

DOCUMENTS AND MINUTES OF THE GENERAL FACULTY  
AND  
DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

The Minutes of the University Council meeting of February 16, 1981, published below, have been prepared for the immediate use of the members of the University Council and are included in its Documents and Proceedings. They are also included in the Documents and Minutes of the General Faculty for the information of the members.

*H. Paul Kelley*  
H. Paul Kelley, Secretary  
The General Faculty

MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16, 1981

The fifth regular meeting of the University Council for the academic year 1980-81 was held in Room 212 of the Main Building on Monday, February 16, 1981, at 2:15 p.m. with President Flawn presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Abram Amsel, Martin Baughman, Francis Bostick, Harold Box, Robert Boyer, Robert Brody, John Brokaw, Billye Brown, Ronald Brown, Mark Cassidy, James Colvin, Mary Crockett, James Doluisio, Mitzi Dreher, John Durbin, David Edwards, Peter Flawn, Gerhard Fonken (Kenneth Tolo substituting), Charles Franklin, Karl Galinsky, LaVerne Gallman, David Gavenda, Earnest Gloyna, Donald Grantham, Eleanor Greenhill, Terence Grieder, Dagmar Hamilton, Glynn Harmon, Roderick Hart, Thomas Hatfield, Forest Hill, James Hurst, Ira Iscoe, Robert Jeffrey, Gaylord Jentz, James Jirsa, Paul Kelley, Robert King, Robert Kline, Charles Lamb, Judith Langlois, Gerlinde Leiding, William Lesso, Ernest Lundelius, Don McDermott, James McGinity, Neill Megaw, Larry Nettles, Chad Oliver, Thomas Philpott, Joanie Powell, Mary Ann Rankin, Phyllis Richards, Elspeth Rostow, Susan Russell, William Shive, Ray Sommerfeld, Waneen Spirduso, James Stephens, John Sutton (T. J. Gibson substituting), James Vick, Warwick Wadlington, Stanley Werbow, Robert Williamson, Eugene Wissler, Louis Zurcher (Mary Cunningham substituting);

Absent: Harold Billings (excused), James Browne, Parker Fielder (excused), Bonnie Freeman, Alan Friedman, William Glade (excused), Kimberley Helbig (excused), David Hershey, Lorrin Kennamer (excused), George Kozmetsky (excused), Clarence Lasby, William Livingston (excused), Thomas Marquardt (excused), Michael Sharlot, Guy Shuttlesworth (excused), C. G. Sparks, Lawrence Speck;

TOTAL PRESENT: 66; TOTAL ABSENT: 17.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 1981 (D&P 8178-8203). (APPROVED AS CIRCULATED.)

The University Council approved the Minutes of the meeting of January 26, 1981 (D&P 8178-8203) as distributed.

MOTION TO CHANGE THE DATE OF THE MARCH, 1981, MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL (D&P 8177). (APPROVED)

Because the date regularly scheduled for the March meeting falls on the Monday during Spring Vacation, Secretary Kelley MOVED that the University Council change the date of the regular meeting in March, 1981, from Monday, March 16, to the following Monday, March 23. The motion CARRIED.

a chapter on elementary and secondary education in which we talk about curriculum and about teacher education, which we find woefully inadequate, by and large; this was the view of people from the educational community with whom we consulted.

"In the chapter on what some people call 'continuing education' we discussed the importance of collaboration between educational institutions, museums, public libraries, and the media.

"The central message in the report is that universities have a formative role in our society. We should not simply react to public opinion as to what is relevant or what makes a good professional; we should, in some manner, tell the public and employers what we think makes good professionals, productive citizens, thoughtful human beings, in the community.

"In closing, and by way of sympathizing with [Mr. Vick] and what lies ahead for his group, I was encouraged when I saw...on a list of responses to insurance company questionnaires the following answer from somebody who had had a very bad automobile accident; in attempting to explain it he said, 'I collided with a stationary truck coming the other way.' I think [Mr. Vick] has that ahead of him."

Ira Iscoe (Psychology) also expressed sympathy for the Vick Committee. "I basically support their recommendations. As I've said before, any time you break a truce between...warring factions, you have some problems. I don't view the Vick Committee recommendations as particularly arduous. I am in sympathy with the fact that Engineering, Pharmacy, [and perhaps] Architecture [and] Communication may have some problems with it. I wonder, Mr. President, and it's just a rhetorical question, [can general education] fit into the entire University? Are some of our segments so professionalized that they cannot accommodate the Vick Committee recommendations? If so, maybe in our deliberations we should have some exclusion clauses; [however,] I'm not advocating them [at this time].

