

MEREDITH HERALD

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Educating Women to Excel

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Meredith Herald

at

Meredith College

3800 Hillsborough St.

Raleigh, NC 27607

(919) 760-2824

FAX (919) 760-2869

holderc@meredith.edu

Task force meets, discusses changes to general education

STEPHANIE JORDAN
Copy Chief

On Friday afternoon, Aug. 31, 2001, as most of the Meredith community slipped off for their holiday weekend, about 25 faculty and staff gathered in the Chapel Commons Room to discuss a heavy topic—general education reform.

Dr. Betty Webb, chair of the General Education Review Task Force, facilitated the meeting. Prior to beginning, Webb explained that Meredith is joining a national movement among colleges and universities to re-evaluate general education requirements.

"The world is a much different place than it was when the current plan was drawn. We don't feel that our system is

bad, but we feel that we can do better," said Webb.

The task force feels that general education at Meredith has moved to more of a "check-off system" than a continuing, culminating, four-year experience, and the task force's goal is to reverse that trend.

They distributed a draft for the framework of the new curriculum.

Currently, general education rests on four core classes or experiences in which all students participate: ENG 111, ENG 201, REL 100 and either HIS 101 or 102.

The idea for a new set of core classes drew the most discussion at Friday's meeting. A class or possibly a series of two classes temporarily referred to as a Cornerstone would begin a

student's general education experience.

Broadly speaking, a Cornerstone course will be a multi-disciplinary, foundational experience.

Task Force member Dr. Rebecca Oatsvall said her view of a Cornerstone course is one that will "help the student locate herself, give her a dislocation experience and then bring her back."

Oatsvall's explanation applies on a larger scale to the purpose of general education as a whole, many committee members added.

Following the freshman Cornerstone experience would be one or two Steppingstones, multi-disciplinary courses that are similar to the foundation but still take the student a step

further.

The core requirements would culminate in a Capstone course in the senior year.

Webb was quick to point out that this new model is, not the same as what the college now offers as a Capstone course.

Several faculty voiced concerns about this model.

Dr. Carolyn Happer of the history and politics department questioned having "the whole of general education rest on a model that isn't widely used on our campus."

Currently the only courses similar to the proposed core are Honors Colloquia and Cap-

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New 'chiller' will even out temps

KRISTEN THOMPSON
Staff Reporter

Students and faculty have learned that one weather forecast that is never predictable is the one inside the buildings on campus. Perhaps the only thing predictable is the unpredictability.

In Joyner, for example, it's not unusual to feel warm and stuffy in Room 111 and be reaching for your cable knit next door in Room 113. And that happens every day.

However, temperatures will become more predictable this year as the College installs new chilled water and steam lines across campus to replace old lines that were installed in the 1960s.

The project which will improve cooling campus-wide, was initially driven by the needs of the new math and science building.

However, Greg Ahrendsen, the project manager, said that the "administration saw this as a great time to fix some problems that we are having now

and to prepare the campus for the future beyond the new math and science building."

"We have had to watch the weather reports and then spend one to three days changing

heating and cooling measures to be switched whenever the weather demands.

New pumps will be installed in all buildings on campus that do not already have one. This will allow the individual cooling and heating of buildings and a more uniform temperature within rooms of the buildings.

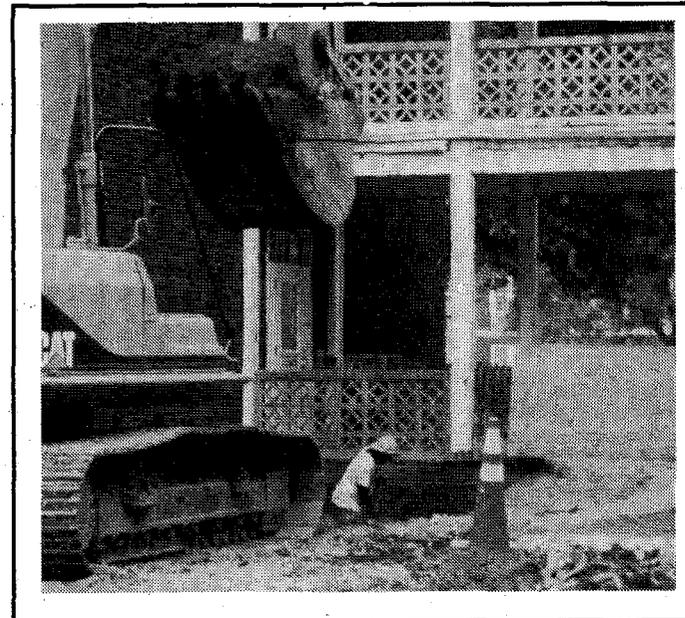
From now on the chillers and boilers will be turned on year round so that on hot fall days or cold spring days the Meredith community can work and study with heating or cooling.

So clip-on fans and sweat-shirts are not quite relics yet.

However, the Meredith community can expect more regular temperature in buildings when the new chillers are installed this winter.

The majority of the project will be completed by May 2002.

"This project should greatly enhance the comfort level of building occupants," said Ahrendsen.



With the help of the CAT excavator and a few shovels, workers dig a trench seven feet deep for the new pipes between Stringfield and Vann Residence Halls.

PHOTO BY CHRISTINA HOLDER

In past years, the old lines were able to provide steamed or chilled water but never both.

over from one to the other manually," said Ahrendsen.

The new system will allow