

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
March 15, 2001**

Members present:

Mary Albrecht, Mary Dale Blanton, Chris Cox, Catherine Dalton, Tom George, Fred Gilliam, Robert Hinde, Andrew James, Faye Julian, Suzanne Kurth, John Lounsbury, Johnnie Mozingo, Robert Peterson, Paul Pickney, Max Robinson, Harold Roth, Margie Russell, Delores Smith, Frank Spicuzza, Linda Tober, and John Zomchick.

Members absent:

David Anderson, Richard Bayer, Heather Collins, Eric Haley, Laura Howes, Buck Jones, Robert Maddox, Mike Mullen, Carol Seavor, Jean Skinner, Allen Taylor, Michael Ware, Bill Woodcock, and Robert Woodruff.

Proxies:

Teresa Berry (Rita Smith) and Kathy Warden (Bob Jackson).

Julian called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

I. College of Business Administration Report—Mary Holcomb

Mary Holcomb, Interim Assistant Dean of the College, presented an outline of a proposed revision to the undergraduate business curriculum. The program will include a business functions course which provides the framework for the entire curriculum. Additionally, the curriculum includes more team-taught courses and collaborative work, increased accountability, more prescribed courses in the major, and a fully integrated set of courses. She added that the College will continue to offer service courses for the University.

Discussion focused on how the new business minor will affect those majors that require the business minor as part of the major and the importance of a broad based education for business students. Holcomb welcomed the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes and their impact on other colleges and programs. An outline of the proposed curricular structure follows on pp. 13135-13144.

II. General Education Committee Report—Fred Gilliam

Gilliam presented a draft report of the recommendations of the General Education Committee. He noted that the proposals were not radically new but recommendations for improvement of the current University Requirement. An important aspect of the proposal is that various aspects of general education requirements are integrated into the major. The committee concluded that there need not be two distinct bodies of education, but a continuation and reinforcement of general education requirements within academic majors. The committee welcomes responses to the report. Pinckney stated that students should begin to reflect on the value of education when they are freshman and might include a freshman seminar or academic orientation for all students. Julian concurred, noting that an academic orientation is very important. Anne Mayhew of the Provost's Office suggested further action might await discussion with in-coming provost Crabtree

who has implemented a new general education program at his current university, Colorado State. Gilliam agreed. The draft report appears on pp. 13145-13156.

There being no further business, the Council adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Tober
Secretary to the Undergraduate Council

PROPOSED UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

Presentation to the
Undergraduate Council

March 15, 2001

Dr. Mary Collins Holcomb
Interim Assistant Dean
Undergraduate Programs

The Existing Undergraduate Business Program

General Education Requirements (64 hours)

Subject Areas	Hours
English 101, 102	6
Mathematics 123, 125 or 141, 142	6 or 8
Intermediate Foreign Language	6
Social Science	6
Natural Science	8
History	6
Oral Communications	3
Written Communications	3
Ethics	3
Humanities	6
Art Elective	3
Non-business Electives	6 or 8

The Pre-Business Core (17 hours)

Subject Area	Hours
Statistics	3
Computer skills	3
Accounting	6
Economics	4
Career Planning	1

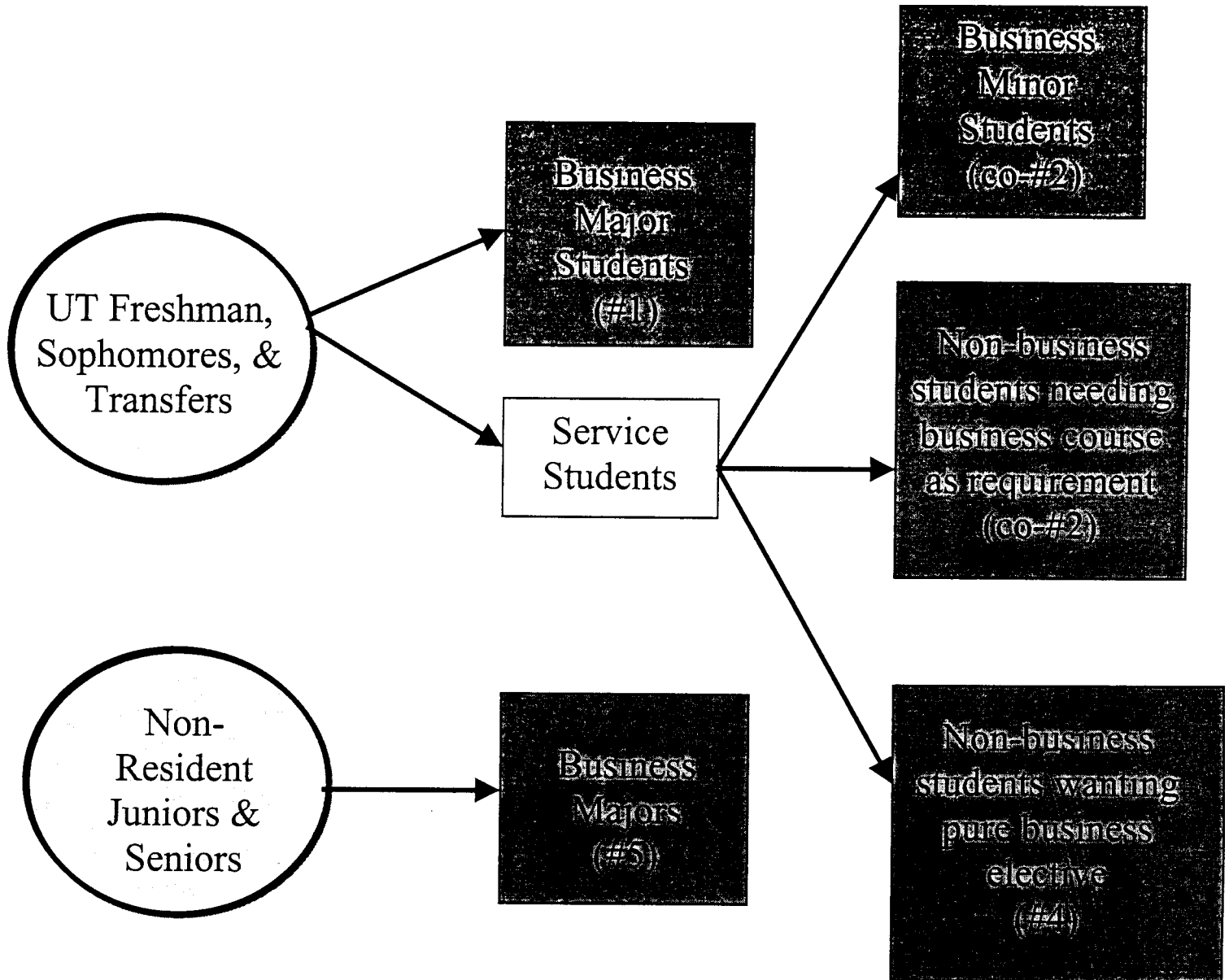
The Business Core (18 Hours)

