

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AD HOC
COMMITTEE TO REVIEW BASIC EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Introduction

In April of 1987, the Vice President and Provost, Dr. Gerhard Fonken, created a faculty committee to study the results of the implementation of the Basic Education Requirements which resulted from the Vick Committee Report. This committee was made up of Frank D. Bean (Sociology), Allen Bizzell (Business), Wallace Fowler, Chair (Aerospace Engineering/Engineering Mechanics), Michael Katz (Slavic Languages), Ken Kirk (Pharmacy), Mel Oakes (Physics), Charles Roeckle (Fine Arts), Ricardo Romo (History), Diane Schallert (Educational Psychology), Pamela Shoemaker (Communication), and William Sutherland (English).

The committee used the following methods to gather data:

- (1) Interviews of Deans or Dean's Representatives for all schools and colleges
- (2) Written Surveys of Department Chairs
- (3) Special requests to the Office of Institutional Studies
- (4) Letters/information from interested faculty
- (5) Information from a Center for Teaching Effectiveness committee studying the Substantial Writing Component requirement and its implementation at UT

Copies of the questions asked the Deans and the surveys sent to the Department Chairs are given in the Appendix.

After a data-gathering phase, the committee was divided into four subcommittees which studied in detail the following Basic Education Requirements:

- (1) Mathematics and Natural Sciences
- (2) Fine Arts/Humanities and Social Sciences
- (3) Foreign Languages
- (4) English and the Substantial Writing Component

This report provides the results of the Committee's study. It consists of an Introduction, a Summary of Findings and General Recommendations, Individual Requirements Summaries, and Appendices. The Appendices contain the detailed reports of the individual subcommittees. The committee hopes that this report will aid the University in improving its implementation of the Basic Education Requirements.

Summary of Findings and General Recommendations

The Basic Education Requirements, implemented in 1982-84, imposed university-wide requirements in Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Fine Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Foreign Language, English, and Substantial Writing Component courses. In its study, the committee found widespread support for the Basic Education Requirements and their positive effects, not only on the education of University undergraduates, but also on academic preparation in secondary schools statewide. Despite problems of implementation, there is no evidence to suggest a retreat from these requirements as they currently exist.

The current requirements were implemented with few identifiable new resources being provided, and with little reallocation of existing resources. The implementation of the requirements caused appreciable increases in the numbers of semester credit hours taught by a number of departments. Similarly, large enrollment increases in specific courses in several departments were reported (for example, Mathematics and Spanish). Also, courses across the university which bear the Substantial Writing Component (SWC) designation and which require few prerequisites have experienced large enrollment growth. A significant number of these SWC courses are taught by the English and History departments.

These increased enrollments have strained the resources of the departments affected. Compounding the resource problem, other departments, which have redesigned courses in their majors to meet the SWC requirement, need increased TA support to help meet the SWC content of these courses.

To date, the increased teaching/grading burden has resulted in the following unfortunate consequences:

1. Many faculty who were initially enthusiastic about the Basic Education Requirements have become discouraged, with the major problems being related to SWC courses.
2. Enrollment overloads in Substantial Writing Component courses have caused a number of these courses to be changed slightly in order to no longer qualify as SWC courses. A prime example is English 325, Creative Writing, which originally satisfied the SWC requirement. The course was flooded by non-majors seeking SWC credit, prompting the faculty to alter the course, eliminating the SWC credit.
3. Some departments have had to divert financial resources away from tenured faculty lines into lecturer and assistant instructor appointments in order to accommodate increased enrollments in courses supporting the Basic Education Requirements, thus sacrificing the overall quality of the departmental faculty and scholarship.

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Situations such as this can be found in several departments across the University.

The resource problems experienced during the implementation of the Basic Education Requirements have been complicated and exacerbated by increases in University enrollment from 1982 to the present. Teaching resources, already severely strained, have had to be stretched even farther. The losers have been the students, the faculty, the University, and ultimately the State of Texas.

General Recommendations

The following recommendations are those which apply across the University, and which are strongly recommended by the committee. Other recommendations relating to the individual components of the Basic Education Requirements are presented in the Individual Requirements Summaries which follow this section of the report.

1. Based on the finding that the faculty strongly supports the current Basic Education Requirements, the committee recommends that the current requirements be retained, that the courses taught to meet the requirements be of high quality, and that no retreat from the requirements be considered.
2. Since the faculty strongly supports the current requirements, and since current financial resources necessary to provide high quality courses to meet the requirements are clearly inadequate, the committee recommends a match in enrollments and resources be sought. This match could be achieved either by dedication of additional resources to the implementation of the Basic Education Requirements or by reducing the appropriate components of the University's enrollment. Either solution introduces new problems which would have to be solved.
3. Based on the original intent of the Vick Committee recommendations, and supported strongly by the information gathered during this study, the committee recommends that the University strongly consider requiring that at least half of the Substantial Writing Component credit must be earned in the student's major department.
4. Based on the uncertainties still felt by the committee at the end of this study, the committee recommends that the administration strongly consider an ongoing study tracking the enrollments and class sizes in courses which are used to meet the Basic Education Requirements. Such a study should go back to the introduction of the requirements in order to quantify the effects of the introduction of the requirements on educational quality and resource needs.

The committee believes that these recommendations, together with those related to separate components described in subsequent sections, will improve implementation of the Basic Education Requirement and strengthen the quality of undergraduate education at the University.

Individual Requirement Summaries

Mathematics

The Vick Committee recommended a three hour math requirement for all students.

The committee suggested that the basic principles of calculus or methods of statistical inference would be desirable, however stopped short of making this part of their recommendation. Instead, the committee included a stipulation that certain courses not be allowed to satisfy this requirement: M.301, beginning algebra; M.302, an introductory course in the cultural aspects of mathematics; M.303F, the mathematics of finance; and M.316K&L, techniques of mathematics for elementary education. These suggestions and stipulations were deleted from the final motion to the University Council.

Some positive effects of this requirement were cited in interviews of the Deans and surveys of department chairs. These were (1) that one curriculum which was especially weak in mathematics has been strengthened, and (2) that several departments expect the mathematics skills of their students to improve. This requirement has no effect on students enrolled in curricula which already required mathematics courses.

The implementation of the requirement has prompted the mathematics department to offer M.302, Introduction to Mathematics and M.303D, Applicable Mathematics. Enrollment in these two courses has grown from 94 in 1982 to 1239 in 1986. Spring 1987 saw a combined enrollment of 914 in these two courses.

Mathematics has met the teaching loads resulting from these large enrollments by using the money from unfilled faculty positions to hire lecturers. The department is actively seeking to fill these positions with senior faculty. New faculty will enhance the Mathematics program but worsen the resource problem associated with the Basic Education Mathematics Requirement.

The Mathematics requirement has resulted in a serious problem of staffing the courses used by non-technical students in meeting the Mathematics requirement. The resources initially used to meet this need, funds from unfilled Mathematics faculty positions, are shrinking as new faculty are recruited. This problem is not being addressed effectively.

Natural Sciences

The Vick Committee recommended a requirement of nine hours of natural science courses.

At least six hours must be taken in one subject to assure a greater depth of coverage. A maximum of three of these nine hours could be taken in mathematics and these three hours would not overlap with the previous required three hours of mathematics. Students were strongly advised to acquire a basic knowledge of how to use a computer.

A positive effect of this requirement on some curricula was noted. This was that students enrolled in curricula which were weak in natural sciences would better understand their physical environment. Many curricula which already had a natural sciences component were not affected by this requirement.

Fine Arts and Humanities

As currently implemented, the Basic Education requirement consists of:

Three (3) semester hours in Archaeology, Architecture, Art, Classics, Drama, Fine Arts, Humanities, Music, or Philosophy (other than logic).