"...there is one point of information. We have mentioned the 1983 catalogue. What [is the] time deadline? When would we have to have this [new set of requirements] in the hands of the appropriate people to institute it in 1983?"

President Flawn called on Dorothy Lay (Official Publications), who stated that new general education requirements would have to be finally approved by the Board of Regents no later than late spring or summer of 1982 in order for them to appear in the 1983 catalogue.

Mr. Iscoe then asked, "If the recommendations that have been made [are approved], are the various departments prepared to fulfill their responsibilities; if there are to be extra courses..., are the various departments prepared to [offer] them?... I would like...feedback from some of the main departments as to whether they are prepared to meet the increased demands based on instruction of the highest quality."

Robert Williamson (Finance) commented briefly regarding the overall report and his sense of the position of the College of Business Administration faculty. "I was on the Vick Committee, and during the past couple of years [that] we have worked on this, we have been in contact with my faculty, we have surveyed the faculty, we have dealt with our Undergraduate Programs Committee--both last year and this year, and there are certainly differences of opinion within the College.... On balance, my sense is that the College faculty are supportive of the general thrust of the Vick report. Now, there are some things that they feel pinch, and they would like to have some modifications. But I feel that this is an important point: [in what is perhaps] the largest professional college on campus, the rank and file of the faculty are generally willing to take another look at our general requirements and to make any improvements that

Larry Nettles (student) maintained "... that the requirements of various accreditation agencies are not an appropriate consideration before this body. I'm reluctant to let outside institutions dictate the curriculum required for each degree at this university. We all know that accrediting agencies will require as much as they can get away with in each degree program. They seek to expand their power and influence, and I think that we should address the requirements for each particular degree at The University of Texas without reference to what they might do."

RESTATEMENT OF THE LEGISLATION RECOMMENDED BY THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (D&P 8148-8166); major legislation. (WORDING ACCEPTED AS AMENDED)

There being no further general comments, President Flawn called for general discussion of each of the six specific recommendations in turn-- Writing, Social Sciences, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Foreign Languages, Fine Arts and Humanities. He called to the attention of Council members the document prepared by the Secretary and distributed at the beginning of the meeting that stated the recommendations of the Vick Committee in the form of legislation; those legislative statements are reproduced below.

LEGISLATION RECOMMENDED BY THE VICK COMMITTEE  
(AS RESTATED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL)

It is MOVED that The University of Texas at Austin adopt the following set of minimum requirements for all undergraduate degrees, and that no exceptions or substitutions be allowed:

1. Writing: 12 semester hours of credit in courses beyond E. 306 (Rhetoric and Composition). [At least]\* 6 of the 12 hours must be in upper-division courses certified to have a substantial writing component; the certification of such courses will be the responsibility of a standing committee of the General Faculty, with broadly representative membership. These upper-division courses will not necessarily be courses designed to teach writing, but they will require substantial writing by students, and the written work will be evaluated on form as well as content. Since feedback from the instructor is fundamental to improving writing skills, it is essential that the courses satisfying this Writing requirement be taught in small classes.
2. Social Sciences: 6 semester hours of credit in American Government courses and 6 semester hours of American History courses (as required by state law), plus 3 additional semester hours of credit in Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Linguistics, Psychology, or Sociology courses.
3. Mathematics: 3 semester hours of credit in Mathematics courses other than M. 301 (College Algebra), M. 302 (Introduction to Mathematics), M. 303F (Mathematics of Investment), M. 316K (Modern Topics in Elementary Mathematics I), and M. 316L (Modern Topics in Elementary Mathematics II).
4. Natural Sciences: 9 semester hours of credit in natural science courses, at least 6 hours of which must be taken in one subject. No more than 3 of the 9 hours can be taken in Mathematics courses, and that 3 hours

\* During subsequent discussion, the two words in brackets were deleted with permission of James Vick; see D&P 8253.

must be different from the 3 hours used to meet the Mathematics requirement. Students will be strongly advised to acquire a basic knowledge of how to use a computer.

5. Foreign Languages: Proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to that of U.T. Austin students who have satisfactorily completed the second semester freshman course in that language. Initially students can satisfy this requirement by presenting at least 2 years of secondary school credit in one foreign language. However, beginning in the Fall Semester of 1986 students submitting secondary school credit to satisfy this requirement will also be required to demonstrate proficiency at the specified level by examination.

