

# Guilford enters new academic age

American students as a group traditionally complain about being at odds with the administration and poor communication with faculty. Guilford, on the other hand, has a proud tradition of cooperation with students. Now this priceless resource is needed, because Guilford is changing its curriculum and wants the help of the student body.

**BEN THORNE**  
features editor

Many of us, myself included, came to Guilford for the college's unique and demanding curriculum. Nothing ever stays the same, however, and this year's freshman class holds the dubious honor of being the first class to enter Guilford in the midst of serious curricular reform in many years.

The greatest changes being considered concern the general education requirements. Obviously, there are several aspects of the core and distribution requirements which call for reconsideration. According to a statement issued to the faculty

by the Subcommittee on Curriculum Revision the general education curriculum lacks cohesiveness, distinctiveness, and faculty interaction. Also interdisciplinary cooperation across majors and divisions is limited.

In plain terms, departments are not interacting adequately, and their exact relationship to one another is altogether too ambiguous. Also, there is not enough flexibility within the core at present to allow more than a handful of courses to be double-counted: that is, satisfy more than one requirement.

The advantages to increasing such freedom could not be underestimated: a broader education, shorter tenure for those desiring to graduate early, and more room to take electives, and so acquire the kind of personalized education a student wants, instead of taking classes merely to fulfill requirements. The latter can feel like fitting a square peg into a round hole: our educational experience is not supposed to be like that.

Realizing this need for change, the col-

lege formed the Subcommittee on Curriculum Revision to draft a new general education model. A model has now been drafted, and after much deliberation among faculty, administration, and students it will soon be made accessible to the student body for commentary.

The proposed model differs from the current one largely in its emphasis

on interdisciplinary programs. These programs would include a required interdisciplinary concentration (in place of a minor) revised first year and senior year interdisciplinary requirements, and a reduced set of distribution requirements. These would provide a greater opportunity for students to add breadth and depth to their learning experience at Guilford, while simultaneously offering a chance to satisfy several requirements at once.

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The Subcommittee must submit a final draft to the Board of Trustees in February, so it is imperative they get as much student input as possible, and that's where I come in. I serve as the Academic Affairs Chair in the Community Senate and sit as the traditional-age student representative on Curriculum Committee. My job is to protect the academic interests and

voice the opinions of the student body. Academic Affairs has been involved in this process in several ways this year, one of the

most important being a Forum we hosted earlier this semester. The purpose of this forum was to introduce students to the faculty and administration responsible for these reforms, and educate the student body about the

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proposal. Next semester we will host another forum with an all-student panel to convey last minute ideas to the Subcommittee, but before and after then, feel free to talk with me or Cory Birdwhistell about any concerns you may have. Remember, this is your school and your education, and nothing will change unless we as a student body will it so.

## Guilco's Current Distribution and Core requirements

First year composition (2 courses)

Foreign Language (= one year)

Creative Arts

History

Lab Science

Non-lab science

Humanities (2 courses)

Social Sciences (2 courses)

Intercultural

FYS

IDS 401

**Concerned about curriculum changes?**

**ACT NOW!**

Contact Ben Thorne through the Senate Office at x2310 to ask any questions you may have concerning curriculum reform.