All colleges and departments have a fine arts/humanities requirement which meets or exceeds this Basic Education requirement. Some colleges or departments expressed an interest in minor adjustments within their own programs, but there was general satisfaction with the requirement. Two of the colleges (Business Administration and Engineering) mentioned the benefit which this requirement has in broadening the education of their students.

The departments offering courses for use in fulfillment of this requirement, however, reported difficulty in meeting the great demand for specific, popular topics (e.g., architecture studio courses, lower-division art history, non-major acting, etc.). The departments do not have the resources to add additional sections of these courses. Problems of over-subscription also occur in fine arts or humanities courses which are certified writing courses.

The committee recommends that The University (a) retain the fine arts/humanities requirement as currently implemented, (b) determine whether the allocation of additional resources for the most popular fine arts or humanities courses is educationally desirable and financially possible, and (c) consider an improved system of information dissemination to alert students and advisers to various fine arts or humanities courses which are usually open and which do fulfill the requirement.

Social Sciences

The current Basic Education requirement in social sciences consists of:

Six semester hours in American government (including three hours in Texas government) and six semester hours in American history as required by state law, plus three additional semester hours in Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Linguistics, Psychology, or Sociology.

All undergraduate programs have a social sciences requirement which meets or exceeds this Basic Education requirement, with two exceptions. The teacher education programs in the College of Fine Arts were approved by the University Council to use educational psychology courses in partial fulfillment of this requirement. To keep The University competitive with other institutions, the University Council also agreed to exempt the applied music degree programs from the three semester hours of social sciences beyond the legislative requirement.

Although there seems to be widespread satisfaction with the intent of the social sciences requirement (the College of Engineering mentioned the positive effect which the requirement has had in broadening the education of its undergraduates), several problems were reported by the colleges and departments. Among issues of general concern were (a) the lack of sufficient sections of lower-division courses in some areas of the social sciences, (b) confusion about the evaluation of transferred credit in American government, (c) concern about student understanding of the legislative restrictions on credit by examination for American government and American history, and (d) concern about the relevance of current standardized examinations in American history *vis-vis* the content of courses taught at The University. Of more specific concern were the difficulties of College of Engineering students in fulfilling the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology requirement for a two-semester sequence in one area of social science, and the suggestion from the School of Social Work that the Basic Education requirement be reconsidered in light of several of its courses.

The greatest concern, however, was focussed on the twelve semester-hour legislative requirement in American government and American history. This requirement was almost universally decried as inordinately burdensome and restrictive. It was the overwhelming sentiment of the colleges and departments that the requirement be reduced to six hours (three hours each in American government and American history), and that the freed six hours be used for other appropriate requirements.

The committee recommends that The University (a) retain the social sciences requirement as currently implemented, (b) seek a means of providing an adequate number of courses for students needing to fulfill the requirement, (c) consider steps toward the reduction of the legislative requirement, and (d) undertake appropriate review of relevant policies and procedures in the Office of Admissions and Measurement and Evaluation Center to identify and solve any problems related to the social sciences requirement.

Foreign Language

The Vick Committee recommended a proficiency

"We propose that each of our undergraduates should be required to master the basic grammar in a foreign language. Initially students could satisfy this requirement by presenting two years of high school language credit. Beginning in the fall of 1986, those submitting secondary credit would also be required to demonstrate proficiency at a specified level on a standardized examination.

A strong minority of the committee favored requiring students to complete the second semester freshman course in a foreign language or to otherwise demonstrate proficiency at this level."

The requirement has been implemented as an entry requirement only. The current requirement is not a proficiency requirement, and can be met by:

- (1) the successful completion of two high school units (i.e., two years) in a single foreign language, or
- (2) earning college level credit for courses 506 and 507 (or their equivalents) in a foreign language.
 - (a) Credit may be earned either by examination or by earning classroom credit for the appropriate courses.
 - (b) Credit for Courses 506 and 507 (or their equivalents) will not count toward a degree.

Thus, the current foreign language requirement, as implemented, is an admissions requirement with a deficiency provision, and not the proficiency requirement sought by the Vick Committee.

Some colleges and schools (Architecture, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Nursing, and Pharmacy) meet the requirement by demanding that all incoming students present the appropriate entrance credits. Social Work has implemented the proficiency requirement as recommended by the Vick Committee and requires credit for Courses 506 and 507 (by examination or by taking them). The College of Fine Arts has adopted the minimal entry credit requirement as implemented across the university, but seven of its degree programs require language proficiency at the Course 312L level.

Three colleges (Communication, Liberal Arts, and Natural Sciences) also have proficiency requirements at the Course 312L level. The Department of Home Economics, within Natural Sciences, is an exception. Home Economics has adopted the minimal language entry credit requirement.

There are two major benefits which have resulted from the implementation of the basic education requirement in foreign language. First, it has forced many Texas high

schools to upgrade their foreign language instruction in order to meet UT entrance requirements. Second, more students are enrolling in foreign language at the college level.

The major problems relating to the implementation of this requirement center around resources. An insufficient number of sections in some languages (Spanish) are available to meet enrollment demands because of an insufficient number of teaching personnel. Minor problems exist in the areas of records checking for transfer students and an apparent double standard for deficient students. (See subcommittee report in Appendix). Also, a problem exists with respect to the way that the foreign language requirement is to be interpreted when dealing with foreign students.

The basic education foreign language requirement has been implemented as an entrance requirement, although some schools and colleges require that a level of proficiency be demonstrated. When resources allow, the university should consider moving to a foreign language proficiency requirement for all students.

English

The English requirement is a writing requirement and is the basis for the Substantial Writing Component requirement. However, it is convenient to break the requirement into two parts; one part which must be taken in the English department (called the English requirement) and a part which can be taken outside English (called the Substantial Writing Component requirement). The overall requirement, as stated by the Vick Committee, is:

Writing: Twelve (12) semester hours of credit in courses beyond E.306 (Rhetoric and Composition). Six (6) of the twelve hours must be in upper-division courses certified to have a substantial writing component.

This requirement has been implemented as a six (6) hour Substantial Writing Component requirement. The English requirement has been implemented as a requirement for E.306 and E.316K with a new course E.309 being developed. The requirement that the English courses be "beyond E.306" was not implemented, and is not likely to be implemented because of lack of resources. However, the English Department continues to devote as much staffing as possible to E.309 and to developing short non-credit courses in its writing center.

Substantial Writing Component (SWC)

The English requirement, as stated by the Vick Committee, is:

Writing: Twelve (12) semester hours of credit in courses beyond E.306 (Rhetoric and Composition). Six (6) of the twelve hours must be in upper-division courses certified to have a substantial writing component.

The underlined portion of the Vick Committee English requirement is the basis for the Substantial Writing Component requirement. The Vick Committee also recommended that the SWC courses be "taught in small classes".

As the requirement is currently implemented, students must take two courses, each fully certified as a 3 hour substantial writing component course. Students in most curricula meet the requirement that the two SWC courses are upper-division, but all do not. All curricula require at least one upper-division SWC course. Many departments offer all of the SWC courses required by their majors, but some offer no SWC courses at all, leaving the teaching burden to other departments.

The problems which have accompanied the implementation of the Substantial Writing Component are many and complicated. The reader is referred to the Appendix for details. Only the major problems will be addressed in this section. Problems have arisen due to (1) the unbalanced distribution of SWC courses across the university, (2) current requirements for SWC course format, (3) variations in the writing content of SWC courses, (4) adverse faculty attitudes toward teaching SWC courses, (5) grading, (6) course availability and large enrollments, (7) availability and skills of Teaching Assistants, and (8) lack of adequate resources.

The resource problem underlies most of the other problems, and is the direct cause of several of them. The unbalanced distribution of SWC courses can, in part, be attributed to lack of teaching resources in some departments. Similarly, the problems with course availability, large enrollments, and TA availability are resource problems. The problem of adverse faculty attitudes, probably the most serious problem of all, is a direct result of the problems cited as stemming from lack of adequate resources.