Business Functions & Strategy	Hours
Business Law	3
Marketing	3
Finance	3
Management (Operations and Human Resources)	3
Organizational Strategy	3
International Business	3

The Major (27 Hours)

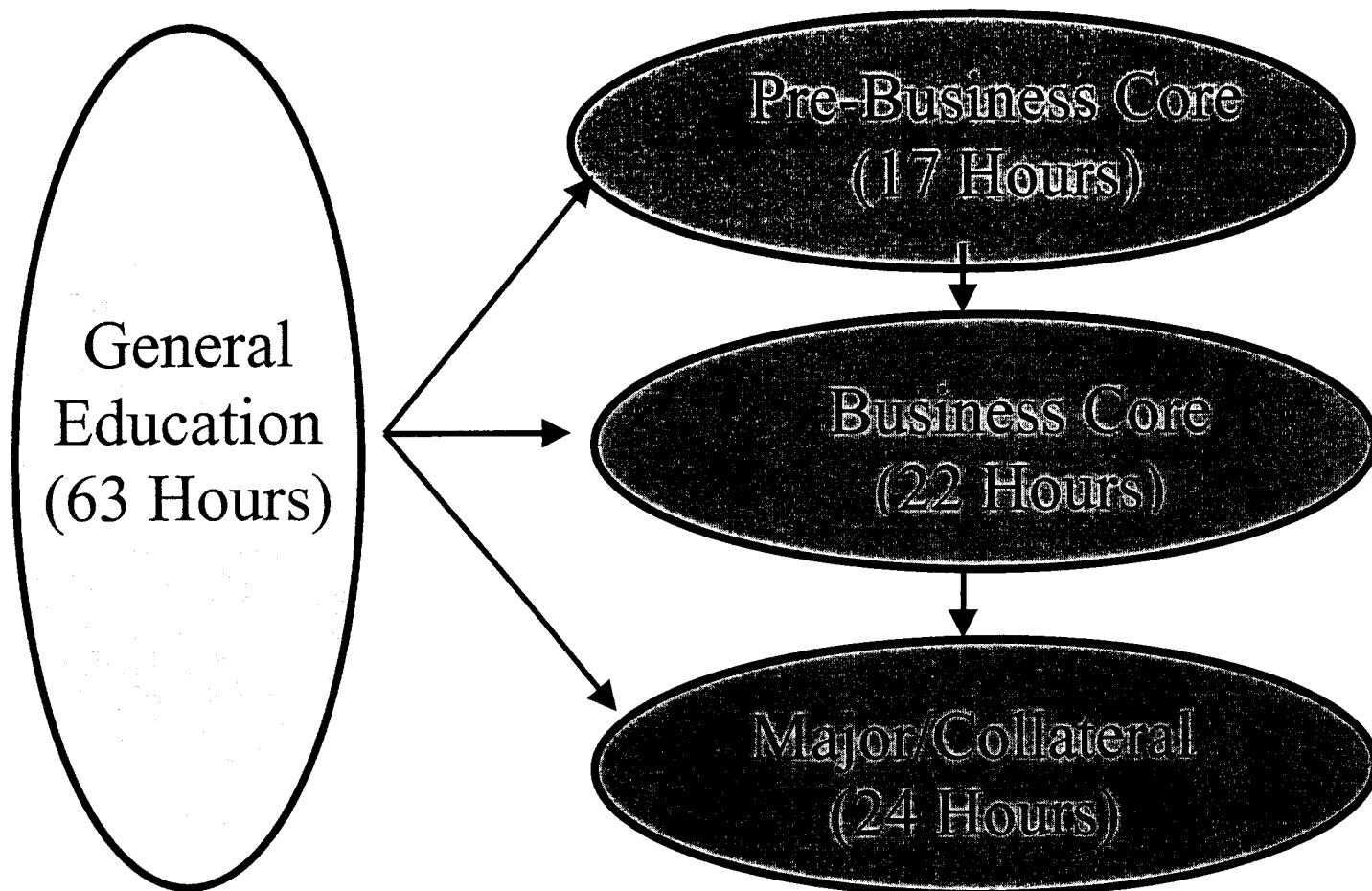
Subject Areas	Hours
Required Major Courses	18
Electives	9

Target Student Groups & Priorities



= Priority

Undergraduate Business Program Structure



PROPOSED UNGERGRADUATE PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The UG General Education Curriculum (63 Hours)

Proposed Subject Areas	Proposed Hours
English 101-102	6
Math 123-125 or 141-142	6 or 8
Intermediate Foreign Language	6
Social Science	6
Natural Science	8
History	6
Oral Communication	3
Written Communication	3
Humanities/Arts	3
Non-business Electives	14 or 16

The UG Pre-Business Core (17 Hours)

Business Tools	Business Environment	Business Functions
Statistics – 3 hours Accounting – 5 hours (3 financial, 2 managerial) Computer skills – 1 hour	Economics – 4 hours	4 hours covering the Functions of Business: ▪ Marketing ▪ Finance ▪ Logistics ▪ Operations ▪ Organizational Behavior ▪ Information management

