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<td>Nancy Dentar</td>
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<td>Bill Cly (Callies)</td>
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<td>Alethia Jackson</td>
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<td>Oliver Kensey</td>
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<td>F. Andre D. Baptist</td>
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<td>William Lundel</td>
<td>Sung B. Kim</td>
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<td>Jani J. B.</td>
<td>Corey Anthony</td>
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<td>John E. Hunters</td>
<td>Faroun Municio</td>
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AGENDA

                              1992-93 University Senate, May 4, 1992
2. President's Report
3. SUNY-wide Senate Report Vincent Aceto
                              Paul Wallace
4. Chair's Report
5. Council Reports
   a. CPCA                     Ronald Bosco
   b. EPC                      Joan Schulz
   c. GAC                      Richard Felson
   d. UAC                      Bonnie Spanier
   e. RES                      Lorretta Smith
   f. LISC                     Mark Steinberger
   g. CAFE                     Scott Lyman
   h. SAC                      James Kiepper
   i. UCC                      Reed Hoyt
6. Old Business
7. New Business
   a. Council Changes
   b. Report of the Committee on Student Conduct, 1991-92
   c. Update on Senate Bill No. 9192-01: General Education Program
      (Professor Cyril Knoblauch)
   d. Update on Senate Bill No. 8990-29: Assessment Report - University
      at Albany (Dr. J. Fredericks Volkwein)
   e. Senate Meeting Dates (for your information)
8. Adjournment
Chair Brannon called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes
The minutes of the 1991-92 May 4 University Senate meeting and the 1992-93 May 4 University Senate meeting were approved as printed.

2. President's Report
President Swygert noted that he will be meeting with the editorial board of the *Daily Gazette* and *Money* magazine. He has already met with the editorial board of the *Times Union*.

The President reported that the Search Committee for the Vice President for Finance and Business is proceeding with advertisements. The Search Committee for the Dean of the Arts and Sciences and the Transition Committee are working closely with Vice President Hitchcock and will report to the Senate. A faculty committee has been established to design the academic program for the Center for Environmental Sciences and Technology Management, reported the President.

President Swygert gave a report on the Commencement ceremonies in May. He also noted that the December Graduate Assembly will be held in the RACC. The President urged the faculty to attend the Assembly.

Turning to the budget, the President reported that the budget "mantra" will be stability and restoration for next year. He has drafted a letter to the Governor from the SUNY campus Presidents concerning this.

A number of issues were raised with the Senate Executive Committee, reported the President. Two issues are the quality of life on campus (discussion needs to begin) and the recruitment and retention of minority group students.
The President then showed the video supporting the Capital Campaign. The Senators commented positively on the film.

3. SUNY-wide Senate Report
Senator Wallace reviewed the report that was included in the agenda packet. This was a meeting of governance leaders. The first SUNY-wide Senate meeting will be held on October 15-17, 1992, in Geneseo.

4. Chair's Report
Chair Brannon welcomed the 1992-93 University Senate to a busy year.

5. Council Reports
a. CPCA: Senator Bosco noted that CPCA restored a past practice on submitting a report of the Council's activities. This type of reporting will continue through this year.
   b. EPC: Senator Schulz had nothing to report.
   c. GAC: Senator Felson had nothing to report.
   d. UAC: Senator Spanier had nothing to report.
   e. RES: Senator Smith had nothing to report.
   f. LISC: Senator Steinberger had nothing to report.
   g. CAFE: Senator Lyman had nothing to report.
   h. SAC: Ms. Denton, reporting for Senator Kiepper, noted that the Council has met and the committees were established.
   i. UCC: Senator Hoyt reported that the Council has met and committees were established. The Council is looking at quality of life issues.

6. Old Business
There was no Old Business.

7. New Business
a. Council Changes: The Council changes as circulated were moved, seconded and accepted.
   b. Report of the Committee on Student Conduct, 1992-93: The report was accepted as an informational piece.
   c. Update on Senate Bill No. 9192-01: General Education Program: Chair Brannon asked Professor Knoblauch to discuss.