The attitudes of many faculty who have taught SWC courses toward these courses is not good. Most of the disenchanted faculty teach in departments in which the SWC courses can be taken by students enrolled in many curricula. These faculty have seen SWC courses, designed for majors but available to interested students from other disciplines, swamped by large numbers of students seeking only SWC credit and not at all interested in the subject matter. After several semesters of overloaded classes, unresponsive students, and the extremely large grading loads which resulted, some of these faculty have, in desperation, modified their courses so that they no longer meet the SWC course guidelines. They still have their students write, but not for SWC credit.

The current restrictive definition of what constitutes an SWC course is a problem which offers, in its existence, the seeds for a partial solution to some of the other problems. By dividing the SWC requirement up into six one-hour writing units, and

by allowing faculty to offer courses with "light writing" requirements (one or two hours of SWC credit), the SWC course loads could be spread more evenly across the university, more faculty would be willing to teach courses for SWC credit, enrollments in many of the current SWC courses would drop to more reasonable levels, and grading loads would drop. In addition, the total amount of writing required of each student could be increased slightly through the use of "light writing" courses. (See Appendix for more detail).

Another action which could be taken to encourage faculty to become involved in SWC courses is to increase the teaching load credit for large SWC courses. A formula, based on the amount of SWC content, the enrollment, and the TA resource assigned to the course would be needed.

The problems associated with the implementation of the Substantial Writing Component are the most serious associated with the current Basic Education Requirement. Lack of adequate resources and the resulting adverse faculty attitudes are the primary problems. Courses of action involving changing SWC course format and increasing teaching load credit for SWC courses should be closely examined.

Recommendations

Specific recommendations relating to the SWC requirement are:

1. That at least one of the SWC courses be taken in the student's major.
2. That SWC courses need not be 3.0 unit courses so long as the full writing requirement is met.
3. That incentives be offered for teaching SWC courses. For example, 4-1/2 points instead of 3 points for a three hour course, furnishing a teaching assistant in large classes, or limiting enrollment in SWC courses.
4. That UT embark on a program designed to embrace the capabilities provided by burgeoning technology in order to handle SWC courses in a more efficient and cost-effective manner.

APPENDIX

**Subcommittee Reports
on
Individual Requirements**

Report Science and Mathematics Requirement Subcommittee

I. REQUIREMENT AS STATED BY VICK COMMITTEE

Mathematics: The Vick Committee recommended a three hour math requirement. *[The committee suggested that the basic principles of calculus or methods of statistical inference would be desirable, however stopped short of making this part of their recommendation. Instead, the committee included a stipulation that certain courses not be allowed to satisfy this requirement: M.301, beginning algebra; M.302, an introductory course in the cultural aspects of mathematics; M.303F, the mathematics of finance; and M.316K&L, techniques of mathematics for elementary education. These suggestions and stipulations were deleted from the final motion to the University Council.]*

Natural Sciences: The Vick Committee recommended a requirement of nine hours of natural science courses. At least six hours must be taken in one subject to assure a greater depth of coverage. A maximum of three of these nine hours could be taken in mathematics and these three hours would not overlap with the previous required three hours of mathematics. Students were strongly advised to acquire a basic knowledge of how to use a computer.

II. REQUIREMENT AS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTED

The University has adopted the Vick Committee recommendation in the areas of natural sciences and mathematics:

Natural Sciences: Six semester hours from one area of natural science.

Mathematics: Three semester hours. At the level of college algebra or higher.

Natural science or mathematics: Three semester hours.

III. WAYS REQUIREMENT IS BEING MET

All colleges and departments have natural science and mathematics requirements that meet or exceed those recommended by the Vick Committee. The requirements are met with few exceptions by completion of courses in the College of Natural Sciences. (The School of Nursing has several courses its students utilize in fulfilling this requirement.)

In response to the adoption of the Vick Committee recommendations the Department of Mathematics has introduced several new math courses especially for the liberal arts student: M.302, Introduction to Mathematics and M.303D, Applicable Mathematics.

IV. POSITIVE EFFECTS OF THE SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS REQUIREMENT

In our survey there were only three comments on the positive results of this requirement. It was suggested that one program especially weak in math

was strengthened. Several other departments expected the math skills of their students to improve; however, there has not been any effort to gather hard evidence by the departments or colleges.

V. PROBLEMS RELATING TO THIS REQUIREMENT

Mathematics

The major problem encountered by the student in meeting this requirement is the lack of spaces in the math classes. At the moment this appears to be a minor inconvenience; however, there are indications that this will become a severe problem. Below are some enrollment figures taken from a letter the Chairman of Mathematics wrote to the Dean of Natural Sciences.

Course	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987*
M.302&M.303D	94	243	901	1053	1239	914

*Spring only.

As one might expect, these enrollment patterns have put pressure on the Department of Mathematics. We have been told that they have been able to accommodate the additional students by using unfilled faculty lines to hire lecturers. The department is actively seeking to fill these lines with more senior appointments. This will have two obvious effects: (1) Fewer teachers, since the senior appointments will be made at much higher salary levels. (2) The senior faculty will no doubt be less willing to teach introductory courses.

Other Concerns

Other problems expressed in the survey were the too technical nature of existing science courses and the infrequency of offering Math 301. Several departments wished to have computer science courses included or added to the basic education requirements.

VI. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEM

While the subcommittee has not conducted a detailed study of the enrollment patterns in mathematics or examined the budget of the Department of Mathematics, it does appear that there have been significant increases in their enrollment. Presumably these additional student hours have come from other departments. It would seem only reasonable that funds should follow the students. This suggests that the problem could be solved by reallocating resources.

VII. RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION

It is the subcommittee's recommendation that the administration survey the enrollment changes that have occurred following the adoption of the Vick Committee recommendation. Future allocation and reallocation of resources should reflect any substantial changes determined to have occurred.

The subcommittee recognizes that the difficulties facing the Math Department

in staffing large introductory level service courses is not unique to them; the English Department has struggled with the problem for years. There are a number of other departments with a continuing problem. We offer the suggestion that a long term solution might involve the dedication of funds specifically for this purpose. We are well aware of the problems associated with this arrangement; however, the magnitude and importance of providing quality instruction in basic education subjects for our students justifies exploring all alternatives—even those which appear distasteful at first glance.

Report of the Sub-Committee on Fine Arts and Humanities

I. Requirement as stated by the University Council Committee on Basic Education Requirements (cf. D&P 8148-8166 and 8247-8248):

Six (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 [i.e. English 306, 316K, and 346K]) 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.

II. Requirement as currently implemented

With the subsequent adoption of the new English requirement and additional modifications accepted by the Office of the President, the fine arts/humanities requirement has been implemented as follows:

Three (3) semester hours of credit in Archaeology, Architecture, Art, Classics, Drama, Fine Arts, Humanities, Music, or Philosophy (other than logic).

III. Ways in which the requirement is being met

All colleges and departments have a fine arts/humanities requirement which meets or exceeds the Basic Education requirement as currently implemented. In most (but not all) programs, the students are permitted to choose from a wide range of fine arts or humanities courses in the fulfillment of this requirement.

IV. Positive effects of the fine arts/humanities requirement

Responding to the survey of the *ad hoc* Committee to Review the Basic Education requirements, two of the colleges (Business Administration and Engineering) mentioned that this requirement has been helpful in broadening the education of their students.

V. Problems relating to this requirement

A. A few colleges or departments expressed a desire to alter the manner in which the fine arts/humanities requirement was implemented in their own programs. (One college stated that it does not now include "Humanities" in its list of courses approved for the fulfillment of the fine arts and humanities requirement, but would like to do so. One department apparently

would prefer that its students not have the option of taking a section of Music 307, Topics in Popular Music, to fulfill this requirement.) But the overwhelming majority of the colleges and departments responding to the survey expressed no problems either with the adoption of the fine arts/humanities requirement or with the ability of their students to meet the requirement.