The UG Business Core (22 Hours)

Professional Skills	Business Management	Business Environment
Communication -- integrated into all business core learning Team Building -- integrated into all business core learning Ethics -- integrated into all business core learning Technology -- integrated into all business core learning	10 hours covering Contemporary Business Management, currently to include: ▪ Supply Chain Management ▪ Demand Management ▪ Lean Operations Management ▪ Information Management ▪ Integrative Learning Experience Financial Management -- 3 hours Organizational Behavior -- 1 hour Business Strategy -- 3 hours	Global Environment -- 3 hours Legal Environment -- 2 hours

The Major Curriculum (24 Hours)

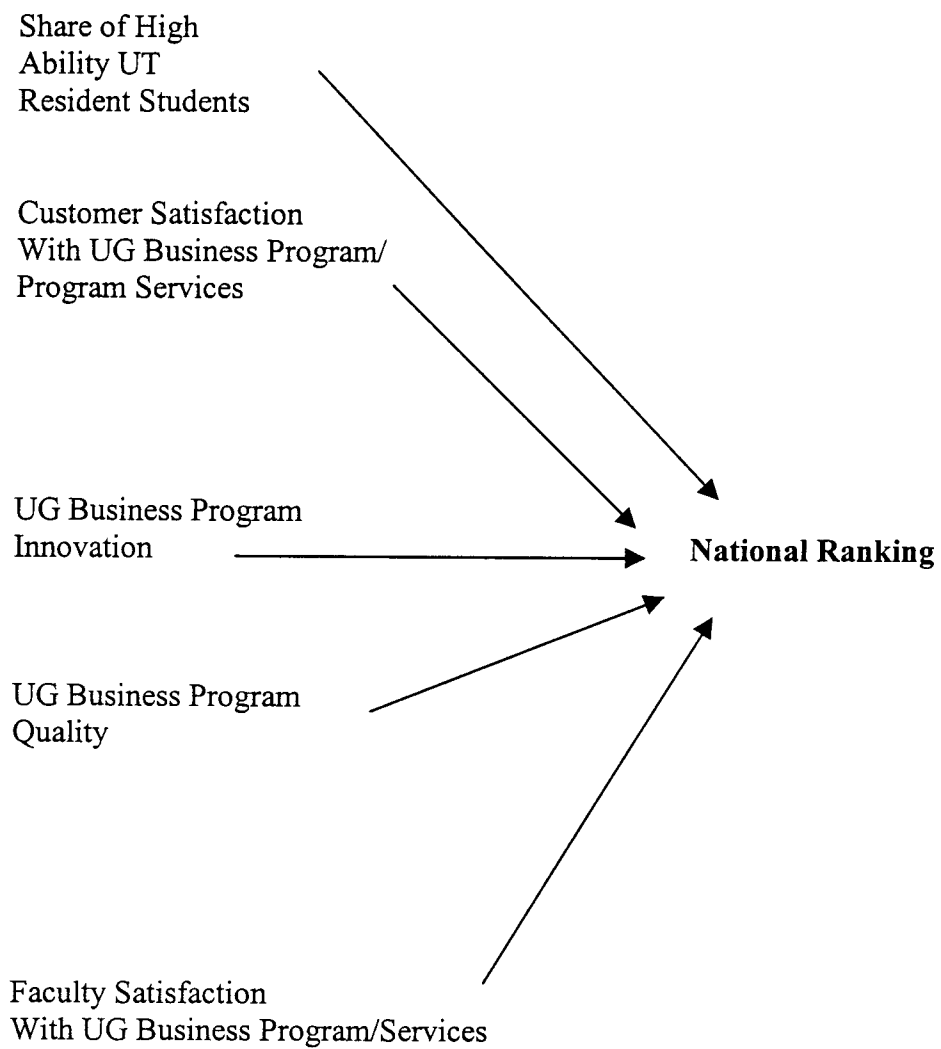
Major	Collaterals*
12 to 15 hours	9 to 12 Hours

* Collaterals to be approved by the Major through a student advising process; collaterals may be taken outside the CBA if approved by the Major.

Suggested NEW Undergraduate Program Semester Schedule

Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
<u>First Semester:</u> Gen. Ed. – 16 hours	<u>First Semester:</u> Gen. Ed. -- 8 hours Financial Accounting – 3 hours Economics – 4 hours	<u>First Semester:</u> Contemporary Business Management I – 4 hours Contemporary Business Management II – 4 hours Financial Management – 3 hours Organizational Behavior – 1 hour Major or Collateral – 3 hours	<u>First Semester:</u> Global Environment – 3 hours Legal Environment – 2 hours Major – 0 to 6 hours Collateral – 3 to 9 hours Gen. Ed. – 3 hours
<u>Second Semester:</u> Gen. Ed. – 15 hours Computer Skills – 1 hour	<u>Second Semester:</u> Gen. Ed. – 7 hours Statistics – 3 hours Business Functions – 4 hours Managerial Accounting – 2 hours	<u>Second Semester:</u> Contemporary Business Management III (Integrated Learning Experience) – 2 hours Major -- 6 hours Gen. Ed. – 8 hours	<u>Second Semester:</u> Major – 0 to 3 hours Collateral – 3 to 6 hours Business Strategy – 3 hours Gen. Ed. – 6 hours
32 hours	31 hours	31 hours	32 hours

A Model of Undergraduate Program Success Drivers



EXAMPLES OF UG PROGRAM SUCCESS MEASURES

MAINTAINED ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The success of the undergraduate business program cannot be disentangled from the success of the entire CBA.
2. The measures of success will focus primarily on those items where the CBA has some control (i.e., we will not address our woeful level of support from the state of Tennessee, although the level of state support clearly will affect many of these performance measures).

Measures of National Ranking:

1. The ranking of the Undergraduate Business Program, and the percentage change from the prior year.
2. The number of individual undergraduate Majors ranked among the “top 25” by respected external sources, and the percentage change from the prior year.