The General Education Committee has been working to implement this Bill, reported Professor Knoblauch. The main concern is to recertify some existing General Education courses and to implement new ones. The program will go into effect Fall 1993. The committee developed a new proposal form that is available in the Dean of Undergraduate Studies Office, Professor Knoblauch said, and will be sent to department chairs. The committee members are available to discuss the proposal submission process to the schools/colleges. Professor Knoblauch noted
that workshops are also scheduled. The committee will also deal with incentives and assessment. Professor Knoblauch encourages the Senators to support and to stay engaged in this program.

d. Update on Senate Bill No. 8990-29: Assessment Report - University at Albany: Chair Brannon asked Dr. Volkwein to discuss.

Dr. Volkwein briefly discussed an assessment matrix he developed. The categories are being given to the University by SUNY Central who would like an annual report. Departments were asked to submit academic plans in the majors, which were reviewed by EPC. A workshop is being planned for deans and department chairs to discuss the plans, said Dr. Volkwein. He also gave the results of a survey that was taken last year (results on the last two pages of the handout). Two philosophies were found: 1) enhance student learning and growth, which will take us to the next level; and 2) students and alumni are our best ambassadors.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carson Carr, Jr.
Secretary
The meeting on September 17-19 was not a full senate meeting, but a meeting of local governance leaders, new senators, and members of committees.

Address by Governor Cuomo (main points)

1. Thinks the coming year will be better economically for SUNY, but not much.
2. Can't give SUNY more money, but maybe can do some building. Plans to give more flexibility to the university.
3. Taxes. Said he won't raise them in NYS, but that the federal government must, and give some back to the states.
4. Recognized that SUNY is cut as much as it can be. Admits that it may be necessary to close a campus.
5. Said that school systems must consolidate (and by implication SUNY also).

Address by Chancellor Johnstone

Chancellor Johnstone spoke first about financial support from the state and the need for advocacy for SUNY. The question now is, does the legislature know that SUNY is "over the edge"?

Advocacy for SUNY

1. Know the facts.
2. Know that the system does know where its going.
3. Know the political realities.
4. Insist on access.
5. Stress the pain of SUNY, and that we are "over the edge."
6. Translate this into action: write legislators.
7. Beware of the "blame game."
8. Be ready to support and praise our friends.
9. Be ready to support the SUNY system.

The Chancellor also discussed the nature and work of central administration in state systems. The following points were published by the Chancellor in his pamphlet, Studies in Public Higher Education (June 1992).

Responsibilities of System Central Administrations

1. Leadership to the system, to public higher education, and to higher education generally, including the establishment of a systemwide mission, the approval of constituent campus missions, and advocacy for the needs of the state and its students and citizens;
2. The appointment, compensation, periodic evaluation, occasional removal, and constant support of campus or institutional chief operating officers;
3. The allocation of resources among the institutions comprising the system;
4. The assessment, approval, initiation, and rescission of academic programs and research endeavors;
5. Policies and programs to assure student access to the system as a whole;
6. The oversight of board and systemwide policies dealing with the needs, interests, and behavior of students;
7. Business administration and stewardship over state resources;
8. Information and institutional research;
9. Public relations and advocacy;
10. Personnel policies, terms and conditions of employment, and (if provided by law) collective bargaining;
11. Legal services and legal representation of the board and of staff and faculty acting on behalf of the system;
12. Consolidation of administrative and academic support services.

Committee Reports

The committee reports dealt generally with the issues which were thought to be issues of the coming year.

LCL's: Want a database from the Governance Committee for such actions as presidential searches.

Operations: What are the demographics of the professoriate, and how does it participate in budgeting on the campuses.

Governance: Will work on presidential search handbook, its own guidelines, presidential evaluations, and database for presidential searches, etc.