6. Fine Arts and Humanities: 6 semester hours of credit in literature courses and 3 semester hours of credit in Art, Music, Classics, Archaeology, Architecture, or Philosophy (other than logic) courses. If the recently-proposed English sequence (D&P 8212-8216) is adopted, then the sophomore literature course together with the upper-division writing course taken in the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences will satisfy this literature requirement.

It is further MOVED that these requirements, which replace requirements adopted in 1955 as a result of the Graham Committee Report, be implemented by each individual school and college through changes in the degree requirements published in its portion of the Catalogue of The University of Texas at Austin. The earliest possible implementation will be in the 1983-1985 parts of the Catalogue, which will first apply to students in the Fall Semester of 1983.

WRITING RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (D&P 8148-8166); major legislation. (GENERAL DISCUSSION ONLY)

Before calling for discussion of the recommendation concerning Writing, President Flawn asked whether any Council member wanted to discuss the sections of the Vick Committee report that appeared prior to the specific recommendations; none indicated a desire to do so.

President Flawn then moved to the discussion of the Writing section of the Legislation Recommended by the Vick Committee. He stated that he would first call on Mr. Vick for whatever additional comments he might want to make about this section. Then, with the consent of the Council, he intended to call on faculty members not on the Council who had asked to speak on various points of the recommendation.

Mr. Vick commented: "...In a sense I, personally, feel like this requirement should not have to be there. Students at the university should write, just as we all write. Why should we have to specify that they spend 12 hours in courses that require a substantial amount of writing? From many of our investigations, consultations with students, examinations of various programs, we found that students were not writing as much as we felt they should. This should be, in my view, the easiest part of the requirement to implement [in] that these courses should already exist;

and it should also be, in my view, the most important part of the whole recommendation."

With permission from the Council, President Flawn then called on James Sledd, who had asked to be heard on this particular recommendation. Mr. Sledd (English) made the following statement: "I won't take long. I want simply to correct some mistakes which the English Department has made in presenting the results of a study that I did some five or six years ago. The study has been cited under my name and has been used by the English Department as if it were a mandate to support this proposal about writing, and it is no such thing.

"One statement made was that the prime concern of my report was the moving of one required course in composition into the upper division out of the lower division. That was not the prime concern of the report. That was one question out of more than a dozen. One question I seriously asked was how important writing is held to be--both by faculty and students. The answer was the expected one. Another big question [was] what does the faculty think of the quality of student writing? The answer, again, was the expected one; about 4% of the faculty were willing to say that their students wrote well or very well, and the overwhelming majority refused to say any such thing. A third big question was the opinion which students have of the present English program--the present being defined by the year 1975, when I made the study; that opinion was unfavorable. Out of the four classes--freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors--only the freshman class was generally favorable, and its favorable verdict was by no means overwhelming; all of the other classes were unfavorable in their reports, and the degree of disfavor increased the further the student went through the University. Another big question I asked was what kinds of writing students have to do; a principal result of that question was that many of the kinds of writing which they have to do on this campus are not kinds which the English Department teaches--and in my opinion, not kinds which the English Department is capable of.

"A second statement I wish to correct is that this study of mine was, in some sense, a mandate. Remember the study was made in 1975, and during the past six years it has been either berated or ignored, but never have I been so honored as to have anything I proposed considered a mandate by the English Department. I made the proposal to shift one of these courses to the upper division repeatedly, and members of the composition faction in the English Department repeatedly said 'No.' I made that proposal to administrators at all levels, and I heard in reply a loud silence. I would not make that proposal at all without protection, which I do not see in the Vick report. If that proposal is to work, then the upper-division course must have a great deal of support, a good deal of money.

"So those are the things I wish to say. I don't want to get into the debate, but it simply isn't the case that the study which I made would support this proposal about writing."

Gaylord Jentz (General Business) asked Mr. Vick two questions about his Committee's proposal--(1) What is a "small" class? (2) How can we enforce the requirement that the instructor evaluate the performance on form as well as content?

Mr. Vick responded: "We spent a good bit of time talking about these particular questions. What exactly is a small class? What class is small enough to facilitate the kind of feedback that we saw as important in the writing classes? We were not ready to set specific limits, although the numbers that were thrown out were as small as 15 or 20 and as large as 40. I don't think anyone thought that [composition] should be taught in classes of larger than 40, and realistically we did not feel that we could enforce anything as small as 15--perhaps something between 20 and 40.