Measures of Share of High Ability UT Resident Students:

1. Number of applicants to the CBA, and percentage change from the prior year.
2. Average ACT score and GPA of admitted applicants to the CBA, and percentage changes from the prior year.
3. Average ACT score of admitted applicants compared with the average ACT score of students at top 25 undergraduate business programs, and the change from the prior year.

Measures of Customer Satisfaction with Undergraduate Program Services:

1. Student satisfaction score with their undergraduate experience measured both at graduation and three years thereafter, and percentage changes from the prior year.
2. The number of employers interviewing on campus for business students, and the percentage change from the prior year.
3. Average salaries offered by employers, and the percentage change from the prior year.
4. Employer satisfaction with our undergraduate business students measured both at hire date and after three years, and the percentage change over a 3 to 5 year period.

Measures of Undergraduate Program Innovation:

1. Number of favorable mentions of the “revised” Undergraduate Business Program in the media and journals.
2. Number of external inquiries regarding the “revised” Undergraduate Business Program.
3. Number, quality, and innovativeness of improvements made in the Undergraduate Business Program.

Measures of Undergraduate Program Quality:

1. Number of students having an internship experience, and the percentage change from the prior year.
2. Number of students with a job at graduation, and the percentage change over a 3 to 5 year period (for those students seeking employment).
3. Average salaries of students with a job at graduation, and the percentage change from the prior year.

Measures of Faculty Satisfaction:

1. Faculty satisfaction with the undergraduate business core, and the percentage change over a 3 to 5 year period.
2. Exit interviews with faculty members deciding to no longer teach in the Undergraduate Business Program.
3. Faculty desire to teach in the Undergraduate Business Program.

A Report on General Education at the University of Tennessee

Executive Summary

General education provides the foundation for successful academic study, for lifelong learning, and for carrying out the duties of local, national, and global citizenship. The University of Tennessee was an early leader in the development of a general education program that would prepare each university student to meet these challenges. The current program retains its original strengths, but several improvements will better prepare University of Tennessee students to meet these goals and better develop their appreciation for the breadth of learning. In addition, the goals of the general education program and the positive outcomes that result from it should be communicated more clearly to students. If the University inculcates students with an appreciation for the contributions of general education, the program will be viewed as a plan for educational and personal growth education, not as a list of prescribed courses.

Comprehensive research universities are finding it ever more difficult to require a meaningful general education program in which every student participates. Curriculum growth to cover new topics coupled with political and practical limits on the size of the curriculum put a significant squeeze on the curriculum planner. This challenge has caused many comprehensive research universities to delegate “general education” programs to the colleges or to shrink the institutional program to minimalist standards. This committee, however, has reaffirmed the importance of a general education program for all University of Tennessee students.

The General Education Committee proposes the following **Statement of Purpose** for the University of Tennessee general education program.

General education provides the foundation for successful academic study, for lifelong learning, and for carrying out the duties of local, national, and global citizenship. By building basic skills in communication, analysis, and computation as well as by broadening students’ historical and cultural perspectives, the general education curriculum helps students acquire an understanding of both self and society, and thus contributes to their personal enrichment while enrolled and after graduation.

The program is expected to produce the following outcomes for the students.

Building Basic Skills: Because the hallmark of the educated person is the ability to think independently, students must be trained to acquire, evaluate and use information.

Developing Broadened Perspectives: General education should help students develop habits of self-examination in the context of the individual’s relationship to family, community, society, and world. To this end, a general education should also help foster a commitment to respecting the diversity of personal and cultural values.

The outcomes are fundamental principles for general education and achievement of each outcome is essential if students are to achieve the life-long goals set forth in the Statement of Purpose. Thus, the primary focus of general education should be on the outcomes, not on the course requirements designed to produce them. Nonetheless, course requirements establish the curricular structure for general education, and it is through these requirements, working in concert with the academic major, that the general education outcomes will be

achieved. The requirements are distributed across seven categories. One course may satisfy more than one requirement (for example, a science course containing a computational component may satisfy III and IV), but each student must complete a minimum of 36 hours of general education.

- I. Communicating through Writing** (3 courses): To satisfy this requirement, students normally take the English 101-102 sequence and one other course designated as “writing intensive” (W) in the undergraduate catalog. The writing intensive course can be within the student’s major or an elective.
- II. Communicating Orally** (1 course): This requirement may be completed by either (1) taking a Speech Communication course from the approved list or (2) taking a course designated as having an oral presentation requirement (O) in the undergraduate catalog. The oral presentation course can be within the student’s major or an elective.
- III. Quantitative Reasoning** (2 courses): This requirement may be completed by either (1) taking two math or statistics courses from the approved list or (2) taking one course from the approved list and one course designated as having a quantitative component (Q) in the undergraduate catalog. The course designated as having a quantitative component may be within the student’s major or an elective.
- IV. Natural Sciences** (2 courses): This requirement is satisfied by taking two courses from the approved list.
- V. Arts and Humanities** (2 courses): This requirement is satisfied by taking two courses from the approved list.
- VI. Social Sciences** (2 courses): This requirement is satisfied by taking two courses from the approved list.
- VII. Cultures and Civilizations** (2 courses): This requirement is satisfied by taking either (1) two courses from the approved list of cultures and civilizations courses or (2) a two-course sequence in a foreign language.

The general education program should be continually improved through better course offerings, better integration with academic majors and continual assessment and evaluation. This responsibility should be given to a standing committee on general education reporting to the Undergraduate Council. The committee would develop a general education guide and a general education web site to present the general education program and its goals to students.

The suggested improvements to the general education program should be thoroughly discussed by the faculty during the spring and fall semesters of 2001 and revised as necessary. The revised general education program should be presented to the Undergraduate Council for approval in November, 2001 or January, 2002 for implementation in the fall semester of 2002.

A Report on General Education at the University of Tennessee

I. Background Information

General Education at UT

A general education program at the University of Tennessee was first implemented during academic year 1989-90. Until that time curricula were developed within the colleges and approved by the University, but a common core of studies for all University students was not required. The development of an institutional general education program made the University a leader in developing a broad general education program to provide a foundation for learning in all academic disciplines. Current readings in educational journals continue to credit the University of Tennessee for its foresight in developing a general education program that quickly became a model for similar programs at other universities. The existing general education requirements are shown in the Appendix.

