many departments find themselves making such decisions on financial bases rather than educational solvency. As a result, the current sector lists do not reflect a coherent educational philosophy.

An examination of the courses which appear on the sector lists supports the above criticism. (See Appendix C for current sector lists.) For example, in the Arts and Letters sector, one discovers introductory-level courses which concentrate on a broad range of knowledge. These include courses such as English 74, *The Short Story* and Comparative Literature 191, *Classics of the Western World I*. On the same list, one finds courses which explore subjects quite narrow in focus, such as English 25, *Chaucer*, and Comparative Literature 241, *Faust in European Literature*. A comparison of these courses provides evidence for disparities within particular sectors with respect to the breadth and depth of subject matter. The same can be said for other sectors. Within the History and Tradition list, courses such as History 10, *The World since 1400*, and Philosophy 1, *Introduction to Philosophy*, appear next to courses such as Anthropology 130, *Barbarian Image*, and American Civilization 219, *Archaeology Field Project*. Similar examples exist in the Society sector. One is hard-pressed to justify the range and types of courses offered within the current General Requirement system.² This division reflects the needless confusion which hinders faculty's and students' understanding of the Requirement. In later sections of this paper, we shall suggest actions which can be taken to resolve this issue.

Our contact with undergraduates has revealed other problems. Chiefly, students complain that the Requirement compels them to take courses they do not enjoy and prevents them from taking more appealing courses. More specifically, advanced students feel goaded into enrolling in courses below their ability. This trend arises because of the introductory nature of the majority of courses on the sector lists.

SCUE believes that students should have the leeway to take intermediate and advanced courses as part of their requirement. Lamentably, many College Juniors and Seniors who have not completed their General Requirement find themselves enrolled in introductory lectures in order to graduate. When they take issue with their situation, upperclassmen are generally told that the Requirement is designed to be fulfilled in their first two years at Penn. Indeed, the responsibility for adequate academic planning rests on the shoulders of undergraduates. Nonetheless, SCUE questions both the notion that the General Requirement should consist solely of introductory courses and the notion that the Requirement must be completed within the first two years. The Requirement was created to expose students to a broad range of information and educational approaches. It is unclear why this need occur only in the first half of an undergraduate education.

The seemingly arbitrary exclusion of certain courses from the sector lists raises another substantial criticism of the General Requirement. Students who examine the sector lists tend to share our skepticism. Accordingly, they rightly react with frustration when they find that certain classes which apparently fit within the stated philosophy of a given sector cannot in actuality be used to fulfill that sector of the Requirement.

Another major drawback of the General Requirement both for students and for instructors is that it often engenders the placement of non-majors in courses suited for students majoring in the subject. This situation forces instructors to teach their course material either at an introductory level for the non-major students or at a level appropriate for advanced students. From the standpoint of the faculty, both situations are far from ideal. Instructors must either relegate themselves to teaching their classes in a less rigorous form, or must teach at a pace which precludes participation by a large portion of undergraduates. Students, on the other hand, are either insufficiently challenged by the course or are overly burdened by its level.

Science and Mathematics Courses

Earlier, we stated that several criticisms which apply to the three humanities sectors do not pertain to the mathematics and science sectors. Indeed, these sectors have a distinct character which warrants a separate evaluation of the courses which appear on their sector lists. SCUE believes that significant problems persist concerning courses that satisfy the General Requirement in the Physical World, Living World, and Formal Reasoning and Analysis sectors.

We have concluded that a number of courses, Physics 5, Chemistry 11, Biology 6, and Mathematics 170 among them, fail to meet the stated objectives of their respective sectors. The literature on the General Requirement holds that "Courses on the sector lists are chosen to be intellectually rigorous, while providing access to the ongoing conversations that are the growing tip of the disciplines involved."³ The science and mathematics courses undergraduates take to satisfy the General Requirement should serve as introductions to scientific methodology and not as a means to avoid contact with scientific study. Students need to develop a strong understanding of these subject matters, not a "watered down" version which fails to impart fundamental knowledge of a particular field.