- B. The colleges and departments *offering* fine arts or humanities courses, however, have encountered at least one problem. In seeking courses satisfy the fine arts/humanities requirement, students (and their advisers) focus their attention on *specific* courses, e.g., architecture studio courses, lower-division art history (Art History 301, 302, and 303), applied piano, applied voice, fundamentals of acting for nonmajors (Drama 301L), the history of rock music (Music 307), and almost any writing course. These courses are chosen because they are very popular, or because they are especially advantageous (cf. writing courses which satisfy two requirements at once), or because students and advisers are unaware of alternative courses. (E.g., non-Fine Arts majors flock to lower-division art history courses apparently without realizing that nonmajors are welcome in upper-division art history courses.) The result has been a continuing problem of over-subscription in certain courses when many others are still available.

VI. Possible Solutions to Problem

- A. One solution would be the allocation of more resources for the most popular courses. In most cases that would necessitate additional financial support for departments which are presently unable to meet the demands of over-subscription. But even if additional monies were at hand, the matter is not so easily solved when there remain concerns about maintenance of a balanced curriculum in the face of demands for only certain elective courses. (Cf. how many sections of Drama 301L, Fundamentals of Acting, can the Department of Drama offer for nonmajors and still maintain the balance necessary for a well-rounded program?)
- B. Another, albeit partial, solution would be a more systematic and effective means of information dissemination to help make students and advisers throughout the University aware of the many alternative fine arts and humanities courses which are available for the fulfillment of this requirement.

VII. Recommendations of the Committee

- A. The fine arts/humanities requirement as currently implemented (cf. item II, above) should remain unaltered.

- B. For the most popular courses, the University should determine whether the allocation of additional resources is educationally desirable and financially possible.
- C. Additional information should be made available to students concerning the variety of courses which can be used to meet the fine arts/humanities requirement.

Report of the Sub-Committee on Social Sciences

I. Requirement as stated by the University Council Committee on Basic Education Requirements (cf. D&P 8148-8166 and 8247-8248):

Six (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.

II. Requirement as currently implemented

The requirement has been implemented as recommended by the Committee on Basic Education Requirements, but with two exceptions. Because of the difficulty in accommodating three sets of requirements (viz. the University's Basic Education requirements, the Texas State Board of Education standards for teacher certification, and national arts association standards for accreditation), the degree programs in art education, drama education, and music education were approved by the University Council (cf. D&P 8950-8997, 9006-9011, and 9068) to count three semester hours of educational psychology toward the social science requirement. (For the 1987-89 College of Fine Arts catalogue, that requirement has been increased to six semester hours of educational psychology.) In order to maintain programs which would remain competitive in attracting the most talented undergraduate music majors, the University Council agreed to exempt the applied music degree programs (only) from the three semester hours of social science beyond the legislative requirement (cf. D&P 8950-8997, 9006-9011, and 9068).

III. Ways in which the requirement is met

All colleges and departments have social science requirements which meet or exceed those approved by the University Council when the Basic Education requirements were adopted originally by the several colleges and schools. In most (but not all) programs, the students are permitted to choose from the full range of social sciences designated by the Committee on Basic Education Requirements.

IV. Positive effects of the social science requirement

Responding to the survey of the *ad hoc* Committee to Review the Basic Education Requirements, the College of Engineering mentioned that this requirement has been helpful in broadening the education of the students in that college.

V. Problems or suggestions relating to the requirement

- A. From the colleges and departments responding to the survey of the ad hoc committee there was widespread complaint about the number of hours of the legislative requirement. It was the overwhelming sentiment that the twelve semester-hour legislative requirement is unnecessary and consumes an inordinate percentage of the coursework for an undergraduate degree.
1. Almost everyone raising this issue recommended that the legislative requirement be reduced from twelve to six semester hours (i.e. three in American government and three in American history) to make room for courses addressing other important educational concerns. There was, however, no consensus on how the six freed hours should be used. Suggestions included using them for additional requirements in the major, social sciences, fine arts and humanities, philosophy, Western civilization, world history, or international political science.
 2. To provide students with a greater breadth of education, two departments recommended that appropriate courses outside of government and history be identified and approved for use in satisfying the legislative requirement. It was suggested that interdisciplinary courses would be particularly useful for this purpose.
- B. Several colleges and departments stated that their students are having difficulty in finding open sections of lower-division social science courses, especially Psychology 301, Sociology 302, Economics 302, Economics 303, American government, and American history.
- C. The College of Engineering apparently has an added problem in trying to ensure that its students take a two semester sequence in one area of social science to meet the standards of the national Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology.
- D. At least one college complained about confusion surrounding the evaluation of transferred credit in American government.
- E. The suggestion was made that the Measurement and Evaluation Center make more clear to students the restrictions on the use of credit by examination for the legislative requirement. (I.e. not more than three hours of credit by examination in government and three in history may be counted toward the legislative requirement.)
- F. It was also suggested that the Measurement and Evaluation Center review the current testing instruments used for credit by examination in history to determine whether the test content is relevant to the course content as taught by the Department of History.
- G. The School of Social Work suggested that the areas of social science approved for satisfying the Basic Education requirement be expanded to in-

clude topics under Social Welfare Studies 311 (e.g., criminal justice systems, alcohol and drug abuse, elderly and child abuse).

VI. Possible Solutions to Problems

Given the current political and economic climate, there are no easy solutions to the first two problems cited above (i.e. V, A and V, B). However, if the legislative requirement were reduced, it would be possible for The University to allocate to other areas of the social sciences funds now used to support a twelve-hour legislative requirement. Funding could thus be made available for departments needing additional financial support to increase social science course offerings and to meet special curriculum needs (cf. the accreditation requirement in social science for the College of Engineering).

Problems with the evaluation of transferred credit (cf. V, D) or with the dissemination of information about credit by examination (cf. V, E) should be considered by the Office of Admissions and the Measurement and Evaluation Center, respectively.

VII. Recommendations of the Committee

- A. The three semester hour requirement in social sciences additional to the legislative requirement should remain unchanged.
- B. The University should take immediate action to work toward the reduction of the legislative requirement to three semester hours of American (including Texas) government and three semester hours of American history.
- C. In the meantime, The University should seek the means to provide an adequate number of appropriate courses for students attempting to fulfill the current social science requirement.
- D. The Office of Admissions and the Measurement and Evaluation Center should review their policies and procedures to identify and solve any problems related to the social sciences (cf. items V, D; V, E; and V, F).

Report of Foreign Language Requirement Subcommittee

I. REQUIREMENT AS STATED BY VICK COMMITTEE

The Vick Committee recommended that the University adopt a proficiency requirement in a foreign language equivalent to that of UT Austin students who have satisfactorily completed the second-semester freshman course in that language. It was recommended that students initially could satisfy this requirement by presenting at least two years of secondary school credit in one foreign language. However, it was also recommended that beginning in the fall semester of 1986 that students submitting secondary school credit to satisfy the requirement would also be required to demonstrate proficiency at the specified level by examination.

II. REQUIREMENT AS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTED

Rather than adopting a proficiency requirement as set forth in the second phase of the Vick Committee recommendation, the University is basically operating at the initial phase level recommended in the Vick report. That is, the basic education requirement in foreign language may be satisfied by:

- A. the successful completion of two high school units (i.e., two years) of a single foreign language, or by
- B. earning college level credit for Courses 506 and 507 (or their equivalents) in a foreign language.
 - 1. credit may be earned either by examination or by registering for, and completing satisfactorily, the appropriate courses.
 - 2. credit for Courses 506 and 507 (or their equivalents) in the foreign language offered to satisfy this requirement will not count toward a degree.

It should be noted that this requirement as implemented is in effect an admissions requirement. Students who come to the university with a deficiency (that is, students who have not successfully completed two high school units) do not receive college credit for taking Courses 506 and 507.