The existing general education program contains many strengths that should be acknowledged and built upon. First, the goals of the general education program are well stated and remain as valid today as when they were first written. Secondly, a total of 14 required courses ensures that all students have substantial academic breadth outside their major. Finally, rationale is provided to explain the relevance or utility of each required area of study. With all of these strengths the most obvious question is: why is there a need to revise the existing general education program?

Despite the acclaim the University received for developing a University-wide general education program, the reality was that the program was not fully implemented by all colleges. The degree to which compliance has been achieved was detailed in a previous report on general education and will not be repeated here. Several reasons exist for a lack of full compliance. They range from curricula that are already crowded with “essential” courses to faculty limitations in certain departments that shoulder a disproportionate share of the general education teaching responsibility. With regard to the latter constraint, the University should develop a program that is achievable either within existing resources or with new resources that can reasonably be expected to become available.

The general education program also needs to communicate its relevance to students more effectively. Despite valiant attempts to show academic and practical relevance in the existing presentation of general education requirements, most students still focus very quickly on “the list”. Rather than considering **why** a certain area of study is important, students often focus immediately on **what** must be done. The general education program should communicate to students more clearly the rationale for and results of a good general education. By doing so, we would hope to shift student focus from a list of required courses to a plan for educational and personal growth. In addition to concerns regarding relevance, there is a related concern that general education is isolated from the academic majors. While “building an academic foundation” is a noble goal of general education programs, the goal often remains unrealized. Academic majors are typically not well integrated with general education and have not been constructed to use general education as a foundation. The proposed revisions are an attempt to strengthen the “connections” between general education and the academic majors.

Previous Reviews of General Education

Previous committees have reviewed UT's general education program and recommended modifications. A Self Study was conducted in February, 1996 in preparation for an external review team. The Self Study report expressed concern that general education courses should "make sense" to students who needed to know why they were taking general education courses and how those courses related to career goals and future lives. The report also recommended that 14 courses should continue to comprise the general education program, but that changes should be made in how those courses were distributed across academic disciplines. The external General Education Program Review that followed "did not find consensus, however, on whether or how general education should be changed." The primary recommendation from this review was the establishment of a general education advocacy group called the General Education Council. Additional recommendations included the dispersal of general education courses throughout the University rather than concentrating them within the College of Arts and Sciences and the integration of general education more broadly into University curricula including the academic majors. An ad hoc committee of the Undergraduate Council reviewed the general education program during the 1997-98 academic year and issued a report in September 1998. That report identified fundamental competencies that are "so essential that they transcend all colleges and curricula" and "competencies" that "have some characteristics that cross all disciplines but which can be taught in diverse ways." The committee suggested a modified course structure for general education and also affirmed the need for a University group that would provide continuing advocacy for and leadership of the general education program. The Undergraduate Council approved that recommendation by establishing the Standing Committee on General Education. It is this standing committee that has studied general education in recent months and developed this report.

Charter for the Standing Committee on General Education

Against this background, the Standing Committee on General Education was asked to consider the description of general education as offered in the report of the *ad hoc* General Education Committee and recommend its adoption, modification or substitution. Secondly, the committee was asked to recommend general education requirements for the UTK campus. The program recommended by the committee should be one that "will expedite student graduation and ... not penalize students who move across colleges."

II. A Proposal for General Education

Purpose and Outcomes

General education is a critically important component of each student's educational experience. It provides a foundation for learning both during the years of college and thereafter. Not only does general education help students develop basic skills; it also extends their intellectual and cultural horizons. At the same time, general education should prepare students for study in their selected academic major while it helps create links between that major and other areas of knowledge. Each student should understand that general education is critically important because it is both a gateway to advanced learning and an enriching and broadening end in itself.

Yet, despite the opportunities and benefits that general education provides, many students do not view it as a valuable part of their education. Too often the student sees general education as a list (or checklist) of courses (or obstacles) that must endure, not as a smorgasbord that can be sampled and enjoyed. One of the great challenges of a general education program is to refocus that student vision to one that sees beyond a list of courses to the positive outcomes that result.

Because the outcomes of general education need to be more obvious to students, the committee spent a lot of time discussing and defining the desired outcomes. In those discussions, the great temptation was to ask “what do we want the students to do?” Fortunately, the committee realized quite early that the more important question and the question that must be decided first is “what do we want the students to become?” Thus, a clear statement of general education goals and outcomes was the first priority of this committee. After substantial discussion, the committee agreed upon the following statement of purpose for general education and desired student outcomes.

Statement of Purpose: General education provides the foundation for successful academic study, for lifelong learning, and for carrying out the duties of local, national, and global citizenship. By building basic skills in communication, analysis, and computation as well as by broadening students’ historical and cultural perspectives, the general education curriculum helps students acquire an understanding of both self and society, and thus contributes to their personal enrichment while enrolled and after graduation.

The University of Tennessee’s general education program has been designed to enable the student to move among colleges within the university or to move to another institution of higher learning. Although it will provide the student with the skills required by college study, those skills are specific neither to UT nor to a particular major or career path.

Desired Outcomes: The program is expected to produce the following outcomes for the students.

Building Basic Skills: Because the hallmark of the educated person is the ability to think independently, students must be trained to acquire, evaluate and use information.

- Students must be able to **acquire** information by conducting independent research, both in a conventional library setting and through the use of the rapidly developing electronic information technologies, including data bases and internet resources.
- Students must then learn to **evaluate** the reliability, accuracy, and logical soundness of that information. The students will be taught to apply evaluative techniques to statistical and rhetorical presentations in arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences.
- Students must be trained to **use** the information that they have acquired. They must write clearly, speak convincingly, and solve problems using creative approaches.

Developing Broadened Perspectives: General education should help students develop habits of self-examination in the context of the individual’s relationship to family, community, society, and world. To this end, a general education should also help foster a commitment to respecting the diversity of personal and cultural values.