"As far as receiving feedback on form as well as content, I think that the feeling of the Committee was not that everyone who taught this course should be a specialist in rhetoric, but that people who taught this course should be willing to require [that] their students use proper syntax and

that they write in an acceptable way. We did not say that there should be a certain percentage of the course grade determined by form; we felt that it was just important. I see it very evidently in my math students who tend to answer math questions without writing complete sentences, or even complete mathematical sentences. We felt like it was very important that this be part of one of these courses, that this aspect of the writing be a factor. We didn't feel that it should be specified in our recommendations."

Dean Gloyna (College of Engineering) stated: "This is one of the areas that we support quite strongly. It is interesting that we would have to support something that seems to be so obvious to everyone, but we are particularly interested in the suggestion by some of the campus, and the report, that we would have greatly improved offerings in the English and writing areas. The suggested course in literature, using outstanding and dynamic faculty members in English who are properly recognized and rewarded, will be of value to us, and our commitment to excellence in composition is certainly essential to the survival of our students as professionals. As a matter of fact, we would like to strongly recommend that the Committee on Students' Use of English be revived to its former strength, so that students can be denied graduation when they are unable to perform satisfactorily in written English on Engineering reports, essays, or anything else."

Dean Jeffrey (College of Communication) spoke next. "I would like to make a couple of clarifications, Mr. President. The College of Communication is not unhappy at all concerning this report as far as the number of hours are concerned. We already require a good many liberal arts courses; our curriculum is quite broad, so that certainly does not bother us a bit."

"The second clarification I would like to make is that what I said before, and what I am about to say, is not at all self-serving. We have more students in the College than we can now manage comfortably, so we are not looking for any more departments, or empires to build. I would like, however, to go on record...because I have not heard any groundswell of support for a communications skills program."

"About 6 months ago I told the Advisory Council of the College of Communication that I had observed in the College that there are a lot of faculty members who are interested in newspapers and not in communication; and with the rapidly increasing change of delivery systems, and the variety of new information delivery systems, those people are not going to do us a lot of good in the future. It seems to me that we are now very clearly in a communication era. There are magazines on the newsstands constantly talking about the communication decade. I think [we are shortsighted], in this period in which we're looking ahead to the next 100 years, [to restrict ourselves] to a communications system that is used less than 5% of a person's waking hours, and [to] forget the communication means and modes that people use over 75% of their waking hours--particularly speaking and listening. I think we have not done the kind of research we should have done if we are really looking forward to educating people to deal with their lives in the future. Professor Vick's response to my question concerning whether they had considered our proposal was that they had read the letter; the letter was not supposed to be the argument, but only a tickler to start them thinking about another means of teaching written communication and speaking communication together."

"I think the comment that the Committee felt that writing was so much more important than [it] did not consider [including] the other [forms of communication] is the basis for my basic disagreement with this report. I would like to see the studies that they examined that indicated that writing was so much more important than other means of communication. I would be delighted to see them, because all of the studies I have seen

certainly have not indicated that. This is an academic institution; it seems to me we place some sort of premium on research, and reported studies from that research, and I would like to know what research places writing--as I say, a mechanism that we use less than 5% of our waking hours--as so much more important than other means of communication that we use much more liberally."

Dean Jeffrey closed by stating his intention to move, at the appropriate time, that the Vick Committee proposal be referred to a committee.

Thomas Philpott (History) made the following statement: "As a member of the History Department, I respond to this favorably, and I think the members of my Department do. As long as I have been here, [and] that is 11 years, the Department has had a series of courses called "Pro-Seminar in Historical Writing"; its usual size is 15, sometimes 20. And those courses are a pleasure for members of my faculty to teach, because [those faculty members are] accustomed to massive courses. If I may say, once again, this semester I have a course with an enrollment of 585 people. I do not know how many times the Vick Committee did refer to small classes, but I favor them--and for reasons besides writing. But I do think that this kind of course that the History Department offers (Pro-Seminar in Historical Writing), where...undergraduate students [essentially] take a seminar, is a good course. It is good for the students, and good for us as teachers; and the work our students do is good. However, we do find ourselves in the position of trying to be surrogate John Trimble's, and that is not easy."

"It seems to us in the History Department that more writing needs to be done throughout the University....I think the History Department can, to answer [Mr. Iscoe's] question,...accommodate this. Members of the English Department have assured us that they can help to accommodate this requirement. I would just add, for the record, that [we hope] that we can get support, have more teachers and smaller classes, and have writing be a general experience, not one which [causes] our students [to] go into paroxysms of terror and say, 'But I've never had to write an essay before.' I hope they will have to write a lot of essays, and I think that can make a difference."

