

**UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MEETING OF APRIL 8, 2003**

Members Present: Rev. Edward Malloy, C.S.C., Nathan Hatch, Rev. Timothy Scully, C.S.C., Rev. John Jenkins, C.S.C., Carol Ann Mooney, Rev. Mark Poorman, C.S.C., Frank Incropera, Eileen Kolman, Joseph Marino, Patricia O'Hara, Mark Roche, Carolyn Woo, Michael Lykoudis, Jennifer Younger, John Robinson, Jay Brandenberger, Thomas Merluzzi, Pit-Mann Wong, James Ryan, Dennis Jacobs, Patricia Maurice, Thomas Noble, Joan Aldous, Teresa Ghilarducci, Brian Krostenko, Cornelius Delaney, Vittorio Hosle, John Welle, Mary Rose D'Angelo, Umesh Garg, Mitchell Wayne, Steven Buechler, Panos Antsaklis, Jay Tidmarsh, Dino Marcantonio, J. Douglas Archer, Kenneth DeBoer, Ava Preacher, Anthony Hagale, Bradley Buser, Stephanie Arnett

Members Absent: Albert Miller, Meghan McCabe, Sean Thornton

Members Excused: John Affleck-Graves, Jeffrey Kantor, Patricia Blanchette, Mihir Sen, Robert Bretz, Thomas Frecka

Observers Present: Lt. Col. David Moskinski

Observers Absent: Mary Hendriksen, Dennis K. Moore, Harold Pace, Thomas Laughner

Observers Excused: Dan Saracino

The Rev. Edward Malloy, C.S.C. called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Prof. Hatch offered a prayer.

1. Minutes of the meeting of February 18, 2003. Fr. Malloy asked if members had corrections to the minutes of the meeting of February 18, 2003, regarding the reorganization of the Economics Department. Because Prof. Hosle said that revisions to a statement he submitted to the recorder had not been incorporated into the minutes, Fr. Malloy said he would delay approval of the minutes until the next meeting.

2. Proposals and recommendations of the Undergraduate Studies Committee on the curriculum. Fr. Malloy asked Prof. Kolman, chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, to introduce the package of proposals and recommendations developed by the Curriculum Review Committee for Notre Dame's undergraduate curriculum. The Rev. John Jenkins, C.S.C., the chair of the Curriculum Review Committee, and Prof. Delaney, a member of the Executive Committee and of the Undergraduate Studies Committee as well as of several previous University curriculum committees, were identified as additional leaders for the day's discussion.

Prof. Kolman gave a brief history of the current round of curriculum review. She

said that the curriculum review was not undertaken to address any particular problem. Rather, it was conducted as part of the strategic planning process Notre Dame undertakes every ten years. As always, that process provides an opportunity to review the University's core curriculum.

The members of the Curriculum Review Committee ("the Committee") were appointed and began their work in January 2002. The members of the Committee are:

Jay Brockman, Associate Professor of Computer Science and Engineering
Rev. John Jenkins, C.S.C., Associate Provost and Associate Professor of
Philosophy (Chair)
Eileen Kolman, Dean of First Year of Studies, Concurrent Assistant Professor
of Mathematics
David Lodge, Professor of Biology
Thomas Noble, Professor of History, Robert Conway Director of the Medieval
Institute
Melissa Rauch, Student, Class of 2002
James Ryan, Student, Class of 2003
Ann Tenbrunsel, Associate Professor of Management
Catherine Zuckert, Nancy R. Dreux Chair and Professor of Political Science

In November 2002, the Committee made a presentation to the Undergraduate Studies Committee and then to the full Academic Council. [See *Notre Dame Report*, No. 16, pp. 372-383 (April 25, 2003)] In December 2002, the Committee held an open campus meeting to which all faculty were invited and at which members received many suggestions and comments. After the November and December meetings, Committee members worked for several months to incorporate suggestions from those meetings into their report by revising their original proposals. This March, the Committee brought its report to the Undergraduate Studies Committee, whose members made a few changes and then unanimously endorsed the package of proposals and recommendations. A week later, the proposals and recommendations were brought to the Executive Committee. Its members made minor, clarifying changes and then they, too, unanimously endorsed them.

Referring to the two-part Curriculum Report members received before today's meeting (Attachment A), Prof. Kolman said that the first part, the "Preface," is intended only to be explanatory. No vote is necessary as to it. The second part, titled "Proposals and Recommendations of the Curriculum Review Committee, 2002-03," consists of a preamble, two proposals, and three recommendations. Today, separate presentations will be made on each proposal and recommendation. After discussion of each, there will be a vote on the proposals and recommendations as a whole.