- Students should be able to explain their own values and beliefs, as well as to understand the histories and cultures behind those values. Students should also develop a commitment to lifelong learning so that they may continue to examine the relationships between their personal perspectives and the perspectives that arise from other cultures.
- Students should strengthen their sensitivity to cultural diversity by learning other languages, which can provide them with a gateway to the histories and traditions of other cultures, both within and outside of the United States; and by

understanding the dynamic nature of a multicultural world through interdisciplinary perspectives.

As we consider revising the general education requirements, there should be clear connections between the courses that satisfy the requirements and the outcomes articulated above. Every effort should be made to help students see how particular general education courses contribute to their education and their future life.

To achieve the “Building Basic Skills” outcome, students will be trained in the acquisition, evaluation and use of information. The committee believes that these skills are best developed when they are integrated into both general education courses and the academic major. Thus, we are not recommending a specific course dealing with information acquisition and use. Initial instruction in the acquisition and use of information is included in English 101-102, and other general education courses will also contribute substantially to this outcome. As students begin to take courses within their major, they will be introduced to discipline-specific information sources just as they will learn new methods of analysis to evaluate the information critically. Ultimately, all students at the University of Tennessee should understand that general education is meant to work together with discipline-specific education to prepare them to intelligently acquire and use information.

The outcome entitled “Developing Broadened Perspectives” is better suited to a prescriptive curricular structure. Required courses in the various disciplines of learning will expose students to the breadth of learning and to other cultures while simultaneously asking them to examine their own values and beliefs. It is also important, however, that this outcome be connected to the academic majors. In particular, the broadening effects sought after in this outcome are meant to complement and counterpoint what students learn in their majors. Thus, this committee recommends that each academic major reinforce the importance of this general education outcome to help prepare its students to practice their profession in a rapidly changing world.

This committee has also considered at some length the relation of continually developing information technologies to general education. Information technology provides quick and easy access to vast quantities of information and, in some cases, to tools that can be used to evaluate and communicate information. Each student should be familiar with the various forms of information technology such as the Internet, search engines, and databases. Each student should also possess the computer skills necessary to use these resources. However, as each succeeding class of students enters the University, it arrives with more knowledge of information technology and better computer skills than the class that preceded it. Just as we now assume that incoming students can operate a calculator, in the very near future we will assume that students can operate a personal computer to access information.

As access to information technology becomes a routine skill for incoming freshmen, the University’s role in teaching students to critically evaluate information grows in importance. If students are to succeed in a world of over-abundant information, then they must learn not only to access information, but also to evaluate its validity. The committee believes that general education courses should require students to critically examine information and information sources for accuracy, authenticity, consistency and value. Students should be able to synthesize information from different sources and identify central themes that unify disparate groupings of information. Finally, students should be able to communicate their findings to others clearly and effectively. These are essential steps in using information from any source, technological or traditional.

Faculty Review

The Statement of Purpose and the Desired Outcomes of general education frame the educational program that is being recommended. In the same manner, the Committee asks the University faculty and the Undergraduate Council to review those statements prior to a review of the courses that will be suggested. Without agreement on the objectives of general education, there is little hope for and minimal value in any agreement on the courses to be taken. However, if the faculty can agree on the objectives of general education, substantial portions of the program content will emerge straightforwardly.

Three Tiers: University General Education, College Requirements, and the Academic Major

In order to make clear the relevance of general education, it should be integrated with the academic majors. Thus, the general education program recommended by this committee should be seen as a three-tier program where general education requirements established by the University could be extended or made more specific by the Colleges or the academic majors. For example, a University requirement for studies in the natural sciences might be made more specific in the Architecture major where students would be required to study Physics rather than Biology. Likewise, students in the College of Business might be required to take a Business Ethics course rather than a more general humanities or social sciences requirement. The College of Engineering has established an interesting model for the integration of general education and the academic majors by classifying social science and humanities courses into required clusters such as “Engineering Practice in a Global and Societal Context.” If this model or other curricular structures are effective in elevating student interest in general education, both the academic major and the general education program will benefit.

Another curricular structure that could be used by colleges or academic majors is a requirement designed to strengthen students’ ability to synthesize related knowledge from seemingly disparate fields. This construct, used by the general education program at the University of Kentucky, requires students to select and take a linked pair of “cross-disciplinary” courses that address a common theme, historical period, or culture from different academic disciplines. Examples of the linked pairs of courses at UK are:

Art History: Byzantine Art
History: The Byzantine Empire

Geography: Geography of Southeast Asia
Political Science: Government and Politics of Southeast Asia

Biology: Principles of Biology
Philosophy: Biology and Society

The committee strongly supports the goal of developing student appreciation for the manner in which knowledge in one discipline is related to knowledge in another. Strategies such as a required pair of linked general education courses may be useful in helping students see the connections between bodies of knowledge. Alternatively, integration of general education and the academic majors can develop this type of synthesis. Rather than recommending a uniform “synthesis requirement” for the University general education program, the committee urges each college and major to examine its academic program and identify the optimum methods to connect the academic major and general education requirements. Doing so will increase the relevancy of general education to the major and support the “three-tiered” general education curricular structure.

General Education Requirements

The primary focus of general education should be on the desired outcomes, not on the course requirements designed to produce them. Nonetheless, course requirements establish the curricular structure for general education, and it is through these requirements, working in concert with college requirements and the academic major, that the general education outcomes will be achieved.

The course requirements for the general education program are distributed across the seven categories shown below. The proposed requirements allow for (and without substantial increases in existing resources must depend on) the use of a broad range of courses to achieve general education goals. For example, the Quantitative Reasoning requirement calls for at least two courses where mathematical or quantitative skills are developed or used, and an approved list of courses that meet this requirement will be provided. (Most of these courses will be either Mathematics or Statistics courses.) Students can take two courses from this list and the Quantitative Reasoning requirement will be met. Alternatively, students can take one course on the approved list and another approved course with substantial content in quantitative reasoning. Courses that have been so approved will be identified in the catalog with a Q suffix. Any course with the Q suffix will satisfy this part of the requirement whether it is required in the major or is an elective. Variations of this option will also be used in meeting the general education requirements in Communicating through Writing (a W suffix), and Communicating Orally (an O suffix).