III. WAYS REQUIREMENT IS BEING MET IN VARIOUS COLLEGES

Six colleges or schools are currently fulfilling the basic education requirement in foreign language through requirements as stated under II above. These colleges are Architecture, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Nursing, and Pharmacy. One school (the School of Social Work) requires that students take Courses 506 and 507 at UT or place out of these courses by examination. In effect, this school has implemented a one-year proficiency requirement. The College of Fine Arts has adopted a minimal requirement equivalent to the

basic education requirement as stated above, but seven degree programs in this college go beyond this minimum, requiring proficiency in a foreign language at the level of Course 312L. For these seven programs, this is, in effect, equivalent to a proficiency requirement equivalent to the completion of a second year of college study in foreign language. Three colleges (Communication, Liberal Arts, and Natural Sciences) have adopted a proficiency requirement equivalent to the completion of Course 312L. Again, in effect, this is a proficiency requirement equivalent to the level attained by completion of a second year of college study in foreign language. The only department in these three colleges that constitutes an exception to this is the Department of Home Economics, which has adopted the basic education requirement as stated under II above.

IV. POSITIVE EFFECTS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

A major benefit of the university's having adopted a basic education requirement in foreign language as a criterion for admission is that high schools in the State of Texas have upgraded their foreign language instruction. This appears to have had effects at two levels. On the one hand, a higher proportion of high schools than was previously the case appear to be offering instruction in foreign language. On the other hand, a higher proportion of high school students than was previously the case are enrolling in foreign language courses in high school. The committee views this as an extremely important positive consequence of the adoption by the University of Texas of a general education requirement in foreign language.

Another major benefit is that students at the college level are acquiring greater conversational and grammatical exposure in foreign language than previously. This is reflected by increased enrollments in foreign language courses. It is the feeling of the committee that the process of studying at least one year of foreign language, with its emphasis on learning at least the rudiments of speaking and writing in another language, not only helps students to build a base from which additional learning may occur, but that it also provides valuable experience in acquiring the discipline necessary to learn another language.

V. PROBLEMS RELATING TO THIS REQUIREMENT

The problems that the committee encountered pertaining to this requirement were largely problems of implementation. These include the following seven problems:

- A. *Enrollment problems.* In some foreign languages there have been an insufficient number of sections in elementary language (Courses 506 and 507) to meet student demand.
- B. *Resources.* We discovered that one of the reasons an insufficient number of sections has existed is that departments do not have the resources (in the

form of Assistant Instructors and Teaching Assistants) to offer additional sections of language courses.

C. *Scheduling.* In some instances departments and students have complained about encountering scheduling problems with respect to foreign language requirements.

D. *The foreign language requirement and transfer students.* Students who enter The University with thirty or more semester hours of credit from other institutions are admitted officially as transfer students. Such transfer students do not need to meet the high school unit admission requirements (which include two years of a foreign language in high school), and the Registrar posts no admission deficiency (foreign language or otherwise) on those students' records.

As concerns the Basic Education requirement in foreign language, it is left to the student's dean to determine whether a student did, in fact, complete two years of a foreign language in high school or needs foreign language courses 506 and 507. Some of the deans' offices, however, have not understood that no foreign language deficiency is recorded by the Registrar when dealing with an official transfer student, and have not systematically monitored completion of the Basic Education foreign language requirement for all transfer students. As a result, students in some schools or colleges have apparently been graduating without fulfilling this Basic Education requirement.

E. *Inequities.* Freshmen who enter The University with a high school unit deficiency in foreign language and transfer students who have not had at least two years of a foreign language in high school are required to complete courses 506 and 507 to meet the Basic Education requirement. If taken at The University to meet this requirement, credit for courses 506 and 507 counts toward the student's grade-point average and scholastic standing, but may not be counted toward the hours for the degree. Poor grades earned in courses attempted to fulfill the requirement adversely affect the student's scholastic standing.

A student who did have two or more years of a foreign language in high school, however, not only may use that study to meet the Basic Education requirement, but may also attempt credit by examination for courses 506 and 507 in that language. If the attempt is successful, the student may count the credit earned toward a degree and use the credit (where appropriate) to raise his or her grade-point average. But if the attempt is unsuccessful, no academic penalty results. The student who took two or more years of a foreign language in high school, therefore, enjoys several advantages over the student who did not.

F. *Foreign students.* The University lacks a policy about how foreign students

are to fulfill the foreign language requirement. The University has no policy concerning whether these students are to demonstrate a certain proficiency in their native language, nor a policy concerning whether they are to demonstrate a certain proficiency in English, although it is evident that completion of degree requirements at the University of Texas where most of the instruction is in English constitutes at least something of a *de facto* proficiency requirement in that language.

- G. *High schools without foreign language instruction.* A minor but continuing problem is the lack of foreign language instruction in some high schools in the state of Texas. This continues to handicap students who attend such high schools.

VI. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS

The first three problems mentioned above could largely be solved through the allocation of more resources to the instruction of foreign language. More sections of foreign language need to be offered, and the university needs to make available the resources to language departments to provide additional sections, especially in elementary foreign language. The problem of transfer students could be handled by the Office of Admissions making a check to see whether the admissions requirement in foreign language has been met by transfer students just as this requirement must be met in the case of those applying for admission as freshmen. The problem of some students who enroll with a deficiency receiving college credit for 506-507 but other students not receiving such credit could be solved by granting college credit to all students enrolling in Courses 506 and 507. The problem of the lack of a policy for foreign students is not easily solved, but it seems to us that an appropriate recommendation would be to establish a committee whose charge would be to define a policy about how foreign students might meet the University's language requirements.

VII. RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION

It is the feeling of the members of the subcommittee that the University should move to solve the problems of implementation noted above. Beyond this, however, we think attention should also be devoted to strengthening the foreign language requirement. Most especially, we would recommend that a proficiency requirement as recommended by the Vick Committee be adopted. The present requirement is an admissions requirement but not a proficiency requirement. In addition, we would recommend that consideration be given to increasing the language requirement equivalent to two years of college study, or to the level of 312K-L or its equivalent.

Report of the Sub-Committee on English

I. REQUIREMENT AS STATED BY VICK COMMITTEE

Writing: Twelve (12) semester hours of credit in courses beyond E.306 (Rhetoric and Composition). 6 of the 12 hours must be in upper-division courses certified to have a substantial writing component.

II. REQUIREMENT AS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTED

This requirement was changed by the University Council to read E.306, E.316K, E.346K, and 6 hours in Substantial Writing Component courses of which at least 3 must be upper-division. The E.346K was suspended then dropped from all college catalogs. Several colleges add to the basic writing requirement.

III. WAYS IN WHICH THE REQUIREMENT IS MET

After the suspension of E.346K, the English department, whether consciously or not, tracked the Vick Committee in recommending that requirement be stated "beyond E.306." It began developing a new course, E.309, which would be offered under the rubrics "Topics in Writing," "The Writing Process," and "Thinking and Writing." E.309 was offered as a pilot in 1986-87 to over 600 students.

IV. PROBLEMS RELATING TO THIS REQUIREMENT

At the present time it seems unlikely that the English requirement can be stated in hours beyond E.306, even more unlikely that E.306 can be either classified as non-credit or as not counting toward graduation. Yet, it would be impossible for the English department to take on another freshman requirement in addition to the 3,000 students in E.306, for adding to the freshman English requirement would be adding some 7,000 registrations. (Last year there were some 6,300 fall freshmen with approximately 600 provisional students moving either to full admission or to probationary status in the fall, having taken E.306 in the summer.)

Consequently, the best course would be to retain the English course requirement as E.306 and E.316K with English devoting as much staffing as possible to E.309 and to the upper-division courses demanded by students.

V. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEM

In order to move students beyond E.306, the English department has been and will be undertaking several projects. The first, begun jointly with the Austin Independent School District and UT Continuing Education, is intended to take advantage of the "dual credit" provision of the Education Reform Act. College

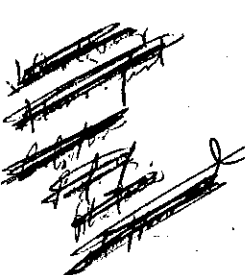
level courses taught in high school can earn the student 3 hours of high-school and 3 hours of college credit. E.306 is being prepared for this program. Ten videos have already been shot. By the use of videos, guidelines, and classroom instruction, students from AISD initially, later from other districts, will be able to earn credit for E.306. Also, the English laboratory or Writing Center is developing short courses in order to help students improve in areas of writing where they are weak. Students who have been on campus will be able to attempt the placement examination again. Some 42% of the 1986 fall freshmen placed out of E.306, and the trend has been upward for some years. Of course, students also have the Reading and Study Skills Center; over the years it has been a significant resource in helping students develop writing and reading skills.

Although the minimum course requirement in English adopted by all colleges is E.306 and E.316K, E.306 and E.316K do not by any means represent all the English courses or all the writing courses taken by students. Last year the English department registered about 7,000 students in its elective sophomore and upper-division courses. These registrations would represent probably 5,000-5,500 different students. When one considers that these students have already taken E.306 and E.316K, the English department is carrying a very heavy load in the baccalaureate program. The rise in freshman enrollment, the large provisional program, and the use of English by other departments for Substantial Writing Component requirements all make for unusual difficulties.

Several departments offer courses that deal with writing and related speaking skills. Some technical writing is offered in Engineering; Business offers BC324 Business Report Writing; Communication offers Speech and Journalism courses; several Liberal Arts department such as Philosophy and Psychology deal with problems of language, and American Studies offers its own writing course; English offers expository writing and editing at the upper-division level.

Report of the Subcommittee on the Substantial Writing Component (SWC) Requirement

Purpose



Since the beginning of American higher education, writing has been an integral part of the core curriculum. One only needs to read *The Federalist Papers* to appreciate how well the art of writing had been mastered in colonial times. In the years since the Industrial Revolution, however, technology has greatly enhanced the exchange of information. Students have access to more information than ever, and thus, its synthesis has become an increasingly challenging endeavor. Moreover, in today's society, we can not always control access to others, and thereby writing serves as an important tool for presenting our point of view. Regretfully, many students arrive at the University with only a rudimentary understanding of the writing process. They often need practice in organizing their thoughts, distinguishing opinions from facts and presenting insightful ideas on the topic. For this reason, the University should make certain that substantial writing courses form a basic core curriculum within every college.

Requirement as stated by Vick Committee

In 1981 the Vick Committee recommended that all undergraduate students take a minimum of 12 semester hours of credit in courses beyond English 306 and that six (6) of these hours have a substantial writing component.

The Vick Committee recommended that the Substantial Writing Component (SWC) 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." The Vick Committee also recommended that SWC courses be "taught in small classes."

The ad hoc committee of the General Faculty recommended that SWC professors require at least three writing activities per semester. They also suggested that all papers would be graded and critiqued in a timely fashion and returned to students for rewriting.

Requirement as Implemented

Course Distribution Across the University

There are over 300 sections of SWC courses listed as being offered per semester at UT at the present time (the actual number is less because of course cross-listings). Table 1 provides information concerning the number of SWC sections offered at UT by college and department over the past five sections. This number is decreasing, due to a variety of factors which will be discussed later. Assuming that there are 250

individual sections per semester offered, and that there are 25 students per section, we have places for 6250 students per year. Assuming 36000 undergraduates with each undergraduate being required to take two SWC courses, we need about 9000 places per semester.

The teaching of substantial writing component courses falls principally on the College of Liberal Arts, which in the 1986-87 academic year taught a total of 391 SWC sections (counting cross-listed sections), and about 1000 sections over the five semesters from Fall 1985 through Fall 1987. This level of course offerings stems from the traditional liberal arts focus on writing.

Within the College of Liberal Arts there were a significant number of departments with large enrollments that offered only a small number of SWC courses. For instance, Sociology offered only one (1) SWC class in the spring of 1986 and only three (3) the following spring. Anthropology and Geography each offered only 8 SWC courses over the five semesters from Fall 1985 to Fall 1987. Many other departments could not meet the demand for SWC courses from their own students.

It is clear that SWC courses are not equally distributed across the campus, and some courses are available only to students in particular majors. Every college has courses which meet the writing requirement, but some departments list no courses which meet the requirement. For example, the no SWC courses were offered by Astronomy, Zoology, Architectural Engineering, and Mathematics in the Fall of 1987.

Many of the departments that did not offer any SWC courses or those that had a limited number of classes depended on other departments to meet the writing requirement for their students. This situation caused some resentment among department planners. The chair of Philosophy, for example, noted that "We get many students from other programs who crowd the writing courses. Other departments/colleges need to offer more writing courses." The same problem exists in other departments, as the committee found that, in 1986, sixty percent of the students enrolled in English SWC courses came from outside the Liberal Arts College.

The approach to offering SWC courses varies across the university. SWC credit is offered in by some departments in courses which count only for SWC credit, while other departments offer SWC courses which meet other degree requirements as well. To further complicate matters, some of the courses which can be used to meet multiple requirements can be taken by a large variety of students (for example, numerous courses offered by the History Department can be used to meet both the SWC requirement and the legislative American History requirement), while others can only be taken by majors in the department offering the course.

Some departments offer and require a sufficient number of substantial writing courses to meet the needs of their students while others depend on other departments for SWC courses. Both practices will continue to exist, but the sense of the Vick Committee recommendations was that SWC credit should be earned in the major department.

Content of Substantial Writing Courses

While the committee was unable to do a detailed analysis of the content of SWC courses in the various colleges, it is apparent that there is diversity in the teaching of writing courses. One relevant study was identified in which a graduate student focused her Ph.D thesis on SWC courses at the University of Texas. She found that the humanities and social sciences "made wide use of writing to encourage their students to analyze." She also found that many students cannot take full advantage of writing skills because so very few courses outside of the Liberal Arts College require written assignments. (Mitchell, 1986: 134, 136).

We found that in some SWC classes students were required to rewrite their papers, while in others students were expected to learn from the instructors' critiques without rewriting.

One assistant dean reported additional problems with the teaching of SWC courses. Faculty members complained that "students enter the writing courses ill-prepared in grammar, organization, and writing skills." Faculty are expected to "remedy student writing deficiencies which should have been corrected earlier."

A unique situation exists in the Spanish and Portuguese Department. This department wants to offer SWC credit for writing courses in Spanish and Portuguese as well as in English.

Faculty Attitudes Toward Writing Courses

Comments from the committee's survey suggest that faculty are reluctant to teach SWC classes. Statements from respondents reflect several general problems associated with the offering of SWC courses.

Many faculty members contend that SWC courses have more to do with grammar and form than content, and thus assume that the English department should handle the SWC courses. Faculty in Linguistics voiced concern that emphasis on writing skills would dominate the subject content of the courses offered.

One college administrator reported that faculty "hate" teaching writing courses and summarized their attitude as one of feeling "burdened by the present criteria for certification of writing courses".

Generally the reasons given for not teaching SWC classes centered on the workload. The SWC writing courses require a great deal more work than many other types of courses, but offer no extra workload recognition. The most elaborate discussion of this concern was expressed by a department chairman in the College of Business, who noted that his department taught an average of 650 students per year in its major SWC course. Because of the 16-page writing requirement, SWC instructors are responsible for grading 10,400 pages (2.6 million words) per year. The Chairman estimated that the SWC requirement "had added a grading burden of 520 man-hours (.3 man years) to their department workload - with no new resources or compensating workload reduction available." (Calculated at a very reasonable rate of 20 pages

graded per hour of grading.)

