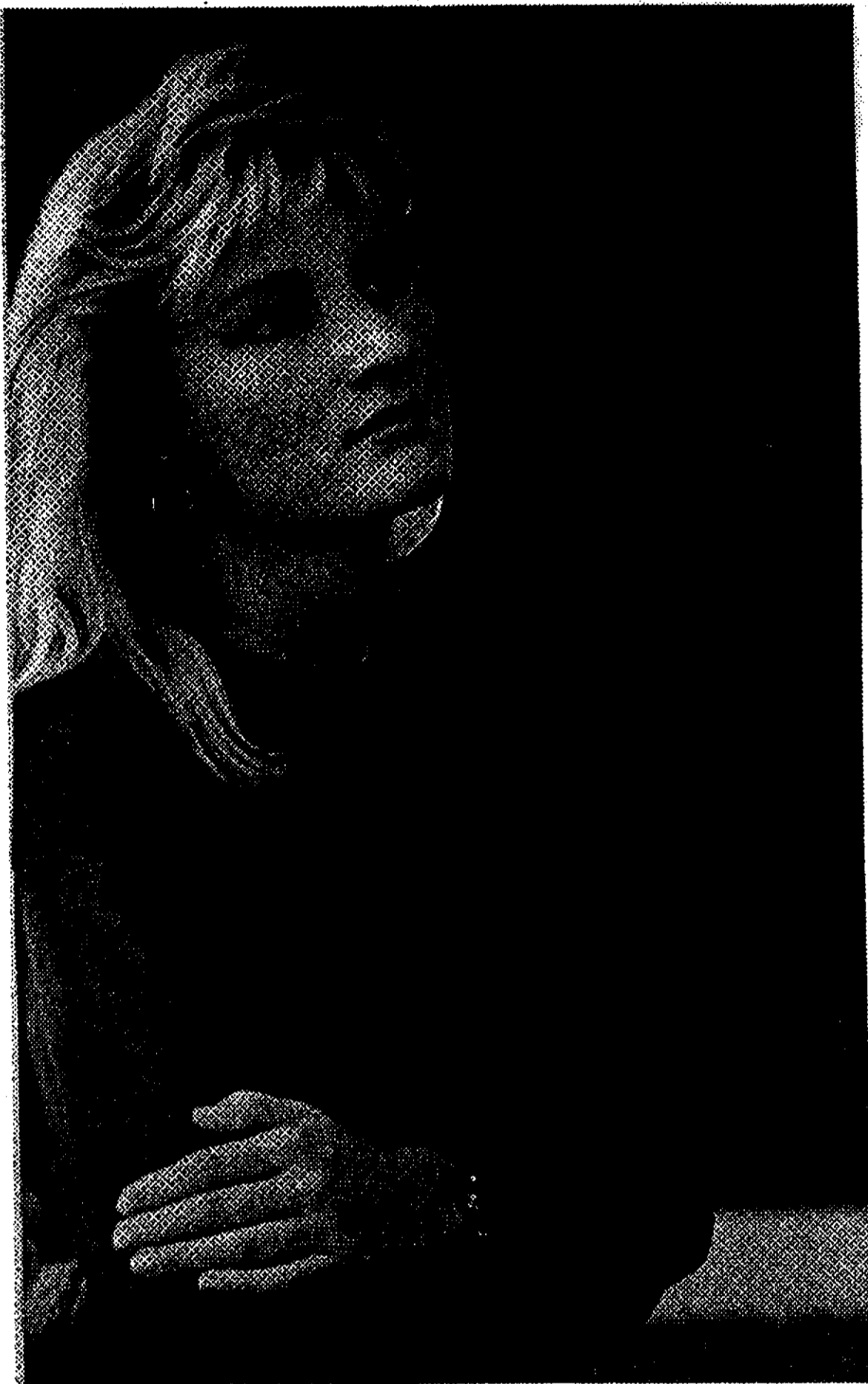


Academic Feature - Capstone Studies

[Ed. note: Many thanks to Dr. Rosemary Hornak for her contribution to this feature.]



Meredith Receives Grant: Additional Capstone Courses to be Developed

Last spring, Meredith College was awarded a grant for \$151,200 from the Jesse Ball duPont Religious, Charitable, and Educational Fund for the development of new capstone courses and the training of faculty members who will be involved in the project.

During the summer, two teaching teams were selected by the Capstone Studies Committee to develop new courses. Dr. Rhonda Zingraff and Dr. Garry Walton will be offering a course entitled "Living Revolutions" in Spring 1991, when Dr. Gwen Clay and Dr. Allen Page will be preparing a course on technology and communication to be

offered in Fall 1991. The duPont Fellows attended a five day workshop conducted by Dr. Rosemary Hornak and Dr. Reginald Shiflett where program goals and characteristics, along with teaching strategies, were discussed.

Dr. Hornak and Dr. Shiflett have been offering a capstone course called "Human Horizons: Past and Future" for four years. They presented papers at national conferences in Washington, D.C., California, and Georgia on capstone studies programs. "We have learned that we have a unique program that other colleges want to know about and follow," said Dr. Hornak,

CAP 400: Human Horizons - Past & Future

Professors: Shiflett and Hornak

An historical overview of cultural evolution provides a framework in which humans are viewed as unique among animals, because animals adapt to the world while humans adapt the world to themselves. Students review major advances in the sciences, the arts, and society. The emphasis is on examining the interaction between the social and moral climate with scientific and

technological advances. After examining how humans have altered their world in the past, students work in task forces to question how humans are currently changing the world, and the resultant benefits, risks, and dilemmas.

Course materials: The Ascent of Man, textbook and videotapes by Jacob Bronowski.

What is Capstone Studies?

Unique course offers all majors an opportunity for real-world problem solving

A capstone course serves as a culminating experience for general education requirements. It focuses on thinking processes, board synthesis of content, and values in action.

Students work in groups to use critical thinking skills, knowledge acquired in general education and their majors, and personal values to study a problem and implement a small, concrete, complete outcome.

"The students have completed some exciting projects," Hornak said, "like one student who worked with a North Carolina paper mill to train their employees to minimize hazardous waste."

"We ask students to try for a 'small win' on a problem of current concern, but it seems like a 'large win!" Dr. Shiflett added.

The Meredith College Report of the President's Task Force for the Pursuit of Excellence (January 1989) asserted:

While we are unable to predict the future with certainty, we must prepare our graduates to live in it as responsible citizens who are prepared and capable of dealing with change. We wish to educate them as leaders, as people who make a difference in directing the future. Most critical is that learning is a life-long, integrative process.

It is not too late to add the "Human Horizons" course to your schedule this fall. It appears on the registration bulletin under a new section called "Capstone Studies" as CAP 400 and is offered on Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00-12:20. The course may be taken to satisfy general education requirements in the Humanities and fine arts, Social and behavioral sciences, or Mathematics and natural sciences categories where students may choose among electives. For more information, see Dr. Hornak or Dr. Shiflett.

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