

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL EDUCATION

S. M. 4/3/68

Open Curriculum

March, 1968.

INTRODUCTION

Presented in this report are the suggested terms of reference of the Senate Committee on General Education, an extract from the Preliminary Proposal on General Education (Paper S13, June 1967), a review of General Education as it presently exists at SFU, and finally the Committee's recommendations regarding the implementation of a General Education program.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference which the Committee understands as its functions are the following:

- 1) To recommend the implementation of some aspects of the Preliminary Proposal.
- 2) To guide with participating faculty members those portions of the Preliminary Proposal that Senate implements.
- 3) To recommend other aspects of General Education not contained in the Preliminary Proposal.
- 4) To transfer its complete responsibilities to the new Academic Vice President within the first semester of his arrival on Campus.

THE GENERAL EDUCATION PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL APPROVED BY SENATE.

In January 1968 (Minute 3-H) Senate approved the Preliminary Proposal brought to it by the Committee on General Education chaired by Professor Wasserman. This approval provided for General Education to be mounted in four types of courses:

- (1) Large-enrollment credit courses graded on a pass-fail basis.
- (2) Courses with or without credit but with an interdisciplinary approach.
- (3) Technical instruction courses carried without credit.
- (4) Seminars, workshops, and related activities carried without credit.

GENERAL EDUCATION AS IT PRESENTLY EXISTS AT SFU.

In considering the implementation of the Preliminary Proposal the Committee began by reviewing courses listed in the Calendar that are explicitly designated as General Education courses, or that fall under the rubric of General Education in relation to the general comments in the Preliminary Report.

The only General Education courses now being offered by academic departments are English 001 and a Creative Writing Workshop. English 002 was offered but had to be cancelled owing to low enrollment. In the summer only English 001 will be offered; this and Biological Science 001 are the only General Education courses that we know to be planned for Fall 1968.

Although not explicitly listed as General Education, the courses Communications 100 and 200 would appear to serve the purpose of General Education; these are large-enrollment courses that depend to some extent on outside lecturers and do not form a part of any degree program. They are three-unit courses for which credit is given.

Modern Languages courses 100, 101, 105, 201 and 202, although forming part of a degree program for some students, appear in general to comply with the form and function of the Technical Instruction courses mentioned in the Preliminary Proposal, as do English 001 and Reading and Comprehension 001.

The Committee found a number of seminars, workshops, theatre and special events activities, most of which are not listed in the Calendar, but many of which could be classified as General Education as defined in the Preliminary Proposal.

The Physical Development Center offers a number of non-credit, non-compulsory courses covering a wide variety of skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THIS COMMITTEE

After defining the range of activities in the Preliminary Proposal that Senate has approved, and after comparing these with courses presently being offered, the Committee submits the following recommendations. It is recommended that:

- 1) Senate ask each Faculty for a report on what General Education courses it will offer in Semesters 68-2 and 68-3, and what courses it will develop and budget for in subsequent semesters.
- 2) Senate ask each Faculty to make fuller use of English 001 and Reading 001 where deficiencies in these areas are identified.

- 3) Senate ask the Faculty of Education for its opinion on offering Communications 100 and 200 on an exclusive pass-fail basis.
- 4) Senate encourage the very commendable noon-hour concerts, theatre programs and special events by directing the Registrar to not schedule lectures, laboratory periods or tutorials during the period 12.30 - 1.30.
- 5) Senate leave the guidance of the non-credit non-compulsory courses offered in the Physical Development Center in the hands of the Center itself rather than this Committee.
- 6) Students who have a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher should be permitted to take a certain number of free elective courses on a pass-fail basis. Senate should ask departments to re-examine their degree programs and to stipulate the maximum number of pass-fail courses that their major and honors students may take as electives, with the proviso that no such course could count toward the fulfillment of specific course requirements for a degree.

"Pass-fail" in this connection means that the instructor would grade the students on the same basis and in the same manner as everyone else; students receiving a "C" or better would be designated by the Registrar as having passed; those with a "C-" or below would fail. Successful completion of a pass-fail course would give the student 3 semester hours of credit (or whatever credit is assigned by Senate and the Department to the course) toward the total number required for the degree. These units would not be counted in figuring the GPA.

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