Graduate Committee: 1) importance of GRI to the SUNY system
2) academic issues of unionization of graduate students
3) articulation (esp. between Centers and 2-year schools)
4) quality of student life 5) pedagogical training for graduate students

Student Life: 1) development of student assembly 2) voting on campus 3) 1st Amendment rights 4) statements of disciplinary actions on transcripts 5) treatment of disabled students 6) campus community 7) report on public safety to the chancellor

Awards: new awards and procedures

Undergraduate Committee: 1) assessment 2) entry-level skills
3) math-skills survey 4) laws regarding disabled students

Paul W. Wallace
SUNY Faculty Senator
September 1, 1992

TO: Prof. Lil Brannon, Chair, 1992-93 University Senate
Prof. Ted Turner, Chair, 1991-92 University Senate

FR: Ronald A. Bosco, Chair, 1991-92 Council on Promotions
and Continuing Appointment (CPCA)

RE: Summary of CPCA Actions in 1991-92

Until some years ago, CPCA annually reported its activities to the public in the form of a "Summary of Actions" memorandum to the University Senate. No one seems entirely sure of how, why, or when that practice was discontinued; however, as I reported to the Senate last Spring, CPCA, by unanimous vote of its membership, would reinstate the practice with a summary of its actions in 1991-92. For the record, the term for CPCA runs from September 1 to August 31.

Between September 1, 1991 and August 31, 1992, CPCA had a total of 43 cases entered on its roster. Of these, 22 cases involved consideration for continuing appointment and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. These 22 cases were decided thus by CPCA: 17 in the affirmative and 4 in the negative, with the remaining case withdrawn from the roster prior to CPCA review. Additionally, 6 cases were presented for continuing appointment in rank. These 6 cases were decided thus: 5 in the affirmative, 1 in the negative. Finally, 15 cases were presented for persons with continuing appointment for promotion to the rank of Associate or Full Professor. These 15 cases were decided thus: 10 in the affirmative and 2 in the negative, with the remaining 3 cases withdrawn or deferred to 1992-93 prior to CPCA review.

Note: In the representation of CPCA votes above, the terms "affirmative" and "negative" indicate simple majority votes. Further, cases involving continuing appointment and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor require two votes: one on each motion. Although the exact vote on one or the other motion was not always the same in every such case, affirmative votes for one motion were, in 1991-92, always followed affirmative votes for the other motion—and the same was true for negative votes.
COUNCIL CHANGES

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<th>Proposed Additions to Councils</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jason Stern, EPC</td>
<td>Seth Leitman, EPC</td>
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<td>Ali Kazim, UAC</td>
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<td>Norbert Zahm, UCC</td>
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# Report of the Committee on Student Conduct for Academic Year 1991-92

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<th>Types of Infraction</th>
<th># of Cases</th>
<th>Not Responsible*</th>
<th>Cases Pending</th>
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<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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- 1991-92 Subtotal 31 | 10 | 0 | 20 | 1 |
- 1990-91 Subtotal 17 | 4  | 2 | 11 | 0 |
- 1989-90 Subtotal 10 | 0  | 0 | 7  | 3 |

*Includes cases withdrawn, dismissed or not guilty verdict

Cases Pending = 2'students withdrew from the University prior to case resolution.

Prepared by Judicial Affairs, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs

July 15, 1992
### UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
### UNIVERSITY SENATE

#### 1992-93 Meeting Schedule

<table>
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<th>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</th>
<th>3:30 p.m. -- AD 253</th>
<th>UNIVERSITY SENATE</th>
<th>3:30 p.m. -- Assembly Hall</th>
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<td>September 21, 1992</td>
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<td>October 26</td>
<td>November 16</td>
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<td>November 30</td>
<td>December 7</td>
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**November 30**

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February 8, 1993

March 1, 1993

March 29

(Nominations, 1993-94 Chair-Elect & Secretary)

April 12

(Elections, 1993-94 Chair-Elect & Secretary)

April 19

March 1, 1993

May 3

**1993-94 Senate Organizational Meeting**

May 3, 1993

3:00 p.m.

Assembly Hall

**1993-94 Council Organizational Meetings**

May 4, 1993

9 a.m. LISC EPC UAC

10 a.m. CAFE CPCA GAC

11 a.m. UCC RES SAC

**Faculty Forum**

Wednesday, November 4, 1992 (3:30 p.m.) -- Assembly Hall

Wednesday, April 14, 1993 (3:30 p.m.) -- Assembly Hall

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All matters requiring action or review by the Senate and the Executive Committee should be submitted to the Senate Recorder two weeks prior to the appropriately scheduled meeting.
Faculty Meetings

Wednesday, September 9, 1992
(2:30 p.m. reception; 3:00 p.m. meeting)
Campus Center Ballroom

Wednesday, May 5, 1993
(2:30 p.m. reception; 3:00 p.m. meeting)
Campus Center Ballroom
September 17, 1992

TO: Members of the University Senate

FROM: President H. Patrick Swygert

SUBJECT: Commencement

According to University Senate Bill 9091-01, administrative responsibility for Commencement belongs to the President who develops a plan for the Commencement ceremony each year in consultation with faculty, staff, the Educational Policy Council, and the senior class. The bill also specifies that the President inform the Senate of the plan for the upcoming Commencement at the first or second meeting of the academic year.