Prof. Kolman said that the core curriculum, sometimes referred to as "core requirements," have a long tradition at Notre Dame. They are the courses required of every undergraduate at the University, regardless of department or major. Thus, they

form a common experience for students. Those requirements are set forth in the University's *Academic Articles*, Sec. 15.2(a):

English composition (1 semester)
Mathematics (2 semesters)
History (1 semester)
Social science (1 semester)
Fine arts/Literature (1 semester)
Natural science (2 semesters)
Philosophy (2 semesters)
Theology (2 semesters)

(One of the above course requirements must be in the University Seminar format.)

Proposal 1: Create Incentives to Increase Faculty Engagement in the Core Curriculum

Prof. Kolman then addressed the first proposal: "Create incentives to increase faculty engagement in the core curriculum." Clearly, she said, Notre Dame can offer students a high-quality experience with the core curriculum only when the University's faculty is providing those experiences. Good teaching of core courses requires time and effort; yet, many priorities compete for faculty members' time and interest. Thus, the point of the first proposal is to emphasize the need for incentives and rewards to encourage faculty to teach the core curriculum—for teaching it is a responsibility held by no department in particular but by the University as a whole. Thus, the first proposal urges the Provost, deans, department chairs, and other administrators "to ensure that time, money, resources and weight in the promotion process be devoted to developing and delivering courses of high quality which fulfill the core requirements. Incentives and support should be offered to individual faculty, departments and colleges to teach such courses well."

Prof. Hosle asked whether Committee members considered the core requirements of the different *colleges* when formulating their proposals and recommendations. [For example, the College of Arts and Letters has a language proficiency requirement.] When the colleges' requirements are examined in relation to the University's core requirements, he said, some may conclude that one or the other should be reduced.

Fr. Jenkins replied that while the Committee was aware of the different colleges' requirements, there was no discussion between the various college councils and the Committee about their intersection.

Prof. Hosle responded that the amount of time faculty are able to devote to teaching the core requirements may depend on how many other courses they are required to teach. It would be useful to integrate the two sets of requirements.

Fr. Jenkins asked whether Prof. Hosle's concern was that the faculty must *teach* many required courses or that the students must *take* many required courses.

Prof. Hosle said that while he spoke from the point of view of the faculty, the students may consider the dual requirements demanding as well.

Fr. Jenkins said that while Committee members were aware that faculty have many demands competing for their time, it was not the Committee's charge to examine the various colleges' requirements. From the start, members determined that they would not add to the University's core requirements; yet, after discussion, they also determined that there was no need to decrease the number of requirements. Examination of the overlap and intersection of the University's requirements with those of the colleges would require a different kind of body and a different kind of charge.

Prof. Kolman clarified that Committee members did meet with groups from each of the colleges—either a college council or a subgroup chosen by the dean. In the course of those discussions, however, there was no move to reduce the University's core requirements. As a tradition that has been established over time, the twelve courses that comprise the core curriculum form the base of every Notre Dame undergraduate's education. Given that well-established curriculum as the starting point, she said, perhaps individual colleges should look more closely at it when crafting their own requirements. It would seem to be going a bit in the other direction to reduce the core curriculum to accommodate the various colleges' requirements.

Proposal 2: Core Curriculum Committee & Subcommittees

Prof. Kolman asked Fr. Jenkins to address the second proposal, which establishes a Core Curriculum Committee and various subcommittees and, she said, is the proposal on which most of the review committee's work was centered.

Fr. Jenkins began by reiterating Prof. Kolman's comment that the curriculum review was not undertaken to address a particular problem; rather, it was part of the University's ten-year strategic planning process. Furthermore, he said, the major proposal that resulted from that review—establishing a core curriculum committee and subcommittees for each core requirement—is not a radical notion. Of the 20 peer institutions Fr. Jenkins' assistant examined on behalf of the Committee, 19 have a curriculum committee—some with much stronger oversight than is proposed at Notre Dame. Fr. Jenkins said he would be happy to share the report on peer institutions with any members of the Academic Council.

Taking the proposal section by section, Fr. Jenkins explained that Section I lists the core requirements and their “designated academic unit” or units, which are the departments or programs that normally offer courses fulfilling the requirements.

Prof. Lykoudis said that while the School of Architecture is not included in the list of departments that fulfill the fine arts requirement, it does, in fact, offer courses students take to fulfill that requirement.

Fr. Jenkins said that the Curriculum Review Committee recognized that there are faculty in departments other than those mentioned in Section I of the proposal who offer courses that fulfill the University’s core requirements. In addition to architecture faculty who offer courses that fulfill the fine arts requirement, American Studies provides another example. That department is not listed in Section I with the departments that fulfill the literature requirement; yet, American Studies faculty do offer such courses. Fr. Jenkins said that the point Prof. Lykoudis makes was raised in the Undergraduate Studies Committee as well. As he explained there, while it is acceptable for schools or departments not listed in Section I to offer courses to fulfill various requirements, the purpose of Section I is to focus on the departments that regularly and routinely offer such courses.