The *College Advising Manual* (page 14) describes the Living World sector as "dealing with the evolution, development, and function of living systems." Biology 6, entitled Human Biology, represents one course included in the Living World sector that ostensibly satisfies the General Requirement. After discussing the goals and merits of this course with faculty members and students, SCUE has concluded that Biology 6 does *not* accomplish the stated mission of the sector. A comparison of Biology 101 and Biology 6 demonstrates the differences between a course which fulfills the goals of the Requirement and the sector, and one which does not. (See Appendix B for the syllabi for these courses.) Biology 101 discusses the fundamental tenets of Biology including cell theory, photosynthesis, respiration, genetic theory, and plant biology. These topics address "the evolution, development, and function of living systems" at their most basic level. On the contrary, Biology 6 covers topics specific to the human body. SCUE does not question the integrity of the course material; rather, we argue that the subject matter in Biology 6 does not impart essential knowledge of living systems as rigorously demanded by the General Requirement. Subjects such as menopause, spermatogenesis, and "medical decision making at the end of life" do not "provide a self-sufficient overview of the substance of a field...."⁴

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¹ Committee on Undergraduate Education, *Rationale of Sector Lists*

² The same criticism, however, cannot be directed towards the science sectors, for the classes are arranged, more or less, in a chronological order (i.e. a student cannot take Biology 240 before Biology 101).

³ CUE Subcommittee Report on the General Requirement, 1990

⁴ The Undergraduate Academic Bulletin 1992-1994, p. 3

Perhaps more important, Biology 6 neither prepares students to major in Biology, nor allows them to enroll in another upper level Biology courses.

Contrary to some individuals' arguments, removing courses from the sector lists that are unfit for the purposes of the Requirement would not force students to enroll in a course requiring a laboratory section. Within each science sector, students may choose from a number of courses which do not include laboratory work. For instance, if students prefer not to take Biology 101 to fulfill the Living World sector, they may choose a course in Anthropology or Psychology. Similarly, within the Physical World sector, courses in Astronomy, Environmental Studies, and Geology offer alternatives that require no laboratory work. Most importantly, these courses impart a basic understanding of the subject at an intellectual level appropriate for the science sectors of the General Requirement.

Mathematics 170 represents another course which, irrespective of its intellectual merit, should not fall within the Formal Reasoning and Analysis sector. Like Biology 6, Math 170 neither enables students to major in Mathematics nor does it prepare students to take other mathematics courses. A course which fulfills one of the science or math sectors, to be sure, should not function as a "loophole," but rather as an introduction to further study in a discipline. Instead of allowing students to use Math 170 to fulfill their Formal Reasoning and Analysis requirement, the General Requirement should be construed in such a way as to offer students a choice among a Calculus, Statistics, Logic, Linguistics, or Computer Science course.

SCUE envisions a General Requirement that presents rigorous and challenging course work to students in every sector. The Physical World, Living World, and Formal Reasoning and Analysis sectors should serve to acquaint students with those disciplines, and not to steer undergraduates away from them. For the reasons stated in this section, *SCUE recommends the revampment or removal of modified science and mathematics courses.*

Proposal for a New General Requirement: The "A & B" System

It should be clear from the preceding sections that SCUE wishes to retain the current seven-sector division. As we have elsewhere stated, the division of knowledge into distinct categories is destined to be nondefinitive. Keeping in mind this limitation, the seven existing sectors provide an acceptable means toward ensuring breadth in the undergraduate educational experience. The crux of our plan involves the division of the three humanities sectors into two categories: the "A" bracket and the "B" bracket. Although our plan addresses the science and mathematics sectors, it does not call for major structural change in those areas.