I am pleased to report to the Senate that the University will continue in 1993 its practice for the last two years of holding a University-wide Commencement ceremony at the Knickerbocker Arena, followed by individual School and College events at sites throughout the University. The 149th Commencement will be held on Sunday, May 16, 1993, at 10 a.m.; School/College events will be scheduled to begin at 1 p.m.

Report on the 1992 Commencement

The 148th Commencement of this institution was held on May 17, 1992. Attendance by graduates was high -- nearly 70 doctoral candidates, 250 master's candidates, and about 2,000 bachelor's candidates filled the floor seats of the Knickerbocker Arena. More than 12,000 guests also attended the ceremony as did approximately 150 University faculty. University staff members with official duties numbered more than 100.

Honorary degrees were awarded to two individuals -- Catherine Stimpson, University Professor and Dean of the Graduate School/New Brunswick/Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Rutgers University; and D. Allan Bromley, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and Chair of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology Policy. Dr. Bromley offered the Commencement Address.
Parent and student attendance was again strong at the School/College events due to good planning and notification by School/College Deans and staffs.

Use of the Knickerbocker Arena continues to be a very cost-efficient approach to Commencement for the University. The expenses incurred for rental, security, and other services remained at the same level as in 1991 (which was approximately 50 percent less than the cost of the multiple-ceremony commencements held in 1991). Traffic, parking, crowd management and other logistical issues were smoother than our first time around and generally problem-free.

Student behavior at Commencement was restless at times, boisterous at times, but generally acceptable. Security staff did not attend as carefully as we asked to controlling access between the floor and the spectator seats, which contributed to some distracting noise and movement. This issue will be given special attention in 1993. And, of course, there were the ubiquitous beach balls. My office received seven letters regarding the ceremony: two from faculty praising it; and five from family members, four complaining about student behavior, one complaining about all aspects of the ceremony.

In the coming year, I would like to engage the Deans and the Educational Policy Council in a discussion of steps that can be taken to improve student behavior and to increase faculty investment in Commencement.

cc: Council of Deans
    Senate Executive Committee
To The University Community:

I am pleased to announce that once again this year, the University at Albany seeks proposals for Affirmative Action Grants, a special program designed to help increase our effectiveness in more fully realizing important aspirations of the University. I hope you will read the announcement carefully and accept the invitation to submit a grant proposal.

The University at Albany has made important strides in recent years in increasing opportunities for minorities and other protected classes. This program will build on those successes.

Sincerely,

H. Patrick Swygert
President

Attachment
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION GRANTS

GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSALS

In order to promote the goals of affirmative action at the University at Albany, funds are being made available for a special program of competitive grants. Proposals are being sought for creative, innovative, and results-oriented projects aimed at recruiting, retaining, and supporting protected class persons at the University at Albany. "Protected class" persons include minorities, women, people with disabilities, and Vietnam era veterans.

Any department, program, office, committee, group, or individual may apply. Particular attention will be given to proposals that: 1) come from academic units; 2) are directed toward African American and Hispanic American students and faculty; and 3) originate in areas of the University that do not serve protected class persons as their primary assigned responsibility.

The number of grants awarded and the amount for each will depend on the quality of applications received. Typical awards will range from $500 to $1,000, but higher or lower amounts may be requested.

In most instances these grants are not intended to fund ongoing activities, but rather to encourage new ideas and projects.

The deadline for applications is November 23, 1992. The recipients of the awards will be announced during Spring Semester 1993.

Proposals should include:

1. A one- or two-page single-spaced narrative that:
   a. describes the project,
   b. states how the project will further affirmative action goals,
   c. presents a timeframe for planning and implementing the project,
   d. lists individuals involved and their qualifications,
   e. lists in-kind services, if any, and
   f. outlines guidelines for evaluation of the project.