Fr. Malloy said that the section’s listing is thus representative rather than exhaustive.

Turning to Section II of the proposal, “Formulation of a Rationale for Each Core Requirement,” Fr. Jenkins explained that this section says that a brief rationale must be formulated for each core requirement “stating the contribution that the required course will make to a student’s education.” That rationale is to “state the knowledge, skills, experiences, etc. that students should acquire through the course or courses” that satisfy a particular requirement. This section also identifies the departments that should draft the rationale for each core requirement. In some cases—the mathematics requirement, for example—one department is solely responsible for drafting the appropriate rationale. For other requirements—for instance, science—drafting committees are to be appointed by the dean of a college.

Prof. Roche commented that he recalled either reading or hearing that some departments at the University have already developed rationales for the core requirements. For the record, and to guide the drafting committees, he would emphasize that the intent of the review committee’s proposal is not to ask departments to state *why* a certain requirement exists. The point here is to answer a *what* question—specifically: What are the learning goals for students in particular core requirements? Answering that question may require a bit of a shift in culture—although more from the students’ perspective than from that of the faculty.

Fr. Jenkins then summarized Sections III, IV, and V of the proposal. Those sections establish core curriculum subcommittees, delineate the composition of the subcommittees, and set forth the subcommittees' role in approving courses proposed to fulfill specific University requirements. He said that the Curriculum Review Committee's hope is that the role of the subcommittees will extend beyond what the Preface calls their "judicial" role of approving or denying courses. [See Preface, Section 3] As stated in Section V, each subcommittee "will seek appropriate ways to enhance teaching and learning in the courses fulfilling the requirement under its purview and to ensure that they accord with the rationale for that requirement." Also, each subcommittee is to provide "assistance, encouragement and advice" to individual faculty members on how a proposed course "might more effectively attain the goals specified in the rationale."

Prof. Jacobs said that he was concerned that the language of Section V appears to establish a one-to-one correspondence between a course and an instructor. He asked if the Committee could clarify that if a course is approved once but then taught in a different semester by a different instructor, no additional approval need be granted by the subcommittee as long as the spirit of the course remains the same.

Noting that he and Prof. Jacobs had discussed this issue previously, Fr. Jenkins proposed that the following friendly amendment be added as the last sentence of Section V(A)(1), titled "Normal Procedure for Approval": "Once a course is approved, another instructor from a unit designated for that requirement may teach the course without seeking further approval, provided that the instructor retains the syllabus or course description under which it was originally approved."

Prof. Aldous objected to that wording, pointing out that it could create difficulties if the original instructor had not taught the course well or if the syllabus had been deficient. She said that faculty are not expected to be clones of each other. The proposed amendment eliminates any sort of original contribution a different faculty member might make to the course.

Fr. Jenkins responded that the intent of the proposed amendment is to make clear that a faculty member may take over a course with no further approval by the subcommittee if the syllabus or description is unchanged from the time of the subcommittee's first approval. Certainly, if a faculty member wants to teach a *different* course, he or she is welcome to pursue approval of that course through the procedure set forth in Section V.

Prof. Aldous said that she is hypothesizing a situation in which a faculty member is teaching the *same* course but using a different syllabus. With the language Fr. Jenkins has just proposed, it does not seem that faculty are allowed any originality to develop a course in a unique way.

Fr. Jenkins said that the language is not intended to preclude faculty members from developing a new syllabus for a course already approved. To do so, they must merely have their own syllabus approved. He reiterated that the intent of the amendment he has proposed in response to Prof. Jacobs' suggestion is to make clear that approval is not needed when the *only* change in a course is the instructor.

Prof. D'Angelo commented that the source of Fr. Jenkins' and Prof. Aldous' disagreement may be the reference in the proposed amendment to the word "syllabus." As a demonstration of commitment to her courses, she changes the syllabi for them quite significantly every year. Perhaps rather than specifying that the "syllabus" must remain the same, it would be better to use the word "description."

Fr. Jenkins responded that the proposed amendment includes both words: ". . . provided that the instructor retains the syllabus or course description under which it was originally approved." The purpose of this open-ended language is to make clear that it is up to each subcommittee to decide what level of detail members need to assure themselves that the rationale established for a core requirement is met by a certain course.

Prof. Kolman pointed out that Part C of Proposal 2, Section V, "Review of Previously Approved Courses," endorses the notion that courses need to be continually rethought and improved and that approval for such improvements need *not* be sought from the subcommittee for each change. While the language of Part C covers a slightly different scenario than that suggested by Prof. Jacobs, it does acknowledge that courses should be updated and improved.