Grading of Substantial Writing Courses

Some faculty have the impression that the SWC writing courses encourage plagiarism. A similar concern was voiced by engineering professors who expressed difficulty in "knowing in all cases if the writing presented is the students' own work." They concluded that "it may be necessary to include several tests of individual writing ability during the semester." We have discussed this problem with several Liberal Arts professors who regularly teach writing courses and the solution offered was indeed that of requiring students to write short one- or two-page assignments in class several times during the semester.

Enrollment Problems

Several enrollment-related problems have resulted from the introduction of the SWC requirement. Among these are faculty reluctance to teach SWC courses, students being unable to enroll in SWC courses due to overcrowding, current SWC courses being removed from the SWC list, an insufficient number of SWC sections being offered by some departments, non-majors crowding into SWC courses designed for majors, and sections too large to teach effectively.

Although most faculty feel that SWC courses should be taught, they are reluctant to spend the immense time required to offer these courses themselves. The reason for this is simple: the university reward structure places its emphasis elsewhere, and those who teach SWC courses are doubly penalized—with larger workloads than their colleagues who do not teach SWC courses, and with smaller rewards at raise and promotion time, because their colleagues had time to write more papers, do more research, etc.

Many of our data suggest that there are far more students seeking to enroll in SWC courses than there are spaces available. The History department informs us that the 10 HIS 350 courses offered for the fall of 1987 presently have a pre-enrollment of about 130 students, but 250 students who signed up for HIS 350 were turned away. The Chairman of Linguistics noted: "We are apprehensive about the courses being flooded with students who are enrolling simply to satisfy the SWC requirement. We know of other departments that have had serious problems of this sort."

The Department of English enrolled a total of 1,197 students in their SWC courses in Fall 1986 and 1,584 students in Spring 1987. The committee has included in the appendix tables which summarize the enrollment in SWC courses taught in English during 1986-87 long term. The tables include sophomore and upper division SWC courses plus the new elective E309 course (first offered in Spring 1987). Cross-listed courses can be identified by their titles.) These tables illustrate that students from many areas look to English for SWC courses, and that English has responded.

One problem, somewhat obscured by the fact that individual sections are not separated in the tables, is the heavy enrollment in some sections. For example, the fall E342 class had an enrollment of 36 on the twelfth day. It had been limited to 40 at registration, and 4 students dropped. Thirty-six students is still a heavy grading load for an SWC course. This level of workload is common in SWC courses.

Faculty who have taught SWC courses with large numbers of students and limited TA help are reluctant to do it again. A pattern of removing courses from the SWC list is apparent across the university. For example, none of the six sections of E321 Shakespeare offered by English currently appears on the SWC list. When these courses were on the SWC list, they averaged 47 students per class, and some of the instructors had three course teaching loads. All five instructors of this course specifically asked to have their courses removed from the SWC list.

Another problem apparent from the tables is that some departments are taking advantage of other departments which offer SWC courses that can be taken as electives. The Vick Committee recommendations clearly stated that SWC courses were to be offered across the spectrum of departments and that the students were to gain writing experience in the major area. The implementation has been uneven, with some departments sending their students into other departments to obtain SWC credit while others take care of their own students. Thus, some students get little experience in writing in the major to satisfy the SWC requirement while others satisfy the requirement entirely within the major. A better distribution of SWC courses across the university is needed.

Another enrollment related problem is that in some cases, SWC courses designed for majors are filled by students from other departments seeking to fill the SWC requirement. For example, E321K, Introduction to Criticism, is a course English majors are expected to take, and is usually limited to 25 students. In Fall 1987, there were 3 sections, all designated as SWC courses. Less than half the students enrolled were Liberal Arts majors and a number of English majors were unable to take the course.

Students are caught in the middle of the SWC problem. Their curricula require SWC courses and there are too few sections of SWC courses available within some majors to meet the need. The flood of students seeking to satisfy the SWC requirement outside the major results primarily from a lack of alternatives.

Another problem can be highlighted using the E321K situation. With a large number of non-majors in a course designed for majors, the quality of the classroom experience is often less than what it should be. The deleterious effect of a large block of students without the necessary background for discussion in a course in criticism may not be so apparent as that of a block of students without a mathematics background in a course in nuclear theory, but it still interferes with the professional development of the department's majors.

Teaching Assistants in Writing Courses

Another problem focuses on the use of teaching assistants in the SWC courses. It is presently unclear how teaching assistants should be utilized and to what extent they are competent in the grading of writing assignments. Training of such teaching assistants seems advisable; also, an increased number of trained teaching assistants to provide reasonable student/grader ratios in SWC courses.

Limited Resources

The SWC requirement was imposed on departments with no reallocation of resources or allocation of new resources to meet the additional teaching requirements. Many departments have experienced additional fiscal demands in the form of needing to hire personnel to help grade papers generated in SWC courses, and the resources to do this, in most cases, have come at the expense of teaching activities within the academic major.

UNDERLYING PROBLEMS

The difficulties surrounding the implementation of the SWC requirement can be categorized as resulting from (1) unbalanced distribution of SWC courses across the university, (2) course format, (3) variations in the writing content, (4) adverse faculty attitudes, (5) grading questions, (6) course availability and enrollment problems, (7) problems with teaching assistants, and (8) the underlying limited resource problems.

I. *Unbalanced Distribution of SWC Courses Across the University*

Some departments offer many sections of SWC courses while others offer none. The Vick Committee intent was that the requirement should be met by writing in the major area. At present, this intent is met only in some departments.

II. *Course Format*

Current SWC course guidelines force all SWC courses to be 3 semester credit hours in length. There are many laboratory courses in Natural Sciences and Engineering which require extensive written reports and could easily be designated as having a substantial writing component except for the fact that they are not 3 hour courses. In addition, the current guidelines force all of the substantial writing to be concentrated in two courses. This creates very heavy grading workloads in these courses and results in many faculty abandoning the teaching of SWC courses. This factor is explored further in item 4. below.

III. *Variations in Writing Content*

Some SWC courses have problems in meeting all of the current guidelines for course certification. The requirement that students be required to rewrite work and submit it for regrading is a critical factor which should be met in all cases. This does not seem to be true in all SWC courses.

IV. *Adverse Faculty Attitudes*

Faculty are reluctant to offer SWC courses for a variety of reasons. Faculty feel that the amount of credit given for offering SWC courses is in no way commensurate for the amount of effort required to do it well. Many faculty require more writing than is required in a SWC course, but do not want to have their courses listed as SWC courses. The issues of crowded classes, extensive grading, and the problems of teaching of uninterested non-majors who are just taking a course to fulfill the SWC requirement are all factors in this problem.

V. *Grading Questions*

Some faculty refrain from teaching SWC courses because they feel that they do not know enough about writing or about composition instruction to do a good job. A related problem is that some of the TA's assigned to SWC courses are not adequately prepared to grade writing assignments.

VI. *Course Availability and Enrollment Problems*

There are not enough SWC courses in a sufficient number of departments to meet student requirements. This has placed an unfair burden on some departments in the College of Liberal Arts. Also, overcrowding of upper division SWC courses in some departments has affected the quality of these courses and consequently has adversely affected the professional education of majors in these departments.

VII. *Problems with Teaching Assistants*

It is unclear how teaching assistants can best be used to aid faculty with SWC courses. However, it is clear that the workload cannot be handled without the use of teaching assistants.

VIII. *Limited Resources*

The SWC requirement was imposed on departments with no reallocation of resources or allocation of new resources to meet the additional teaching requirements. Many departments have experienced additional fiscal demands in the form of needing to hire personnel to help grade papers generated in SWC courses, and the resources to do this, in most cases, have come at the expense of teaching activities within the major area.

POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION—SWC

The following courses of action were identified as possible remedies to the problems identified by the committee. Each possible action will impact one or more of the identified problems. The university should consider these courses of action.