2. An itemized budget noting when funds will be expended. Lump sum budgets cannot be considered.

The University Commission for Affirmative Action will review the proposals and make their recommendations to the President. Please submit proposals to:

Gloria DeSole
Senior Advisor to the President
for Affirmative Action and Employment Planning
University at Albany
Administration 301
Albany, NY 12222
UNIVERSITY SENATE
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

General Education Program

INTRODUCED BY: Undergraduate Academic Council
December 16th, 1991

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

I. That the attached General Education Program be adopted.

II. That the implementation for this revision be effective for all students matriculating at the University in the Fall 1993 semester and thereafter.

III. That this bill be referred to the President for approval and implementation.
Proposed Gen. Ed. Legislation

I. Size and Scope of the Program

1. The General Education requirement includes 24 credits distributed over the following categories of instruction:

   Humanities and the Arts--2 courses
   Social Sciences--2 courses
   Natural Sciences--2 courses
   Cultural and Historical Perspectives--1 course
   Human Diversity--1 course

2. It also includes two courses of writing-intensive instruction.

II. Administration

1. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies is responsible for administering General Education and will have sufficient staff and resources to meet responsibilities for advisement, course approvals, assessment, faculty and curricular development, training of TAs, faculty incentives, and program advertising.

2. A standing Committee on General Education will assist the Dean on matters of advisement, course approvals, assessment, and program development. Its membership should include a core of arts and science faculty, representatives from CUE and UAC, and one undergraduate student. The Committee should begin its work immediately, in anticipation of a substantial project of redesigning and re-registering gen. ed. courses.

3. Course proposals originate in departments and Colleges, pass through appropriate College curriculum committees, and are reviewed by the General Education Committee. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Gen. Ed. Committee are responsible for insuring that the values and criteria of the program are clearly represented in new proposals. Each College is responsible to insure that proposals are tailored specifically to the goals of general education.

4. Evaluation of the curriculum is the responsibility of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. It will include, yearly, both survey and course-specific measures. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies can recommend deregistering a gen. ed. course judged to be unresponsive to the goals of the program.

(5) Advisement policy will be coordinated by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies in consultation with CUE, Admissions, EOP, Registrar, Summer Sessions, and individual departments. Specific
Policy guidelines will be implemented uniformly across all advisement centers. The guidelines should address the purposes of gen. ed., timing of courses in student schedules, connections between gen. ed. and the selection of major, waiver policies, and other relevant information. Students should be advised to include gen. ed. courses in their schedules as early as they can, ideally during their first two years. A rigorous waiver policy should be developed to insure the integrity of the program.

III. Program Categories and Criteria

1. The bulletin description of the program will read as follows:

   The General Education Program of the University at Albany promotes breadth, coherence, critical inquiry, and public responsibility in the intellectual life of every undergraduate student.

   --It promotes breadth through a distribution of courses in the humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

   --It promotes coherence by emphasizing historical, social, aesthetic, and philosophical contexts that shape knowledge and culture.

   --It promotes critical inquiry into the assumptions, goals, and methods of various academic fields of study.

   --It promotes public responsibility by emphasizing cultural pluralism, human diversity, a respect for difference, and a commitment to civic dialogue.

In addition, general education aims to develop the reasoning abilities, the writing, reading, and computational abilities, the interpretive, analytic, and synthesizing abilities, central to the intellectual life of the University.

The majority of General Education courses are at the 100 and 200 level. Students are encouraged to complete the requirements in their first two years.

The program includes four interrelated kinds of courses:
   (1) those intended to introduce the variety of disciplines comprising a university;
   (2) those intended to promote understanding of the diversity of social groups and practices in American society;
   (3) those intended to promote understanding of the world's cultural diversity and historical change;
   (4) those intended to develop writing abilities as a means of composing, learning, and sharing disciplinary knowledge.
Courses in the Disciplines (18 credits)

Students complete two courses in each of the following categories: Humanities and the Arts, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences. Approved courses have these features:

--they offer general, non-specialized introduction to central topics in a discipline or interdisciplinary field; while they may satisfy major or minor requirements, their special purpose is to serve students who do not intend to pursue more advanced work;

--they encourage reflectiveness about disciplinary knowledge, aesthetic discernment, reasoned inquiry, and/or a particular discipline's aims, methods, history, differences from other disciplines, and intellectual or aesthetic assumptions; they explain what it means to be a practitioner of a discipline; they convey explicit rather than tacit understanding of the nature of a discipline;

--they attend, as appropriate, to reasoning and/or aesthetic aptitudes, to reading, writing, and computational abilities, and to the multiple perspectives of a pluralistic culture both within and beyond the university.