Fr. Malloy asked if there were any objections to the friendly amendment proposed by Fr. Jenkins. There were none.

Prof. Preacher asked how the proposed Section V will affect the cross listing of courses. She looked today at a course with a student that is cross listed in history, English, anthropology, and gender studies, although it is primarily a history course. The student wanted to know if the course could be used to satisfy the social sciences requirement of the core curriculum. Her answer was that it *could* satisfy that requirement *if* the student elected to take it under the "anthropology" listing. Likewise, it would satisfy the literature requirement if the student enrolled in it under the "English" listing or the history requirement if enrolled in as a "history" course. Given the many cross-listed courses at the University, Prof. Preacher asked how the proposal will affect the way departments cross list courses and whether courses must be approved for cross listing.

Fr. Jenkins responded that to "count" for any requirement, a particular course must be approved by the relevant subcommittee. A course such as the one Prof.

Preacher has described might very well be taken to three subcommittees. Approval at each will depend on how well it meets the rationale that has been established for that requirement. One subcommittee might conclude that the course does *not* fulfill the rationale for the requirement with which it is charged.

That means, Prof. Preacher said, that it would be possible for a course to be cross listed in various departments, but it might not necessarily be used to fulfill core requirements in all instances.

Fr. Jenkins said that would be true. Fulfilling a requirement of the core curriculum involves additional steps that the process of cross listing a course does not satisfy.

Prof. Preacher asked how students and their advisors will know what courses fulfill the various core requirements.

Fr. Jenkins said that the University's registrar, Dr. Pace, has informed him that by the Spring 2005 semester, the University's new computing system will indicate what courses fulfill the various requirements.

Prof. Preacher said that nevertheless, there could very well be logistical problems. Students will assume that because a course is cross listed with a particular department it will fulfill a core requirement. Some mechanism is necessary to designate whether courses "do" or "do not" fulfill the requirements—and the mechanism must make that information very clear to students well in advance of course registration.

Fr. Jenkins agreed.

Prof. Roche said that some sort of transition period is definitely necessary. Right now, he noted, students can take any course in any of the five social sciences departments [anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology] to fulfill their social science requirement. Yet, to take one example, as the curriculum evolves, there may be a course in the political science department in the field of political theory that does *not* satisfy the University's social sciences requirement but *does* fulfill its philosophy requirement. Thus, some kind of extra mechanism is needed that will be part of the University's computing system to indicate that to students. Until such a mechanism is in place, chaos may result. Prof. Roche noted that it will take some time to develop the rationales called for by the proposal and, then, courses must be developed to fulfill those rationales. Consequently, he suggested that the Undergraduate Studies Committee meet with the Registrar and develop a timetable for rationales and proposals that will mesh with plans for the University's new computing system.

Fr. Jenkins said that Prof. Roche's point was well taken.

Fr. Jenkins then directed members' attention to Sections VI and VII, dealing with the membership and role of the Core Curriculum Committee, the body charged by the proposal to consider the core requirements as a whole. As specified in Section VII, that committee's role extends to:

1. Seeking ways to enhance learning in the core requirements, for example, by generating proposals for inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary courses, innovative approaches to teaching, or more effective use of faculty resources;
-
- Hearing appeals of proposals to the various core curriculum subcommittees;
- Approving credit for core requirements for courses taught at other institutions.

In addition, the Core Curriculum Committee must submit an annual report to the Provost's Office that includes data on the availability of classes fulfilling core requirements, size of classes, indications of the quality of learning, measures of student satisfaction, and suggestions and proposals about ways in which the education of students in the core curriculum can be improved.

Prof. Preacher asked if the responsibilities of the proposed Core Curriculum Committee will extend only to the core requirements. Will its powers be any broader than those requirements—for instance, will it become involved in the curriculum disputes that inevitably arise at the University?

Fr. Jenkins answered that under the current proposal the responsibilities of the proposed committee extend only to the core requirements.

Prof. Preacher said that there is a whole realm of courses at the University that fall into disputed areas that are not part of the core curriculum but that should be subject to some oversight. Might that be an area in which the proposed committee could involve itself?

Prof. Kolman responded that when the Curriculum Review Committee began its work 15 months ago, its members had an expansive vision of the changes to the curriculum they might wish to see. When trying to move some items forward and to create a consensus among the faculty, the Committee's vision became more focused on the core requirements, although clearly, that is not all that could or should be addressed. The question was raised at the Executive Committee meeting whether another curriculum committee should be created to tackle additional and different issues. As she answered there, probably "not in my lifetime." Yet, perhaps once the Core Curriculum Committee is up and running, there might be ways other curricular issues could be addressed. To answer Prof. Preacher's specific question, though, the proposed Core Curriculum Committee deals only with core requirements.