Warwick Wadlington (English): "I would like to answer the question... that Ira Iscoe raised, and also to speak in support of the Jeffrey proposal. I want to talk about this...in terms of both practicality and...general desirability...."

"The Writing requirement, as it is set forth here, really will be, for the majority of students, a 15-hour requirement, not 12. That seems to me excessive."

"I speak as a member of the Department of English. I think...the way it will really work out is that most of these students will be wanting to take these courses in the English Department. Despite the heartwarming sentiments of support that have been made in this body, I don't think it is generally true that there is a widespread interest in the teaching of supportive writing among the faculty of this University. It is simply not what they get paid for. I think that this may...turn out to be a hollow requirement, a mockery, and...since I am interested very much in the teaching of writing and communications in general, I [would] prefer to see us have more modest but really well supported, well thought out programs rather than something which tries far too much and ends up failing."

"I would like to support, then...a 9-hour general requirement, the kind that is going to come up later as the [College of] Liberal Arts proposal. If we do decide that there is [to be a] requirement for additional writing [instruction, then we should specify that it not] be taken in the English Department but...be taken in some other field, presumably the major field of the student.

"I would...also like to speak in favor of a requirement of the general kind that Dean Jeffrey talked about--[at least a 3-hour requirement of] communications in general. He is the expert here and will be able to suggest to us exactly what form this [requirement] would take; I assume [it] would [concentrate] on full communication skills of speaking and listening. It seems to me that, for the generally educated person, this is at least as important as the skill of writing, which actually few people will do [very much] after they leave our institution.... So, on the issue of practicality, I think...the 15-hour requirement is simply too much. We are beginning to get, I think, the kind of support from the administration, for which I'm grateful and our Department is grateful, to allow us to do a good job with a 9-hour requirement. Fifteen hours, I think, is beyond the capacity of the English Department to handle, and I think it is just too much devoted to that particular subject as far as the English Department is concerned. So, again I would urge that we would modify [the Vick Committee recommendations]. If we want to have this many hours of communication skills, let 3 of it be devoted...specifically to speaking and listening, and that 3 hours be specified as not to be taken in the Department of English."

Because Mr. Wadlington had referred to it, President Flawn asked Dean Robert King if he wished to describe the College of Liberal Arts proposal (D&P 8212-8216) at this point in the discussion. Dean King, however, felt that it would be better to postpone discussing that proposal until after the other parts of the Vick Committee recommendations had been discussed. He indicated that the proposal is basically a revision of the existing English requirement, with no increase in hours, and he said that it would be brought out when it is time for the Council to vote on the English part of the Vick Committee recommendations.

James McGinity (Pharmacy) asked Mr. Vick if each college and school has the ability to develop and to incorporate into their programs 6 hours of upper-division courses that contain a substantial writing component. He added that he believed the College of Pharmacy could do so.

Mr. Vick replied: "That certainly was our intent. Our intent was that these not necessarily be courses that teach students how to write but courses that require students to write, and we were in hopes that all majors in the University would include such courses."

Dean Stanley Werbow (College of Fine Arts) stated: "I am going to repeat today, in discussion of this point, something which I mentioned briefly at the close of the last meeting, and that is that the Vick Committee recommendations do not, it seems to me, adequately take into consideration entrance requirements to the University in the shaping of a well-educated individual. The present entrance requirements to The University of Texas, if I remember correctly, are 3 high school units of English. Students go to high school for four years. If they intend to come to the University [it] would be no great hardship to require a fourth unit of high school English, and to specify that at least one whole unit--that means at least two semesters--of high school English courses taken by students who apply for admission to the University be in writing. This would relieve the responsibility of the English Department to offer elementary instruction, and especially the need, if this legislation were to pass, to offer dozens at least, and maybe more, of sections of English 306 for which students would receive University credit but no degree credit.

"I have pulled out, for my own interest, the Documents and Proceedings of the meeting in 1955 when the Graham Committee Report was adopted. Those requirements--at that time--were stated in terms of 6 hours in English composition, and then...6 to 9 hours selected from...three groups [of subjects]--(a) aesthetics, architecture, art, drama, and music; (b) literature and English, or another language; and (c) composition, creative writing, linguistics, speech, and technical writing--so that the student had the opportunity to do more work in writing if he required it, but he was not obligated to do that. I agree, in general, with Professor Wadlington that a 15-hour English writing requirement is excessive, and I would recommend that we undertake steps to see that a large part of that load is placed back on the high school where it belongs."