Courses in Human Diversity (3 credits)

[As described in the current Bulletin.]

Courses in Cultural and Historical Perspectives (3 credits)

Approved courses involve students in the study of cultures, civilizations, or geographic regions as they change through time, providing students with knowledge of various critical approaches to interpreting history and with an understanding of diverse cultural vantage points and worldviews.

Writing-Intensive Courses (6 credits)

[As described in the current Bulletin.]

IV. Course Approvals and Curricular Experiments

1. Courses submitted to the General Education Committee should explain in detail how their content, instructional
methods, and assignments satisfy the goals and stated criteria of the program. Syllabi of those courses, likewise, should make clear to students how classwork relates to the goals of the program. Course assessment will ultimately be tied to student awareness of how gen. ed. values are realized in particular courses.

2. The majority of non-writing-intensive gen. ed. courses should be listed at the 100 and 200 level. Courses at the 400-level (aside from writing-intensive) are inappropriate for the gen. ed. curriculum.

3. Colleges and departments are encouraged to experiment with new curricular possibilities, including cross-disciplinary core courses, capstone courses, disciplinary introductions, and courses in the epistemologies of different disciplines or groups of disciplines.

4. Nothing in the gen. ed. legislation should be seen as discouraging the development of additional University requirements, such as language competence, mathematical reasoning, or public speaking, which might later be appended to that legislation or stand outside it.

V. Departmental and Faculty Incentives

1. Departments should not be discouraged by staffing formulas or other administrative signals from developing 100 and 200 level gen. ed. courses or from committing full-time faculty to gen. ed. instruction.

2. Departments with proven commitments to gen. ed. should receive appropriate resource incentives.

3. Faculty, especially those without tenure, who undertake gen. ed. (including writing-intensive) instruction in the face of well-known professional disincentives must be protected and rewarded for their commitment. Options include the following:

   (a) Merit pay increases specifically for gen. ed. service. Some percentage of the University’s pool of merit resources could be provided to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies for appropriate distribution.

   (b) Released time at the conclusion of a specified term of service, say four semesters.

   (c) Teaching awards.

   (d) Letters of achievement from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and/or the Academic Vice-President for inclusion in tenure and promotion files.
(e) Explicit reference in tenure and promotion
guidelines to the importance given to gen. ed. service under the
category of teaching excellence.

VI: Faculty and Program Development

1. Departments and Colleges should encourage continuing
discussion of the means and ends of general education instruction
through seminars or other conversations designed to attract and
prepare new faculty, design new courses, and improve teaching.

2. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies should have resources
to spread information about the goals of the program, its most
successful courses, the new initiatives it is developing, the
needs it may have for additional courses, and the on-going
discussions of gen. ed. faculty.

Appendix: Transition to the New General Education Program

1. The current program will be suspended as of fall, 1993.

2. All present gen. ed. courses, except writing-intensive
and those in Human Diversity, should be reviewed within
departments and college curriculum committees in light of the new
legislation. After appropriate reconsideration, course proposals
should be submitted to the General Education Committee during the
1992-93 academic year. Given the reduced number of seats required
for the new program, emphasis should be on the quality, not the
quantity, of submitted courses.
UNIVERSITY SENATE
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY AT NEW YORK

Assessment Report – University at Albany

INTRODUCED BY: Council on Educational Policy

DATE: April 18, 1990

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED:

I. That the report of the Assessment Panel submitted to, amended and approved by the Council on Educational Policy be adopted as the University's Assessment Plan.