Fr. Jenkins agreed, pointing out that the composition of the proposed Core Curriculum Committee is geared to the core curriculum. If a University-wide curriculum committee were to be established, it would require a different membership. Many departments are not represented on the proposed Core Curriculum Committee.

Prof. Hosle asked where the proposal contains language specifying the number of courses needed to fulfill the core requirements—for example, the requirement that all undergraduates must take two courses in theology and philosophy.

Fr. Jenkins replied that those requirements are contained in Section 15.2 of the *Academic Articles*, and they were not changed by the proposal.

Prof. Hosle asked Fr. Jenkins whether the distribution of the single disciplines to the number of courses remains the same as well.

Fr. Jenkins said that it does.

Prof. Roche said he would like to return to some of the questions raised by Prof. Preacher. While he was persuaded at the Executive Committee that nothing more should be added to the current proposals, there are several issues related to the curriculum that the Undergraduate Studies Committee may wish to take up next year. Issues arise every day in his office related to matters such as double counting and international studies. He has asked Prof. Preacher to identify some of these issues so that members can begin to think about how perhaps another body, even an experimental one, might examine at least some of them. Prof. Roche added that the University is anomalous in not having a University curriculum committee charged with looking at such issues. The Undergraduate Studies Committee has too much variability and too many people with busy schedules to take on some of the issues that concern the curriculum.

Prof. Preacher said that disputes arise most frequently when there is inconsistency among the colleges. A good example is treatment of ROTC courses by the various colleges. In the College of Arts and Letters, for example, students are not allowed to use first- and second-year ROTC courses to count toward the 120 credits needed for graduation. Other colleges make different judgments. Students see an inconsistency between the colleges and ask why it exists. Another example is that there are courses in various colleges that may count for a requirement if taken by a student who is a member of that college but not when taken by students of a different college. Again, the inconsistency is bothersome to students.

Prof. Preacher continued by saying that international studies is perhaps the major area of difficulty in the curriculum. There is great variation in the credits attached to courses students take abroad. The problem extends beyond international studies to transfer credits. Her office receives, literally, hundreds of requests for the transfer of

credits from other institutions. Each request involves looking at the quality of the other institution, individual course descriptions, and even syllabi. Moreover, the whole decision-making process is time sensitive. She would appreciate having some direction from a larger committee about what her office should focus on in this task as well as how to set standards and to make decisions.

Prof. Wayne, an associate dean of the College of Science, said he does not see the problem quite as drastically as does Prof. Preacher. While there are some issues—among them, double counting, international studies, and transfer credits—he would not be in favor of some higher committee trying to solve these problems. Rather, much of what the larger committee might do can be accomplished with better communication among the colleges. In his own college, whatever action is taken or whatever the situation, the practice is to establish a policy and make sure that it is documented—whether in the college bulletin, on its website, or by some other means—and to try to be consistent with the standards that are set.

Prof. Brandenberger asked where, on a sustained basis, the University considers such issues as: Should there should be an ethics requirement? How many courses should students take? How is work across disciplines best accomplished? If the conversations the Curriculum Review Committee began are not sustained, they will be more difficult to begin anew in ten years. He asked whether it is appropriate for the Undergraduate Studies Committee to focus on those issues. Does it have enough time, or is there a need for a separate body? Additionally, how is the University community to know if the goals set forth by the current proposal are being met? A permanent committee might be the best vehicle to attend to such matters.

Referring to the preamble to the Curriculum Review Committee's set of proposals and recommendations, Prof. Antsaklis asked why the phrase "undertaken every decade" is necessary. While he understands that the curriculum issues addressed in the proposal and recommendations did not arise in response to some particular problem but as part of the University's normal strategic planning process, the phrase seems to indicate that the University addresses curriculum issues only every ten years and not continuously. He would advocate changing "undertaken every decade" to "periodically."

Fr. Jenkins said he would be open to a motion on that point. As mentioned previously, the intent of the phrase as originally constructed was to indicate that the curriculum review was not undertaken in response to any sort of crisis.

Prof. Antsaklis then asked: If some faculty members at the University feel that undergraduates need a background in a subject not currently in the core curriculum—computer science, for example—how would they go about attempting to add it to the core curriculum? Is the core curriculum fixed?