David Edwards (Government) asked for a clarification as to whether the second sentence under the legislative version of the writing requirement (D&P 8247), which began, "At least 6 of the 12 hours must be in upper-division courses..." was an accurate translation of the intent of the Vick Committee report. The report said that the Committee recommended a writing requirement of 12 semester hours beyond English 306, including 6 hours in upper-division courses, while the legislative version prepared by Secretary Kelley said, "At least 6 hours..." which implied that 9 or all 12 of the hours could be in upper-division courses.

Mr. Vick replied: "We did not object to there being more upper-division work. We were mainly concerned with a minimum of 6 hours of upper-division work in the Writing sequence." However, he stated that he thought the words "at least" could be deleted without changing the meaning of the sentence, so they were deleted.

Mr. Edwards then commented: "The general point that I would like to address is what I see as a serious weakness in the proposal that comes out of the College of Liberal Arts,...which is the effort to move upward to the upper-division level at least one course; and it might, depending upon how this were implemented, be moving more of those courses up, in the Vick Committee language. After 16 years of teaching here, teaching courses in [all of] which I require substantial writing by my students, I am utterly convinced that our present English program is grossly inadequate; and I'm sure virtually anybody else in The University of Texas, except perhaps for the 4% Professor Sledd found five years ago saying that our students wrote well, would agree with me. Now, if our present program, which requires this basic work at the lower-division level, is not working, it seems to me a rather bizarre approach to say, 'If it doesn't work down there, let's shift it up to the point when people are already moving in the direction of some sort of profession, and then see if they can do it up there when they didn't learn the fundamentals down below.' It's a bit like [having] a football team [with players that haven't mastered] blocking and tackling and saying, 'Well, let's start scrimmaging and see how we do at scrimmaging, [even though] we don't know how to block and tackle....'

"It seems to me that the idea of upper-division training in writing in a particular substantive area is a splendid one. Any student who expects some kind of profession afterwards ought to applaud that sort of opportunity. I know from my own experience a lot of them don't, but they ought to, and I think they might once they began to see the virtues of it, and especially if it's required.

"But it seems to me that if things are not being done well at the lower level or when they get to the upper level now, what we need to do is maintain and strengthen the lower-division training and then add on to it upper-division training in a particular area. So what the provision ought to be, it seems to me, is a specification that perhaps 9 hours must be

lower division [and] 3 hours must be upper division in a particular discipline or other professionally-oriented type of writing. "If we take seriously our feeling of responsibility for training in the mastery of at least the written language, and I'm certainly not opposed to other types of communication either, I think we probably ought to have a good deal more requirements of a much broader sort, including more foreign language requirements. But if we are serious, it seems to me we have to stay with improvement of lower-division English training, and then add to it more directed upper-division training."

Mary Crockett (Nursing), in response to Mr. Edwards, indicated that one reason for requiring 6 hours at the upper-division level is that "...we can be certain that we have our students, who are going to graduate, in the junior and senior years; we cannot be certain where they will have [taken] their first two years. If we want to assure that they do, indeed, write well, we may have to require 6 hours later in the course for [students who transfer in from other colleges and students who enter] from junior colleges." Mr. Edwards replied, "...It is really a remarkable notion that [if students] come ill-prepared, all we have to do is lower our requirements so we let them in. If they really want to come in, let them meet our requirements."

John Durbin (Mathematics) said: "Dean Werbow has mentioned several times the possibility of increasing entrance requirements. The Educational Policy Committee is considering a proposal to strengthen entrance requirements;... the proposal, as it has been given to the Committee, is to require 4 years of high school English, 3 years of high school mathematics (which include at least 2 years of honest college-preparatory algebra) and 2 years of foreign language. That's just for information. I do not know [when the Committee will report to the Council.]

"[At least one earlier speaker suggested there will be a motion to refer the Vick recommendation to another committee.] I would like to say now that if you want to kill this, you can send it to the Educational Policy Committee, because it will take a long time. That Committee would have to go through all that the Vick Committee has gone through, [and it does not meet very often.] Referring this legislation to the Educational Policy Committee would not be a smart thing for the Council to do, unless you want to kill it."

James Stephens (French-Italian) spoke next. "I would like to express strong support for this part of the recommendation; I think it's the most crucial. Everyone deplores that, not only students, but people at large can no longer write very well.... Students do not read enough; they do not have enough models [of good writing]. [Learning to write] takes a great deal of writing and a great deal of correction. I remember, about a year or so ago, a recommendation from three of my colleagues...that said that students should write every week; I agree with them. But [those colleagues went on to say that there is no need for faculty members] to grade papers, that [students] should write each week, and at the end of the year [the faculty] would be amazed at how much better [the students] wrote than at the beginning. I think that's a lot of nonsense. They will continue to write as badly as ever if they're not corrected. First of all, [the students] usually control only one level of usage--easy colloquial. There's nothing wrong with easy colloquial, that is what they hear on television, on radio, and in conversation, and it's fine, but it's not adequate when it comes to writing. We need to have students read extensively [and] write extensively, and [we need to] grade them regularly. This is...very expensive, and it is a very difficult task to perform adequately.