The Humanities Sectors

According to our model, each of the three humanities sectors (History and Tradition, Society, and Arts and Letters) would be divided into an "A" bracket and a "B" bracket. Students would thereby take three "A" courses and three "B" courses for a total of two courses in each sector. The "A" course could be chosen from a sector list, similar to existing lists, but far smaller in the number of course offerings. Each of the three "A" bracket lists would contain approximately five to ten courses fulfilling the educational mission of a given sector. The courses would be introductory in their subject matter and suited for first- and second-year students. *These courses would be designed specifically for the General Requirement.*

The shift to a smaller number of courses in the "A" bracket, we hope, will give rise to more common intellectual experience among first- and second-year students. Students could take such experiences with them outside of the classroom, and into the latter half of their collegiate educations. The creation of new, high-enrollment courses would also allow for the reduction of other General Requirement courses currently on the sector lists. The new courses could possibly be team-taught, and might even be interdisciplinary. What is most important, however, is that they be specifically created for the fulfillment of the "A" brackets of the three humanities sectors. "A"-type courses should serve as introductions to, and foundations for further studies within, the humanities. Because such courses would absorb much of the student enrollment currently accommodated by other General Requirement courses, significant monetary resources could be pumped into the "A" bracket courses. One might even imagine a large lecture course taught by one or two senior faculty members which would have sections taught by advanced graduate students or by junior faculty members.

As opposed to the "A" bracket of the General Requirement, which we have characterized with a large degree of structure, the "B" bracket would be loosely construed, so as to allow the undergraduate to determine its content. Virtually every humanities course offered to undergraduates at the University not on the "A" bracket list would be suitable for fulfillment

of the "B" bracket of the Requirement. *The specific requirement which each individual "B" course fulfills should be indicated in the course register rather than on a sector list.* In this way, the "B" bracket of the three humanities sectors is a *distributional* system rather than a sector-type requirement. (This, it should be noted, would not preclude the possibility that one course will fall into more than one humanities sector.) Students should be encouraged to take courses for their "B" bracket requirements in all four years of their undergraduate studies.

Presently, the English Department has undertaken the task of creating large, introductory courses specifically designed to fulfill the General Requirement. By limiting the number of courses the department will place on the sector lists (in this case, the Arts & Letters sector), the department has freed up instructors to teach the topics they enjoy to majors and students genuinely interested in further study. Once this type of plan was offered to the faculty in the department, many professors volunteered to teach the Requirement classes on a cycle so that they and their colleagues could have more freedom to teach the courses they desired to teach.

The Mathematics and Science Sectors

We have determined that the science and mathematics sectors do not lend themselves to the same type of "bracketing," as we have called it, as do the humanities sectors. *Given this and other considerations, the science and mathematics sectors of the Requirement are, with the notable exceptions pointed out earlier in this paper, acceptable in their current form.* We should, however, reassert our earlier contention that in order to fulfill the required three courses in the Physical World, Living World, and Formal Reasoning and Analysis sectors, students should actually experience the sciences and mathematics. In other words, meta-science courses—the likes of which appear currently on the "Science Studies" sector list—while being intellectually rigorous and worthwhile in their own right, are not suitable alternatives for actually *doing* science and math. Accordingly, such meta-science courses should remain a part of the General Requirement, but should fall only under the Science Studies sector, thus giving students the option of taking a "great ideas in science" course as a substitute for a fourth science or mathematics course, but not for any of the other three. Courses considered to fall under the "Science Studies" distribution should be so marked in the Course Register, in the same fashion as "B"-type humanities courses will be denoted.

Summary: The SCUE Proposal

To help our readers visualize our proposal for the General Requirement, we have created a chart summarizing our proposed system, which can also serve as the new model of the General Requirement worksheet.