Prof. Kolman replied that the last two times the curriculum was reviewed, a strong and nearly universal feeling prevailed that no more requirements should be added to the core requirements. While there was interest even during this past round in introducing some new requirements, it appears to be the consensus of the community that the University should not do so. Addition or deletion of core curriculum requirements is an issue that can be raised outside of a standard ten-year review—most appropriately, she said, through the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Academic Council. She believes, however, that there is a strong institutional stance among Notre Dame’s faculty and students that the undergraduate curriculum is quite prescribed and quite full. Most would consider introducing an additional requirement only if a current requirement is eliminated—which would present its own difficulties.

Prof. Antsaklis said that he was not thinking of adding to the number of the core requirements. He was thinking, for example, of the possibility of replacing some of the science or mathematics requirements with a different requirement.

Prof. Kolman said that the identical issue was raised during the current round of curriculum review. Members of the review committee decided that the proposed Core Curriculum Committee, along with its various subcommittees, would be a step forward in the creation of a forum for such issues to be addressed. Now there is no mechanism outside of the ten-year review process to consider such issues. Recognizing that, the proposal at hand is to create bodies that will give an intense look at each of the requirements. Prof. Kolman noted that in previous drafts, members may have noticed a proposal that technology courses offered by the College of Engineering could satisfy the science requirement. Yet, ultimately, the way the review committee decided to deal with such issues was by attention to the composition of each core curriculum subcommittee. The subcommittee for the sciences, for example, which is the body that will write the rationale for the science requirement and approve courses to fulfill it, will have representation from Engineering through the presence of both the dean of that college and another faculty member. [See section 3 of the Preface for more background on this topic.]

Prof. Kolman noted that she is optimistic about the fruitfulness of such interdisciplinary discussions. This past summer, she chaired a subcommittee on science, mathematics, and technology. What became clear is that it is necessary for scientists and engineers to sit down together and talk about the rationale for various courses because no rationale was articulated in the past. Once that is done, there will most likely be room for faculty and departments who are not currently in the mix to offer courses that meet the rationale. Thus, rather than prescribing specific courses, the review committee tried to establish a *process* that would involve the right people in discussions.

Prof. Incropera said his recollection is that when the Curriculum Review Committee was established, expectations were fairly high that it would play an important role in the strategic planning process. The intention was that the Committee

would examine the core requirements and propose significant changes that would lead to a distinctive, world-class program. As it turns out, the product of the Committee's work is a focus more on committee structure than on substantive changes. Thus, much will depend on how proactive, visionary, and aggressive the subcommittees will be. There is the possibility, however, that nothing revolutionary or substantive will emerge and that given the extensive commitments of most faculty members, not even evolutionary change will occur. Thus, in a sense, some of the expectations at the beginning of the process have yet to be realized. His hope, though, is that the Core Curriculum Committee and its subcommittees will take their charge seriously and, that if need be, the Provost will prod them to do so.

Prof. Robinson commented that the Core Curriculum Committee is in reality quite weak. With respect to rationales, if its members do not like a particular rationale, all they can actually do is to ask the subcommittee to redraft it. Then, the subcommittee can choose to make changes or not. Furthermore, if a subcommittee turns down a request from a faculty member for a particular course to fulfill a core requirement and the faculty member appeals to the Core Curriculum Committee, all that committee can do is to ask the subcommittee to "reconsider" its decision. There is no power to overturn the subcommittee's decision. Prof. Robinson said that his point is that the Core Curriculum Committee is structurally weak—he did not offer a judgment about whether that is good or bad—but his observation was linked to Prof. Incropera's remarks about much future change being dependent on the vision of the subcommittees. The words "aggressive" and "visionary" are not usually linked to the word "powerless."

Fr. Jenkins said that the rationales drafted by the subcommittees must be approved by the Core Curriculum Committee, but that Prof. Robinson is correct in stating that the committee has no power to actually overturn the decisions of the subcommittees.

Prof. Robinson asked if that was the intent of the Curriculum Review Committee.

Fr. Jenkins said that at the December meeting of the Committee with the faculty, feelings ran very high that the proper oversight for the core requirements should reside in the departments. Faculty said that giving a separate committee too much power would end in charlatanism or a watering down of the requirements. The result is the proposal at hand, which the Committee believes represents a consensus position. Fr. Jenkins believes, however, that while the current proposal is not radical, at least it represents movement toward a situation where faculty discuss the requirements. It provides a structure and a forum for the discussion, which do not now exist.

Prof. Hatch noted that another innovation introduced by the proposal requires the Core Curriculum Committee to prepare an annual report informing departments and the University as a whole of the state of the core requirements.

Prof. Maurice asked whether the proposal should include language about the Core Curriculum Committee's ability to make changes to the composition of the subcommittees. As the proposal is written, certain departments and other academic units make up the membership of the subcommittees. Yet, departments are dynamic. They may switch from one college to another, merge, split apart, or new departments may be created. How does the Committee envision that changes to the subcommittees' composition be made?