A single course may satisfy more than one requirement (for example, a science course with a computational component may satisfy III and IV), but each student must complete a minimum of 36 hours of general education.

The requirements are:

I. Communicating through Writing (3 courses): Good writing skills enable students to share ideas, describe values, and record discoveries – all skills that are necessary not only for professional success but also for personal fulfillment in today's world, where communication increasingly takes place through electronic media rather than face to face. Students must be able to write correctly, and they must be aware that different audiences call for different rhetorical presentations. To satisfy this requirement, students normally take the English 101-102 sequence and one other course designated as "writing intensive" (W) in the undergraduate catalog. The writing intensive course can be within the student's major or an elective.

II. Communicating Orally (1 course): Being able to express ideas orally is as important as being able to express them well in writing. The well-educated person should be able to speak persuasively to other individuals and to groups, both small and large. Speaking one's thoughts well, moreover, has always been a critical component of good citizenship. This requirement may be completed by either (1) taking a Speech Communication course from the approved list or (2) taking a course designated as having an oral presentation requirement (O) in the undergraduate catalog. The oral presentation course can be within the student's major or an elective.

III. Quantitative Reasoning (2 courses): In today's world, arguments and claims often rely for support on scientific studies and statistical evidence. Students should possess the mathematical and quantitative skills to evaluate such evidence. Furthermore, students should possess the skills both to recognize the quantitative dimension of problems and to use mathematical reasoning to formulate and solve the problem. Finally, students need strong quantitative skills because they are indispensable in managing everyday-life situations. This requirement may be completed by either (1) taking two math or statistics courses from the approved list or (2) taking one math course from the approved list and one course designated in the undergraduate catalog as having a quantitative component (Q). The course designated as having a quantitative component may be within the student's major or an elective.

IV. Natural Sciences (2 courses): As science and technology come to play an increasingly important role in contemporary life, it becomes increasingly important for all educated persons to understand and be able to employ the scientific method. All students should be familiar with at least one scientific discipline and its role in contemporary life. Such familiarity includes knowledge of the discipline's basic vocabulary, chief discoveries, and fundamental principles; exposure to the discipline's experimental techniques; and the ability to use all of the above to analyze issues with scientific dimensions. This requirement is satisfied by taking two courses from the approved list.

V. Arts and Humanities (2 courses): To live well in the present, one must have an acquaintance with the past, especially with the cultural achievements that are the distinctive hallmarks of all human societies, from the earliest hunter-gatherers and cave-dwellers to the most recent electronic forms of culture and art. An appreciation of art, music, theater, literature, philosophy, and religions will not only enrich the lives of students, but it will also help them understand their own and other's aspirations, both in a historical and a contemporary context. Students can also come to understand their own creative powers through courses in the fine and the performing arts. This requirement is satisfied by taking two courses from the approved list.

VI. Social Sciences (2 courses): The goal of the social sciences is to help us understand the way that we live, especially the relation between the individual and the group, sometimes from an historical but often from a contemporary perspective. Vital to the continued health and success of our society is an understanding of the complex individual, political, and social dynamics that make up the modern world. Students should not only have a knowledge of the principal concerns of the social sciences, but they should also understand the methods by which social scientists collect and evaluate knowledge. This requirement is satisfied by taking two courses from the approved list.

VII. Cultures and Civilizations (2 courses): Advances in the technologies of travel and communication have brought nations and cultures into a closer proximity than ever before. In order to meet the global challenges of the twenty-first century, students will need to value the cultural differences that are deeply rooted in the long histories of both living and dead civilizations. Students should enjoy a broad knowledge of other cultures and civilizations by learning about these cultures and the roles that they played in the lives of their citizens and upon the world stage. Only by appreciating cultural diversity can one function effectively in our new global marketplace. This requirement is satisfied by taking (1) two courses from the approved list of cultures and civilizations courses or (2) two courses in a foreign language at the intermediate level or above.

Assessment, Evaluation and Improvement of General Education

Assessment of general education is important for at least two reasons. The first reason is a mandatory state-required general education assessment that has a direct impact on University revenue via the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) Performance Funding program. For several years, this assessment was accomplished through use of the College Base (C-Base) Test of General Education. This 3-hour test was administered to over 500 graduating seniors each year. The problems associated with administering the test to students who were not necessarily motivated to do their best were summarized in the February, 1996 Self-Study of General Education. In addition, the test results correlated reasonably well with the entering ACT scores of the students, and the assessment of "value added" by a general education program was in question.

A new assessment instrument has recently been chosen for the required general education assessment, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST). This test focuses on assessment of critical thinking skills, an important outcome of a strong general education program. The test is much more reasonable in length (45 minutes) and is often administered in senior seminar classes rather on a Saturday morning. For these reasons, there is

substantial optimism that the new test will be a much more effective instrument for the assessment of general education and that the allocation of state funds will more accurately reflect the achievements of the University's general education program.

The second reason for assessment of the general education program is to provide the information necessary to evaluate and improve the program. Although the CCTST should provide a better assessment of general education than the C-Base test, it is not as comprehensive as desired. Critical thinking is an important component of general education, but many other equally important components are not measured by the CCTST. Another assessment instrument that could complement the CCTST is a survey of graduates. As the foundation for life-long learning and citizenship, general education impacts all of a graduate's life, including and beyond a professional career. Graduates could comment on the contributions of general education in their pursuit of personal and professional goals. While general education is often under appreciated by current students, it is typically viewed much more favorably with the passage of time as graduates discover the long-term benefits of a broad education.

Assessment will provide the data necessary for continued improvement of the general education program. Just as the curricula for academic majors are assessed, evaluated and improved to ensure continued effectiveness, the general education program will also need to be monitored and occasionally changed to ensure its currency and relevance. The Undergraduate Council has tasked the Standing Committee on General Education with this responsibility. For this oversight function to be effective, several specific actions will need to be taken.