"I would like to agree with Dean Werbow that adding another year of preparation in high school would help us, [but] I am afraid [it would] not. The intellectual level that you find in high schools is so low, and so little reading is done, that [students] are not going to improve noticeably. This is another argument in favor of transferring part of this [required] writing to later in their University career when they will, hopefully, have read more and will be required to read in the field in which they are writing and will be graded.

"[Another point we are talking about is] where we can teach these skills. Certainly we can teach them in history; we can teach them in any field that they take. One field I think is particularly apt is in foreign languages. A student that has had two or three years of a foreign language--German, or Spanish, or French--might then be asked to translate into English from that language, and he will be forced to write in a style other than his usual easy colloquial. As it is now, we ask a student to write a paper, we read it, it's not acceptable; the student says, "What's wrong with it?"--everything's wrong with it, it has to be rewritten; the style, the level, the register is wrong. Now, if we can point to something in a foreign language and say, for example, "This man is trying to move the greatest in the realm, in the cathedral, in a funeral oration. You have got to reach up to that level; you can't say, 'We're just sorry this person died.'" I'm very much concerned about this, because this may come up more with foreign languages shortly.

"I heard [recently], during the hostage exchange, people from the State Department that were quoting a message from Iran. [It was written] originally in Farsi, then it passed through French, and [finally] it had been translated [into English; the message] spoke of 'eventual immediate release of the hostages.' [The State Department people] said, 'Of course, that doesn't make sense--eventual immediate release of the hostages.' Anyone that has had a little French will know that éventuel in French does not mean eventual, it means possible. 'The possible immediate release of the hostages' does make sense. Now, if we cannot handle a language as widely taught as French, or Spanish, or German, in our State Department, how can we hope to handle Farsi?"

"[There are] also other examples. When we see on the front page of our best newspaper, The New York Times, that the French government "demands" something, everyone gets highly worked up--who are they to demand something; [in fact, the French government] is simply "requesting" something. This is the low state to which we have fallen.

"But, at any rate, translating from one language to another has always been, for thousands of years, the best exercise for writers. This is where we could take care of some of this--not as a foreign language, it is not the way to learn a foreign language, it is a way to perfect your own.

"I think the thing is students must write in every course, every year, and there must be some attention paid to it if you hope to teach them to write; otherwise you will have to accept what they say, and they will go on just like it, this way, forever.

"I think this is a very modest proposal and [that] any [department] in the final year, where I hope you do not have 500 students in every class, can find time for students. I think 15 or 20 is the most you can handle. Someone said 40; think just how you are going to grade 40 papers every week, and do anything about it. And [the writing] also must be based on something they know; it must have a background, something they have read, in order to write in a convincing manner.

"I will say only one other thing. Just read today's Daily Texan--the letter from the [Engineering student]. There are four sentences in there that are ill-constructed. I wouldn't want to cross the bridge that he constructed. If he can't construct a sentence in English, how can he construct a bridge?"

Dean Earnest Gloyna (College of Engineering) responded: "I agree with almost everything you said until the last sentence, sir. As a matter of fact, we have put so much faith in our high schools and their English teachers, ...and our English teachers here on campus, that sometimes we forget the fact that, according to our 1979 freshman class, only 13.5% passed the advanced placement [test] for English 306. And, sir, the SAT [Verbal] scores in Engineering are essentially higher than those of the average in the University; of course, in the [Mathematical scores] we are much higher."

Karl Galinsky (Classics) spoke next. "I'd just like to clarify one or two things on behalf of the Committee. First of all, we are not looking upon this requirement as a 15-hour English requirement. The feedback that we had from the different professional schools in particular...clearly indicated that the 6 hours that we specify in the upper-division level would be taken in almost every case in the student's major subject area. So, I think to say 15 hours more English...is irrelevant; I do not think that's going to happen."