Fr. Jenkins said that the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Academic Council is the body best suited for the task of reviewing the subcommittees' composition and making any necessary changes.

Prof. Maurice responded that if nothing is added to the proposal to take account of departmental evolution, there seems to be a clear message that the University is unwilling to change the status quo. New departments may very well develop in a certain discipline, and those departments should be integrated into the subcommittee structure.

Prof. Incropera commented that he believes much of the entropy resulting from the Curriculum Review Committee's meeting with the faculty in December was driven by a desire expressed there on the part of many faculty to maintain the status quo. Even with the subcommittees that the proposal establishes, forces to maintain the existing courses and objectives may very well dominate and change will *not* occur over time.

Prof. Kolman addressed Prof. Maurice's question as well. She pointed out that the current proposal gives much appointment power to the Provost and the deans. Thus, at least in the short term, those administrators can take departmental evolution into account when putting together the curriculum subcommittees. And, if they discern that some dimension of the curriculum is not represented on the subcommittees, they are given the opportunity to remedy that through their powers of appointment. In fact, the language used in the proposal makes clear that the appointment power exists to ensure that there is breadth of representation: [Section IVA of Proposal 2 states: "In making appointments, the Provost is urged to consider various factors which would bring the optimal balance of perspectives and skills to reflection on the required courses."]

Recommendations: Integrative Courses, Honors Opportunities, and Ethics Education

Prof. Kolman then turned to the "Recommendations" section of the proposal. She said that over the 15 months of the Curriculum Review Committee's work, many topics surfaced that could have been addressed and, perhaps, *should* have been addressed. Yet, in the end, it was the consensus of members that the proposed Core

Curriculum Committee and its subcommittees provided the best hope for taking up many of those issues. As Prof. Incorporera has pointed out, though, that is only a hope.

There were some issues, however, about which members of the Curriculum Review Committee felt very strongly and that could very well not be subsumed into the new committee structure. Thus, they have chosen to address three of them in recommendations:

- Develop integrative courses to satisfy core requirements
- Encourage the development of honors opportunities within departments and colleges
-
- Enhance education in ethics

The idea, Prof. Kolman said, with regard to these three recommendations is that they will be taken up by the appropriate bodies over time.

Prof. Kolman asked Prof. Delaney, currently a member of the Executive Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee as well as a member of previous curriculum review committees, to lead the discussion on the recommendations.

Prof. Delaney began by observing that in his extensive experience with curriculum review committees, it has always been true that the endeavor begins with heroic ideals and a desire to rethink the entire curriculum. Ultimately, though, realism takes over and members recognize the various constraints of the structures and requirements that exist at the time.

As for the current set of proposals and recommendations, Prof. Delaney said that as one who was largely on the outside of the process, it appears to him to be an enormous step forward from the previous recommendations—not because it changed any requirements—it does not—and not because it dismantled disciplinary autonomy—it does not. What is unusual and forward-thinking about the work of this particular curriculum review committee is that its members did not accept defeat in the face of realism. Rather, the proposals set forth an oversight structure consisting of a nested set of committees that are intended to lead to an examination of Notre Dame's core requirements.

Prof. Delaney observed that many of Notre Dame's peer institutions have an undergraduate college, which provides for constant examination of college requirements. Notre Dame does not have an undergraduate college. Its undergraduate education is fragmentary in that there are four colleges, a school, and a first-year-of-studies program—and there is absolutely no communication between those entities. Thus, it is an enormous step forward to put in place a set of committees that will look at what the University regards as its core requirements. Faculty must actually

sit down and think about the requirements and which courses in their departments fulfill those requirements. Initially, that examination will occur in individual departments. Then, as the committees become broader and courses in *other* departments and colleges are considered in relation to the core requirements, faculty members will need to think about the University requirements as a whole.

The first of the three recommendations, Prof. Delaney said, indicates that although the traditional disciplinary way of describing the core requirements has been maintained for the present, faculty are encouraged to think outside the box concerning how those requirements can be met. They may possibly be fulfilled through a course in someone else's department or by an interdisciplinary course.

He continued that the second recommendation—encourage the development of honors opportunities within departments and colleges—aims to take the research component of undergraduate education much more seriously than has been done in the past. The point is to ratchet up the undergraduate experience—not necessarily for every student but there should at least be an *opportunity* for every student to do serious undergraduate research in a chosen area. That may occur through an honors track, a capstone research project, or getting students involved in research early in their four years at Notre Dame. Other major universities do all those things.