- I. To provide more balance in the distribution of SWC courses across the university, clarify and enforce the Vick Committee requirement to state that at least one of the SWC courses be taken in the student's major.
- II. To provide more flexibility in the format of SWC courses, adopt one of the following alternatives.
 - A. Drop the requirement that SWC courses must be 3-unit courses. Some one and two hour laboratory courses currently require more writing than is specified in the current SWC requirement. This would allow additional courses within departments which currently teach only a limited number of SWC courses to count for SWC credit. We recognize that in some cases students may prefer to enroll in SWC courses offering 3-unit credit rather than those 1-unit laboratory courses, but this may be offset by the requirement that students take at least one SWC course in their major.
 - B. Allow courses to offer 1/2 or 1/3 of the current credit for substantial writing. Students would take a total of 6 credits of writing earned from a combination of courses with 1, 2 or 3 writing credits. Instructors of "light" writing courses would be allowed to require commensurately less writing or to grade some of the writing in a less time-intensive manner. Laboratory courses with 1 hour and 2 hours of credit could be "light writing" courses. This option presents too much variation in SWC courses. It appears that this course of action would require substantial, if not excessive, monitoring of students' records. It would likely be quite difficult to supervise the various combinations of courses.
 - C. Change the requirement from 2 courses each requiring at least three papers for a total of at least 16 pages to one of the following possibilities (it should be noted that the recommended amount of writing is being increased as the number of writing courses increases):
 1. 3 courses with 2 papers (with a total of at least 12 pages) with feedback and rewrite
 2. 4 courses with 2 papers (with a total of 10 pages) with feedback and rewrite
 3. 6 courses with 1 paper (8 to 10 pages each) with feedback and rewrite

The concerns noted above in section B apply to this recommendation. Again, the variations in these options could prove to be administratively cumbersome.

- III. To minimize variations in SWC course procedures relating to the handling of rewrite requirements, strictly enforce current guidelines for SWC courses.
- IV. To counter adverse faculty attitudes toward teaching SWC courses, adopt one or more of the following alternatives:
- A. Give faculty of SWC courses more teaching credit, perhaps using the same credit as is given for graduate courses (50% more than that given an undergraduate course with the same number of credit hours).
 - B. Work toward enrollment limits on SWC courses (perhaps 20 to 25 students per section).
 - C. Hire more teaching assistants to help with grading (one TA for every 20 to 30 students).
 - D. Embark on a program designed to embrace the capabilities provided by burgeoning technology (computer labs, word processing programs, etc.).
- V. Help faculty and Teaching Assistants With Teaching and Grading SWC Courses by providing special pre-semester workshops (perhaps one week long, perhaps taught by the English department or CTE staff). In these workshops, faculty and teaching assistants involved in SWC courses would receive special training in the philosophy, theory, and practice of teaching writing in the disciplines.
- In addition, develop a handbook for SWC course instructors and teaching assistants containing guidelines and helpful hints, and problems to avoid.
- VI. Items I, III, and IV contain parts which, if implemented, would impact course availability and crowding.
- VII. To determine how best to use teaching assistants in SWC courses, ask a committee made up of faculty with experience in such use of TA's to pool their knowledge and prepare a report on this topic.
- VIII. Many of the problems cited above could be mitigated with additional resources. However, in today's atmosphere of tight budgets, the allocation of significant additional resources to solve the SWC problems is unlikely. Thus, the administration should allocate whatever resources are available and encourage the faculty to make those changes in the SWC requirement, course format, etc., which will alleviate the most pressing problems. Items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7 contain candidate changes of interest under these conditions.

As a first step in understanding the true cost of the SWC requirement, the Office of Institutional Studies could be tasked with providing the administration with (1) a detailed report which lists the resources which have been diverted to meeting the SWC requirements, (2) the uses of these resources in meeting the requirements, and (3) an assessment of the impacts of these diversions on

programs within the university. These reports, along with estimates of additional resources still needed, would provide valuable information concerning the advisability of diverting additional resources to meet SWC problems.

Writing Courses Offered by College and Department*

* not offered for the semester designated

Colleges, Schools, Depts.	Fall '85	Spring '86	Fall '86	Spring '87	Fall '87
School of Architecture	2	6	2	4	2
Total	2	6	2	4	2
College of Business Admin.					
Accounting	2	2	2	2	2
Finance	4	6	5	6	5
General Business	12	7	13	2	*
Management Sci. & Info.	*	*	*	*	12
Management	5	5	5	5	4
Marketing Admin.	7	7	7	7	6
Total	30	27	32	22	29
College of Communication					
Advertising	9	5	6	5	10
Journalism	24	18	20	14	20
Radio, TV, Film	4	2	6	6	4
Speech Communication	2	5	4	7	6
Total	39	30	36	32	40
College of Education					
Curr. and Instruct.	6	5	3	4	3
Special Education	*	1	1	2	1
Total	6	6	4	6	4
College of Engineering					
Aerospace/Eng. Mech.	8	8	8	8	8
Architectural Eng.	1	*	*	*	*
Chemical Eng.	7	7	6	7	6
Civil Eng.	2	7	5	9	5
Elec./Comp. Eng.	1	1	3	3	4
Mechanical Eng.	1	1	3	3	3
Petroleum Eng.	2	2	2	2	2
Total	22	26	27	32	28
College of Fine Arts					
Art	2	1	2	3	5
Drama	3	4	4	2	6
Fine Arts	*	*	*	1	1
Music	2	1	4	2	3
Total	7	6	10	8	15

Writing Courses Offered by College and Department*

* not offered for the semester designated
continued

Colleges, Schools, Depts.	Fall '85	Spring '86	Fall '86	Spring '87	Fall '87
College of Liberal Arts					
American Studies	3	6	8	19	15
Anthropology	2	1	1	1	3
Archeology	1	*	1	*	1
Asian Studies	15	4	4	3	4
Classics	2	4	4	5	4
Comp. Lit.	4	*	4	3	3
Economics	2	1	1	1	2
English	52	45	46	65	53
Ethnic Studies					
African/Afro-Am.	5	2	5	4	4
Mexican Am.	2	1	4	4	5
European Studies	11	9	8	3	11
French and Italian	*	4	4	4	5
Geography	1	2	1	1	3
Germanic Languages	4	3	5	3	5
Government	10	7	12	11	14
History	9	12	13	15	17
Humanities	8	3	7	5	5
International Studies	2	4	9	4	8
ILAS	3	5	5	*	8
Linguistics	1	*	*	*	2
Middle Eastern Studies	5	*	6	2	9
Oriental/African Studies	4	3	6	6	7
Military Science	*	*	*	*	1
Naval Science	*	*	*	*	2
Philosophy	3	2	4	3	3
Plan II Honors	13	10	13	12	12
Psychology	13	15	11	7	14
Slavic Languages	2	2	2	1	2
Sociology	3	1	4	3	2
Spanish and Portuguese	2	5	3	6	6
Women's Studies	*	*	*	*	11
Total	182	149	206	185	245

Writing Courses Offered by College and Department*

* not offered for the semester designated
continued

Colleges, Schools, Depts.	Fall '85	Spring '86	Fall '86	Spring '87	Fall '87
College of Natural Science					
Astronomy	1	1	*	2	*
Botany	1	*	5	1	2
Chemistry	4	2	4	3	4
Computer Science	*	*	2	*	3
Geological Sci.	*	4	2	4	4
Home Economics	7	9	9	8	7
Marine Studies	*	*	1	*	*
Mathematics	1	1	0	1	*
Physics	*	*	2	1	3
Zoology	1	*	1	*	*
Total	15	17	26	20	23
School of Nursing					
Total	4	4	4	6	6
College of Pharmacy					
Total	1	7	*	5	2
School of Social Work					
Total	7	4	4	7	5
All Totals	315	282	347	328	399