Second, as far as moving at least 3 of these hours up to the upper-division level is concerned, our complaint is not about the quality of instruction that takes place in the English Department at the lower-division level. I think the campus, in general, has made it too easy for itself to seek the blame in that particular department. I think the responsibility needs to be spread out. I think that is one of the factors that moved us to make this requirement. I think, basically, what we would like to see is [writing] being used consistently, not being relegated to the sophomore level or the freshman level...; writing should be practiced at the junior level and senior level as well. I have [seen students] who wrote fairly well when they came out of that English requirement at the end of the sophomore year [but who were] not asked to use that particular skill for several years; [when they were asked to write] in the last semester of their senior year, they were up against a brick wall again. So, the point of the Committee was simply not to...criticize the English Department for doing a poor job at the lower-division level, but to make sure that there is writing semester after semester, year after year, in every subject area on this campus."

David Gavenda (Physics) responded: "I just heard that, in all the professional areas, there would be people willing and able to teach this upper-division writing course, or two courses. I don't know that Physics is a professional area (it is perhaps specialized; we are part of the old College of Arts and Sciences), but I will repeat here what I said in the Senate. I think very few of my colleagues are qualified or willing to teach a course with a substantial writing component to it. Now...I suppose we could try to palm off our laboratory reports in an upper-division course as being a substantial writing component, but I do note that this states that the written work will be evaluated on form.... So I take it that, if this evaluation is to be on form as well as content, the people teaching these courses will have to know how to teach writing skills beyond the content which is included in the course normally..... I want to emphasize that I support this requirement, in general, but I suspect that many students on the science part of the campus will have to take those upper-division hours outside of the College of Natural Sciences."

Robert Williamson (Finance) spoke on behalf of the Undergraduate Programs Committee of the College of Business Administration, that had asked him to point out some problems with the proposed Writing requirement. "I think their concerns are more of a practical nature than a theoretical nature. It is hard for us to see how we, in the College of Business, can actually handle the 15 hours (including English 306), with 6 hours of writing at the upper-division level...in our very large classes. One possible option, when we get around to amendments, is to go in two different directions--one is to make 3 hours, at least, the option of an interpersonal communication skill other than writing (which we see also acceptable at a theoretical level); another approach would be to reduce the [upper-division requirement from] 6 to 3 hours of writing courses--and perhaps rather than being specified as upper division, it [might] be specified as '3 hours of the 12 must be in courses outside the English Department'.... This way History, Government, and other areas that would be offering basic requirement courses typically offered at the lower-division level might be able to incorporate Writing requirements in these courses so Business students could get [the] additional Writing requirements in these other areas...as part of their major; [this does not seem to be very] feasible at the present time, with our very large enrollments in the College of Business."

Mary Ann Rankin (Zoology) replied to Mr. Gavenda's statement about science as an area in which this kind of writing could be taught. "I really support this idea, and I think, in Zoology at least, we would not find it difficult to accommodate it in our upper-division courses--at least I would not. I normally require essay exams from my [students in] upper-division courses, and usually a paper [as well]; I think I would find it a relief to be able to grade freely on the basis of form as well as content. So, I think there may be another view within the science community."

There were no further comments on the Writing recommendation.

SOCIAL SCIENCES RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (D&P 8148-8166 and D&P 8247); major legislation. (GENERAL DISCUSSION ONLY)

Mr. Vick chose not to make an opening statement on this recommendation, and there were no questions or comments from members of the Council.

MATHEMATICS RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BASIC EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (D&P 8148-8166 and D&P 8247); major legislation. (GENERAL DISCUSSION ONLY)

Mr. Vick chose not to make an opening statement on this recommendation.

John Durbin (Mathematics) noted that the amendment he mentioned at the Council meeting in February had been prepared and distributed as D&P 8208-8210. He chose to make a few general remarks and save the details until the amendment is actually moved.

"First, there is a correction on page 8210; it is my error, not the Secretary's. [On] page 8210, number 3, line 4, I am quoting...the Vick Committee; it says '...could learn in high school,' and it should say, '...should learn in high school.'"

"[There is] another remark I want to make. When I said last time I would make this amendment, I said that I would exclude M. 316K and L from the courses that I was going to remove from [the Vick Committee] list. These are Mathematics Education courses, and I was most concerned with keeping students who are not in [Mathematics] Education out of these courses. I think that is important because [these courses] serve a special purpose; there are not many [faculty members] who are qualified to teach them. [However], that problem can be taken care of separately; students [who are not in Mathematics Education] are not allowed to take those [courses] now....I think, though, the students in Mathematics Education should be able to count M. 316K and L as the courses that they offer to satisfy this 3-hour mathematics requirement. What I am telling you is that the way this proposal is actually written is not what I [intended] as far as M. 316K and L go."