Prof. Delaney said that the third recommendation—enhance education in ethics—is in keeping with Notre Dame's principles as a Catholic university. Particularly in this day and age, with corruption rampant, ethics should figure more prominently in the curriculum as a whole and not be confined to the Philosophy and Theology Departments. The Mendoza College of Business is taking interesting steps toward making ethics more central to its students' curriculum. One could imagine Engineering doing a similar kind of thing. The recommendation is a reminder to all departments that ethics should not be the purview of any one department.

Prof. Delaney concluded by reiterating that while the language of the recommendations may appear conventional, the Undergraduate Studies Committee is not endorsing a conventional view of undergraduate education. The message to faculty is to look more adventuresomely as to how various core requirements can be satisfied.

Prof. Garg asked what it means for the Council to endorse the recommendations. What would the next step be after a vote of approval?

Fr. Jenkins said endorsement would provide some weight to the endeavors of many at the University—in departments, colleges, and the Office of the Provost—who are very concerned with moving forward on some of the ideas expressed in the recommendations. For example, granting a degree with honors is essentially a logistical problem. Putting the Council's weight behind it would move that idea forward.

Prof. Garg asked if the Council should add language asking the Provost to forward the three recommendations to such administrators as deans and department chairs.

Prof. Hatch said that it is the responsibility of his office to set up the committees that will formulate the rationales.

Prof. Garg said he is referring instead to the recommendations.

Prof. Roche said the message could be conveyed by the Provost's Office website or an e-mail announcement sent either to all department chairs or to individual faculty members directly. He would recommend that rather than merely informing faculty of the Council's actions regarding the recommendations, the colleges should ask faculty to identify which items they might like to discuss in the next semester. That would more likely result in initiation of the discussion.

Fr. Jenkins said that with Prof. Hatch's permission, he would be happy to send that kind of communication to faculty.

Prof. Kolman noted that both the first and second recommendations ask specific groups to take action on the subject they raise. The Core Curriculum Committee is directed to encourage the development of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary courses and the Undergraduate Studies Committee is asked to revisit the topic of honors opportunities. Still, anything that can be done to make the recommendations a reality is important.

As to the second recommendation, Prof. Hosle asked whether there is any policy at the University on grading. The standard for "A" and "B" work varies from professor to professor and department to department. He said that this seems to be a matter bordering on obsession with some students and may become even more so if departments and colleges institute honors opportunities.

Fr. Jenkins said that while a recent University Rhodes Scholar did not have the most impressive grade point average, he was the youngest person to ever publish an article in the *Journal of Science*. That is an example of the kind of culture shift the Committee would like to cultivate—a culture shift that can only become a possibility through a series of small steps.

Prof. Kolman moved that the entire proposal regarding the undergraduate curriculum, including its preamble, two proposals, and three recommendations, be brought to a vote.

Fr. Scully seconded the motion.

Prof. Roche asked that Prof. Antsaklis' suggestion to delete the phrase "undertaken every decade" be considered a friendly amendment.

After seeing that there were no objections, Fr. Jenkins agreed to amend the proposal.

Fr. Malloy called for a vote on the proposals and recommendations developed by the Curriculum Review Committee. The vote was unanimously positive.

Fr. Jenkins thanked the Curriculum Review Committee for their hard work and dedicated service on their difficult task. He said that had his colleagues known the task that lay ahead when he invited them to serve fifteen months ago, they probably would have turned him down. Serious curricular reviews are endemically contentious and difficult. The work of a curriculum review committee often resembles nothing so much as charging the machine gun nests at Gallipoli. But the Committee members have worked in a dedicated and selfless manner, not for anything he could offer them, but to improve education at Notre Dame. They deserve the gratitude of all at the University, on whose behalf he thanked them.

3. Committee reports

(a) Undergraduate Studies Committee: Prof. Kolman said that in addition to the curriculum proposal just passed, there was one other issue before the Undergraduate Studies Committee: course scheduling. Committee members plan to finish work on a proposal this semester, but they will not bring that proposal to the full Academic Council until the first meeting of the Fall 2003 semester.

(b) Graduate Studies Committee: Prof. Antsaklis reported that members of the Graduate Studies Committee met April 3, 2003, to discuss ways to restructure the committee and, by extension, the entire committee structure of the Academic Council. They hope to present their proposal at the next meeting.

(c) Faculty Affairs Committee: Prof. Mooney reported on behalf of Prof. Ghilarducci that the committee continues work on a number of issues. The topic of faculty grievance and disciplinary procedures is being studied with a committee from the Faculty Senate. Committee members hope to present a proposal on that topic to the Academic Council next fall. In addition, committee members will meet this week to discuss the holiday issue on their agenda—specifically, whether Labor Day and Presidents' Day should be University holidays. Finally, a subcommittee on salary equity should have a proposal ready for the last Academic Council meeting of this year.

There being no further business, Fr. Malloy adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Ann Mooney
Secretary