



GENERAL EDUCATION PROPOSAL PASSES

□ The vote was 63-40 at the meeting on Friday.

CHRISTINA HOLDER
Editor-in-Chief

The final version of the College's new general education proposal passed with a vote of 63-40 at the faculty meeting on Friday, April 5 in Kresge Auditorium.

The new general education program, called *Making Connections, Making a Difference*, builds on three main components: Students will connect concepts in a interdisciplinary curriculum, will practice cultural and global awareness and will prepare for and engage in civic activities.

The vote on the proposal marks a year-long endeavour by the faculty and the General Education Task Force, headed by Dr. Betty Webb of the English department.

The meeting served as the final forum where faculty could voice their opinions on the proposal before it went to a vote.

Some faculty expressed concerns about the proposal's ability to provide opportunities for undergraduate research and its requirement for science and mathematic courses.

Webb said one of the goals of the reform agenda was to "move away from the checklists" students currently use.

She said students often tell her, "I want to check off my last gen ed requirement so I can get on to the real stuff."

Among those who voiced support for the program were Dr. Louise Taylor, assistant professor of English, who praised the proposal's focus on engaging students in the educational process.

She said that throughout her years teaching she has learned that "participatory education is crucial."

Dr. Elizabeth Wolfinger, professor of biology, also praised the proposal, but as "a scientist and as a woman" she was troubled that the proposal did not include an increased requirement of science and mathematics courses. Currently, Meredith students

are required to take 13 hours of science and math.

"I wanted a bold statement alongside that building," said Wolfinger referring to the new science and mathematics building currently under construction.

Psychology professor Cynthia Edwards pointed out that with the new math/science category, called "Scientific Literacy," a psychology, sociology, economics or dance major could "in fact be taking less math and science" if the student chooses from a list of new electives within the category.

Newly proposed electives such as "Price Theory" or "Statistical Methods in Psychology" may look more appealing to students in those

majors instead of the base math and science choices.

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Alyson Colwell-Waber, who has worked alongside Webb on the proposal, said that after studying 150 other institutions nationwide, the task force discovered "the vast majority had less" than Meredith did in math and science courses.

She said the fact that the task force chose to keep the same number of required courses made a bold statement about how Meredith values the discipline.

Look for the *Herald's* full, two-page spread on what a new general education program will mean for the student in next week's edition.

Laptop investigation procedes

Campus police chief says office doors were unlocked when six laptops were stolen over Spring Break
The *Herald* investigates and discovers that three of the doors were locked.

□ Faculty are taking more precautions since laptop theft.

CHRISTY SADLER
Staff Reporter

Campus Police Chief Frank Strickland has confirmed that the laptops that disappeared from faculty offices recently were stolen. He could not reveal possible suspects but said that the situation is "still under investigation."

According to Strickland, six laptops were stolen over two weekends in March from the Joyner and Harris classroom buildings. Three were stolen between March 1 and March 4, and three more were taken sometime between March 14 and March 18.

Of the six total laptops

stolen, three were taken from offices in Joyner, and three were taken from Harris.

Strickland said, "In most cases, the offices were left unlocked and the computers were not secured by the cables that locked them to the desks."

However, in the cases of at least three professors who had their laptops stolen, this was not true.

Dr. Tony Bledsoe, a professor in the business department, confirmed that his laptop was stolen from his office on the first floor of Harris over the first weekend in March. He said that when he left the office that Friday, his door was locked. However, his computer was not secured to the desk with a cable.

Bledsoe confirmed that his door was still locked when he

returned on Monday morning, but his laptop was gone. He said that the lock did not appear to have been tampered with.

Two other business professors, Dr. William Burpitt and Bern Shuey, had their laptops stolen from their offices on the second floor of Harris.

Student workers for Dr. Robin Colby and Suzanne Britt in the English department also confirmed that the two professors had locked their offices on the first floor of Joyner before leaving for Spring Break, during which time their laptops were also stolen.

Sophomore Courtney Harris, student worker for Colby, said that Colby's door was definitely locked and that the computer was locked to a desk in Colby's office. However, she thought that the

method Technology Services had used to lock the cable to the desk would have made it fairly easy for someone to remove the cable from around the desk.

Laptops can be secured with a combination padlock, in which professors spin four mini-dials of numbers to the proper code.

Britt's student worker, junior Tanesha Williams, said that she arrived at Britt's office Monday morning before Britt did and found the door to be locked as usual. However, her laptop was missing from its usual place on her desk.

The remaining stolen laptop belonged to Dr. Veronique Machelidon in the Foreign Languages department.

Jeannette Rogers, the foreign languages departmental assistant, said that she didn't know whether the door

to Machelidon's office was locked. She did say that she was confident that the outer door to the suite of offices was locked when she left. It was still locked when she returned the next morning, she said.

All six professors had their computers replaced within a few days by Technology Services.

Strickland added that all of the stolen computers were ones provided by Meredith for faculty use, and no other items were reported missing from any of the offices.

While Strickland could not comment on possible suspects or leads in the ongoing investigation, he did note, "The serial numbers of the computers have been entered into the National Crime Information Center network, and all pawn shops in the area have been notified."