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The General Requirement: 10 Courses	
<p>The Humanities Six courses from the following sectors:</p> <p>I. Society II. History and Tradition III. Arts and Letters</p>	<p>The Mathematics & Sciences Four courses from the following sectors:</p> <p>IV. Formal Reasoning and Analysis V. The Living World VI. The Physical World VII. Science Studies (Optional)</p>
<p>The "A" Bracket You must choose one course from each of the three "A" Bracket Humanities sector lists. These courses are introductory and require no prerequisites. You may use <i>only</i> courses from the sector lists.</p> <p>I. _____ II. _____ III. _____</p>	<p>Sectors IV through VI You must choose one course from each of the three sectors lists for sectors IV, V, and VI. These courses serve as introductions to the sciences and the mathematics.</p> <p>IV. _____ V. _____ VI. _____</p>
<p>The "B" Bracket You may choose any three courses denoted in the course register as falling within the three humanities sectors. You must choose one such course from each sector.</p> <p>I. _____ II. _____ III. _____</p>	<p>Floater or Sector VII You may take either one additional course from any of the sector lists for sectors IV, V, or VI; OR You may take one course denoted in the Course Register as falling within Sector VII. (IV, V, VI or VII) _____</p>

Additional Merits of the SCUE Proposal

The SCUE proposal addresses several difficulties previously encountered by undergraduates in fulfilling their General Requirement. The creation of the "B" bracket allows students a greater degree of choice in their education, and enables advanced students to take courses at levels more appropriate to their experience and expertise. Note also that this system would minimize the extent to which students would have to take additional courses in their major fields of study to satisfy the General Requirement. Along with increasing the number of courses which may fulfill the Requirement, our plan calls for encouraging students to spread their Requirement over the entirety of their undergraduate career. Consequently, our plan allows for greater integration of educational experience throughout the course of undergraduate study.

The SCUE proposal also resolves the problem of intellectual stratification among students in certain General Requirement courses. Whereas instructors were previously faced with the difficult task of teaching courses to students with varying degrees of knowledge and skill, our new system ameliorates this problem as the "A"-type courses will be general in nature and designed for all levels, while the "B"-type courses will be taken solely by students who are prepared for, and interested in, that specific course.

Having "A"-type courses which are broad and introductory would ensure undergraduate exposure to a range of knowledge and methodologies, which is the stated goal for the current system. This common intellectual experience will allow for first- and second-year students' educations to extend well beyond the classroom. Given the limited number of courses available for students to take for the "A" bracket of their humanities requirement, carryover activities could easily be planned by the College or by the departments offering the courses.

Philosophically the "A & B" system accommodates what we have argued is the duality of breadth. For just as the General Requirement should ensure that College undergraduates experience breadth in knowledge, it should equally reinforce breadth in methodology. By creating an option for students to choose courses for the Requirement which may either cover a broad or narrow range of knowledge, and a broad or narrow range of methodologies, the structure accepts the complexities of education and gives undergraduates the responsibility and the privilege of choosing which areas to explore.

What Is SCUE?

Founded in 1965, at a time when students had little control over their own educations, The Student Committee on Undergraduate Education is the oldest existing branch of student government at the University of Pennsylvania. SCUE's suggestions and proposals over past three decades have initiated some of the most influential projects in Penn's history. These include course evaluations, the cocoduction of the University, the Freshman Seminar Program, the implementation of Fall Break, and the creation of Undergraduate Advisory Boards in each undergraduate department.

SCUE takes as its purview any issue which affects undergraduate education or the intellectual atmosphere at Penn. We work to enhance and expand curricular opportunities, advising, and the overall quality of the undergraduate academic experience. We serve our duty in various roles: sometimes as advisors to the administration, and sometimes as advocates for the student voice. All of our efforts are predicated on the tenet that undergraduates must have a say in the academic programs of which they are most integrally a part.

In addition to addressing specific academic issues, SCUE sponsors Take a Professor to Lunch Week, the Course Majors Fair, and Education Week. The Committee is also publisher of *The Practical Scholar: A Student's Guide to Academics at Penn* and in the past, published *Perspectives on a Liberal Education*. Although we once published the *Penn Course Review*, or the "SCUE Guide," we no longer do so. Since 1983, a separate University student group has handled that task. Currently, some of our projects include an attempt to secure more reading days for undergraduates, a proposal for a Speaking Across the University program, a comprehensive review of academic advising at Penn, and a proposal for inter-school minors.

