

To: Faculty Council, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
From: The Educational Policy Committee
Date: April 9, 2003

The Educational Policy Committee has read and discussed Version 1.4 of "Making Connections: A Proposal to Revise the General Education Curriculum," prepared by the Curriculum Review Steering Committee. We recommend the proposal with reservations. The vote in the Committee was nine in favor, three opposed.

Version 1.4 represents an improvement over the existing curriculum in the following areas.

1. It distinguishes more clearly between General College and upper-level requirements.
2. It eliminates the complex "Western Historical/Non-Western/Comparative" requirement.
3. It includes a formal requirement for experiential education.
4. It mandates increased exposure to the world outside of North Carolina and the United States.
5. It focusses the diversity requirement on the United States.
6. In its suggestion that faculty develop interdisciplinary clusters of related courses it fosters the kind of teamwork and educational experience that is likely to become more essential in the decades to come.

Our reservations stem from the following concerns.

1. The overall structure of the proposed curriculum is very complex and prescriptive.
2. The intellectual goals of the "Connections" section and its constituent parts are not entirely clear or consistent.
3. The number of requirements is substantially larger than in the current curriculum.
4. The use of multiple counting to enable students to satisfy "Connections" requirements may lead students to select courses not for educational reasons but because a given course satisfies more requirements. We recommend that the number of requirements that can be satisfied by any single course be limited to two or three.

We recognize that no single document is perfect and able to satisfy all interested parties on campus, and that the proposed curriculum addresses a number of issues in our existing curriculum. The Educational Policy Committee wishes to acknowledge and thank Laurie McNeil and the other members of the Steering Committee, as well as the dozens of students and faculty who contributed to the proposed new curriculum.

(This report is submitted by George W. Houston, Chair of the EPC. He can be reached at <gwhousto@email.unc.edu>.)