The Standing Committee will be the voice for General Education on the University campus. It must develop materials that will communicate the goals of the program to the students and other constituencies (see Section IV, Raising the Profile of General Education). The committee should also review periodically the efficacy of the general education program, assessing both the appropriateness of the goals and the degree to which those goals are being achieved. The committee should also review and approve courses submitted as candidates for the W, O, and Q suffixes. Finally, the Committee will review and make recommendations to the Undergraduate Council regarding the impact on general education of curricular changes proposed by Colleges and the academic majors.

IV. Raising the Profile of General Education

The University also needs to reemphasize the value of general education. Student commitment to the general education program will be much stronger if students understand and appreciate how "Gen Ed" contributes to their personal and professional growth. However, it is not only our students who need to be reminded of the importance of general education. As the committee considered the "standing" of general education within the University, we agreed that the importance and relevance of general education needs to be reemphasized to faculty, the administration, parents, the state and all University constituencies. Several steps can be taken to aid in this process.

The Undergraduate Catalog can be an effective vehicle for elevating the status of general education. The current catalog presentation of general education requirements is very rich in content, and would be quite informative to students if they reviewed the presentation. Unfortunately, however, the description is not prominently displayed nor is it referred to by many of the colleges. We recommend that the general education section be made more prominent within the catalog and include (1) the statement of purpose, (2) the desired outcomes, (3) the requirements and a discussion of their relevance, and (4) the list of courses that could be taken to meet the requirement. We also recommend that each college comment on the general education component within its academic programs and refer students to the section on the University's general education program.

A “Gen Ed” web page is an even more effective way to present the general education requirements and communicate the relevance and importance of the program. The rationale for general education can be presented in an engaging style using color graphics and sidebars. Linked pages can amplify the role of each “Gen Ed” requirement and present course descriptions, suggest combinations of courses, etc. This page would also have broad access, and in particular, would be available to parents, high school guidance counselors and others not on campus.

The committee considered the publication of a *General Education Guide* for new students. This guidebook would help to elevate the profile of general education. However, the *Guide* would either fail to include college-specific or major-specific requirements, or it would be very large. Instead of a comprehensive guidebook, the committee recommends that colleges and majors consider a publication that would present general education requirements in the context of and connected to an academic major.

Finally, a stronger general education program can be developed only when the program has the full support of the faculty. The faculty must believe in the program to the extent that they will agree to teach general education courses and will build upon a general education foundation in the other courses they teach. This goal is entirely achievable but will require the support and leadership of the academic deans, department heads, the Undergraduate Council, the Faculty Senate and the administration. General education should be promoted by the Standing Committee on General Education, discussed at department faculty meetings, and monitored by the Undergraduate Council. If the faculty believes in the value of general education, actively supports it as an essential component of every degree program, and communicates that support to the students, general education will be a success. Without the support of the faculty, students will fail to see any value in general education despite the fancy web pages and guidebooks that promote it. Faculty support is the essential ingredient to the success of general education.

V. Implementation Plan

The general education revisions proposed in this report need to be thoroughly reviewed and vetted prior to implementation. The committee suggests that discussions of this draft proposal be held during the spring and fall semesters of 2001. Course lists for selected requirements will be developed during the same time. Following the appropriate discussions within the Undergraduate Council, the proposed revisions would be modified if necessary and presented to the Council for approval at either the November, 2001 meeting or the January, 2002 meeting. Implementation would occur in the fall semester of 2002.

THE UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENT GENERAL EDUCATION

The goal of general education is to develop those basic skills, knowledges, attitudes, and judgments that are necessary for effective citizenship at all levels, from the local to the global; for responsible and fulfilling interactions with others and the environment; and for an enriched personal life. General education may also provide the basis for a major or professional concentration, but its aims are not career-specific. The following areas define the general education program for undergraduate curricula.

English Composition (2 courses)

Courses used to meet this requirement should develop the student's ability in analytic and expository writing through the study of literature and writing applications. This requirement would normally be satisfied by completion of English 101-102 or equivalents, or by demonstration of proficiency.

Mathematical Sciences (2 courses)

Courses used to meet this requirement should develop the student's ability to analyze and solve quantitative and logical problems.

Humanities and The Arts (2 courses)

Courses used to meet this requirement may concentrate either on critical analysis or practice of the arts. These might include the interpretation and analysis of works in one or more of the arts; consideration of significant philosophical, ethical, or religious text and issues; or participation in some area of the visual, spatial, musical, theatrical, rhetorical, or written arts.

Historical Studies (2 courses)

Courses used to meet this requirement should develop the student's appreciation of continuity and change over time. Such courses would examine the connections and interactions between different aspects of the human experience through attention to significant political, social, economic, intellectual, and cultural developments in a chronological, balanced, and integrated framework.

Social Sciences (2 courses)

Courses used to meet this requirement should describe the structures of society, clarify the dynamics of cognitive and personal development through the life cycle, or analyze social, economic, or political issues.

Natural Sciences (2 courses)

Courses used to meet this requirement should describe the world around us using scientific methods and examine natural phenomena in terms of scientific principles. Such courses would normally contain a laboratory or field experience.

Foreign Languages (2 courses at the intermediate level)

Courses used to meet this requirement should facilitate the student's ability to use a foreign language as a tool for oral and written communications and reading, including an understanding of the cultures for which it is the native language.

OR

Integrative Studies (2 courses)

Courses used to meet this requirement may be of three broad types:

- a. Multicultural studies, which analyze international dimensions of critical issues or explore elements and values that shape a culture other than the student's own;
- b. Interdisciplinary studies, which incorporate the methods and approaches from two or more disciplines to explore major issues; or
- c. Disciplinary perspective courses, which explore the potential and limits of a discipline in terms of its impact on individuals and society or examine a student's major course of study from a value-oriented perspective.

All majors and college or school curricular requirements described in this catalog are in accordance with the University Requirement.