SCUE consists of twenty-five general members, who are selected by a six-member steering committee. The steering committee is elected by a full committee vote each January. We accept applications for membership from undergraduates both in the fall and in the spring semesters; the Committee always seeks bright, articulate, motivated undergraduates who wish to have a greater say in the educational decisions which define their experiences at Penn.

— J.P./M.T.

Multi-Cultural Elements in the General Requirement

Since the introduction of the General Requirement in 1987, faculty and students at the University have made appeals for the integration of historical and current perspectives of non-Western cultures into the traditional curriculum. The inclusion of non-Western viewpoints in the curriculum is important. As nations, ethnic groups, and races of the world become aware of their increasing inter-connectedness, the study of other cultures provides students with a broader perspective and a deeper understanding of social, economic, and historical phenomena. Some have argued for a sector within the General Requirement that encompasses non-Western or non-traditional subjects only. The General Requirement, in its current form, has attempted to address this issue by including courses which focus on topics specific to ethnic, racial, and religious groups within the humanities sectors.

The creative intent of the above-mentioned courses in the General Requirement was surely to acknowledge the increasing importance of studying non-Western viewpoints. *Nevertheless, SCUE believes that the placement of courses that integrate many different perspectives would better enhance the understanding and appreciation of other cultures by all students.* SCUE holds that the perspective of one culture should be viewed in comparison to those of other cultures. *Therefore, we recommend that a single, non-Western viewpoint not be the sole scope of any course within the "A" bracket. Rather, such viewpoints should be introduced into "A" bracket courses along with other perspectives.* For example, in a History and Tradition course such as United States History from 1865 to the Present, the experiences of black, Irish, and Japanese Americans should be included as these groups significantly influenced and were affected by events occurring within the United States during that time period.

SCUE recognizes the difficulty of assuring that General Requirement courses in the humanities contain various perspectives. We respect the academic freedom each professor enjoys, and we do not seek to dictate the content of General Requirement courses. At the same time, the Committee maintains that undergraduates must be educated in a manner which reflects the cultural composition of the United States and of the world.

Maintenance of the General Requirement

The current mechanism used to maintain the General Requirement functions ineffectively at ensuring the Requirement's high quality. The failure of this mechanism results from both its structure and its charge. Further, our preceding proposal would require certain changes in the ongoing maintenance of the Requirement.

The Sector Panels

Currently, seven separate sector panels designate the courses included in the General Requirement. The lack of standardization among the seven has rendered the system ineffectual. Because each panel decides which courses appear on its list, the Requirement as a whole is disjointed. Often the courses chosen represent the arbitrary and economic concerns of those involved (both departments and sector panels). Moreover, no students sit on the sector panels, which make the most important decisions on implementation of the Requirement. This regrettably disenfranchises students from the process by which their own educations are determined.

Proposal: The Standing Committee

In our proposed system, one unified committee would serve the needs of the General Requirement: a Standing Committee on the General Requirement with responsibility for the continuing evaluation of the courses on the "A" bracket sector lists for the humanities and of the sector lists for the mathematics and sciences (with the exception of the Science Studies sector).

The creation of the "B" bracket of the humanities sectors incurs new demands on those responsible for the Requirement's implementation. The Standing Committee should therefore act upon the suggestions of each department in designating courses to fulfill the "B" bracket of a sector. The Standing Committee should follow an identical procedure for the Science Studies sector. All such designations should be noted in the Course Register, (as opposed to sector lists) and should be noted in the Course Timetable.

Conclusions

We hope the readers of this SCUE White Paper will consider the ideas we have discussed. Our criticisms of the current General Requirement and our proposal for a new system represent thorough research and debate. It is indisputable (and, at this point in time, undisputed) that the Requirement must change. Our proposal seeks to create a compromise, and reflects even the most disparate of criticisms of the current system.

Implications of the General Requirement for the College of Arts and Sciences reach far beyond the College itself. The undergraduate divisions of the three other schools look to the College in forming the liberal arts components of their own curricula. The General Requirement of the College not only should stand as a pragmatic way to broaden College students, but should represent a model of education administered in its finest form.