

Academic Flexibility Committee Report Theme

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gram than in a specialized program.

Finally students transferring to St. Andrews might find the bachelor of philosophy a means of fitting in courses from other institutions without having to find exact parallels with courses at St. Andrews.

By instituting a separate degree the college would protect the value of the B.A. and B.S. as pre-graduate school degrees. At the same time it would allow the student the option of creating his own liberal arts program within the context of the St. Andrews commitment. The degree should prove attractive to the able student who is not willing to commit himself to a narrowly defined course of study. Normally a student would declare his intention to pursue the B. Phil. by the end of his sophomore year.

The committee recommends one of the following plans for the B. Phil. program.

A. Total number of courses required for the degree: 37 courses.

Required courses -- C & C--8 STMS--2

P.E.--1

Free electives: 26. The student could elect any course offered in the college providing he meets the pre-requisites for that course. At least half of these courses must be taken from 300-400 level offerings.

Course load: 4-1-4
Intent: This would allow the student to create as broad or as narrow a program as he desires.

B. Total number of courses required for the degree: 37

Required courses--C&C--8 STMS--2

P.E.--1

Electives: 26. Restrictions: The student could elect any course for which he meets the pre-requisites, BUT the student could make no more than eight course within a single department. At least half of these courses must be taken from 300-400 level offerings.

Course Load: 4-1-4

Intent: This would make the B. Phil. a true liberal arts degree by insuring that the student would take a wide range of courses in various disciplines.

II. The committee recommends the following revision in the St. Andrews grading system.

(1) Modification of the present grading system to:

Grade	Significance
A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Satisfactory
NC	No Credit
W	Medical Withdrawal
I	Incomplete

(2) Discontinuance of the grade-point-ratio (GPR) as a criterion for remaining in school, because by definition everyone would have at least a 2.0, though the registrar would have the data to rank the class for honors, Dean's List, etc.

SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

(1) the grade of NC be used in these cases:

(a) failure to do satisfactory work

(b) withdrawal from the course for other than medical reasons

(2) That the cut-off point between a C (or acceptable grade) and an NC grade fall in the middle of the D range of the present grading system.

(3) A student who fails to pass 3/4 of his courses in a given term will be placed on academic probation from which he can be removed by passing 3/4 of his work the following regular term or by achieving a record determined by action of the Faculty Executive Committee in the case of summer school work.

(4) The Faculty Executive Committee will review the total records of students whose eligibility to return in a given year is in question.

(5) All courses attempted will be listed on the transcript.

ADVANTAGES OF THE NEW SYSTEM

(1) The punitive aspect of the present grading system is considerably reduced. Students failing to reach minimum standards in a course are not penalized throughout their academic career, as is the case when GPR determines the eligibility of a student to remain in school.

(2) It may encourage good students to attempt courses in areas outside their major.

(3) This system would reduce the pressure on a student who did not find himself capable of completing his work in the usual four year sequence.

(4) It would allow instructors to establish more consistent course expectations, since students are not unduly penalized for failing to reach minimal requirements.

(5) The attrition problem with borderline academic cases may be lessened.

III. The committee recommends the establishment of a procedure for giving college

credit for appropriate high school work in order to accelerate a student's program by giving both advanced standing and credit for particular work. This could be done by a pre-school testing program in which the appropriateness of advanced standing was demonstrated resulting in credit being given for all courses below the level of tested competence where the rationale for courses below the rationale for course sequence is clear. The same end would be reached by a student's completing a particular course satisfactorily after which he was credited with courses below that one in the same program where the rationale for course sequence is clear (as in language or math, for example). The transcript would indicate that course credit had been given though no grades would be recorded.

IV. The committee recommends that the College continue to honor top sophomore scholars with public recognition and the awarding of a \$500.00 scholarship over-and-above other aid received. This aid is now given only for the junior year, which is seen by some as an effort only to keep certain students beyond the usual transfer point. We recommend that the scholarship be given to these students for their senior year as well if they maintain a high quality of performance in the junior year.

V. The committee notes an inclination on the part of some academic divisions to interpret "individual work" as a phenomenon restricted to either very able and/or advanced students. Toward the end of increased flexibility, we recommend a course listing for each division entitled "Special topics in . . ." This would provide the opportunity for independent work for any student with a defensible proposal, in any term, without prejudice as to his advanced knowledge of the discipline, so long as a faculty member would guide him and the division would approve the project. Such a course could be taken more than once so long as a transcript notation was made of the nature of the

material. This procedure would enable students involved in summer work related to their academic interests to reflect on that work for course credit -- giving them the opportunity to advance their standing and earn money and providing the college with additional tuition income.

VI. The committee views commendably such programs as the monthly colloquiums of the Religion and Philosophy division. We recommend that each division consider such a program and that some provision be made for students involved in independent study to make presentations to the group. This combination of experiences serves well the collegiate character of our community by recognizing the work of young scholars.

VII. The committee recommends that the feasibility of a St. Andrews abroad program for the junior year be given careful study. In the meantime we recommend that students be advised of other junior year abroad programs and that every effort be made to enable students so inclined to take advantage of this experience without prejudice to their graduation on schedule.

VIII. The committee recommends that a serious study be undertaken to determine the costs of offering a January term abroad for all students regardless of ability to pay and, further, that foundation support for such a program be sought. Failure to do this will reinforce growing splits in the student body which are harmful to morale.

IX. The committee recommends a study of the feasibility of using funds from one of our recently awarded unrestricted grants to provide aid for the middle income student whose Parent's Confidential Statement does not justify financial aid but who none-the-less needs help in meeting our comparatively high costs. This would address the threatened polarizing of our student body into two extreme economic

groups.

X. The committee recommends a careful review of the faculty adviser program in an effort to see if it can be improved to provide students with informed, concerned, and serious relations with faculty advisers.

XI. The committee recommends that each division do a careful analysis of its course numbering, sequence, and prerequisite requirements to be sure that the rationale in terms of content and degree of difficulty corresponds to number, sequence, and prerequisite requirements.

XII. The committee commends the avowed effort of the College to develop strong offerings in the behavioral and social sciences, and we urge early efforts achieve such a program by appropriate faculty appointments in psychology and sociology.

XIII. The committee recommends the study of a program of student-taught courses similar to that in existence at Barat College in Illinois. Specifically we suggest a program in which an able upperclassman would work in independent study during the fall term developing a course in an area in which he had demonstrated competence. He would be granted credit for that work. Concurrently, the course being developed would be listed as an option for January term work by freshman. If the course were well enough subscribed, it would be offered in January with additional credit given the student-teacher for teaching it under the pedagogical supervision of a faculty member.

XIV. Finally, the committee recommends a renewed effort on the part of the administration to keep the student community informed of changes in academic program and personnel. Too often, only such morale-eroding news as the planned departure of a teacher reaches students, and the hiring of new persons or adoption of new programs goes unreported.

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