II. That this plan be forwarded to the President for approval.
University at Albany

REPORT OF THE ASSESSMENT PANEL

March 29, 1990

AS AMENDED AND APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

APRIL 18, 1990

Assessment Panel Members:

Lilian Brannon (Chair) – English
John Aronson – Chemistry
Cynthia Fox – French
Rodney Hart – Student Affairs
Andrea Hoffer – (Student Association)
William Holstein – School of Business
Alice Jacklet – Biology
Peter Johnston – Reading
Sara Kavner – (student member of EPC)
Marvin Krohn – Sociology
Ronald Ley – Educ. Psychology
Betty Shadrick – EOP
Malcolm Sherman – Math
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Warren Ilchman – Academic Affairs

Staff Support

Fred Volkwein – Institutional Research
Barbara Schoonmaker – Student Affairs
Gail Richardson – Academic Affairs
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INTRODUCTION

The Basis for the Assessment Panel's Recommendations

President O'Leary appointed this panel in the Fall of 1989 to propose a comprehensive plan for assessment in four areas: basic skills, general education, attainment in the major, and personal and social growth. This report and its thirteen recommendations respond to the President's charge. We spent the academic year examining the nature of teaching and learning and student growth on this campus. While this report represents the product of our work during 1989-90, it builds on the work of the 1988-89 Committee on Evaluation Policy. That Committee's April 1988 report (see Appendix A) provides the foundation and the context on which this report and its recommendations are based.

Additional source documents gave shape to our work. Joseph C. Burke addressed a memorandum to campus Presidents in December 1988. The SUNY Provost called for the formulation of outcomes assessment plans, provided a philosophical defense of campus based assessment aimed at improving undergraduate education, and issued helpful guidelines (see Appendix B). We also found encouragement from the "Statement of Principles on Student Outcomes Assessment" developed by the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. (See Appendix C). Finally, a recent journal article by Patrick Terenzini, "Assessment with Open Eyes: Pitfalls in Studying Student Outcomes," proved to be a rich source of wisdom (Appendix D).
ATTAINMENT IN THE UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR

Educational assessment gives us at least some insight into the complex cognitive and social processes by which students come to know a subject. Any one kind of assessment must always be seen as part of a complex web of understanding that a faculty generates through its practices of teaching and evaluating student progress and performance. Multiple measures provide more useful and valid indicators of student development than any single measure, such as a grade in a course. Our proposed plan for assessment in the major must be connected to a comprehensive departmental plan of self study, one that enhances our interest in the intellectual lives of our students as they relate to our own practices, course offerings, and course sequences within the disciplines.

This plan for assessment, then, augments our habitual ways of assessing students' progress within a major by asking that as a faculty we regularly reflect on, and if necessary act on, our evaluation of students' progress in constructing their knowledge of a discipline. This panel believes additional forms of assessment in the major are necessary because our two currently dominant means of assessment do not give us a complete understanding of our work with students, nor do they require that we discuss ways of revising our curriculum in order to strengthen student achievement. First, one widespread form of assessment, program reviews, gives us only a broad measure of our programs' and departments' needs and intellectual viability. While we profit from them, program reviews are more summative than formative, more oriented toward external accountability than toward internal program enhancement. Our second mode of assessment, student grades in specific courses, gives us only individual faculty estimates of student performance in a particular course, not a comprehensive view of student achievement in our discipline. The assessment plan proposed here offers a more diverse and effective approach, one that is locally important, that departments compose for themselves, and that aims to stimulate conversation, thought, and action on matters pertaining to strengthening the undergraduate curriculum. Assessment in this context means the continual audit of our educational practices with the aim of enhancing the teaching and learning of a discipline. We suspect that the best assessment will serve multiple purposes, evaluating both the student and the curriculum. This panel, then, has designed this plan for the twin purposes of becoming more accountable to ourselves and improving the impact we have on our students.

Recommended Assessment Plan in the Undergraduate Major

Recommendation 1: Each department or program should be required to construct a means for evaluating student attainment in the undergraduate major. We offer seven assessment alternatives for departments to consider. In so doing, we endorse the philosophy contained in last year's Report to the EPC: Stating educational objectives is a necessary first step in measuring student attainment. Before assessment can be fully effective, departments will need to articulate what it is they expect their graduates to know and understand and what students can be expected to do with that knowledge.

Recommendation 2: During Fall 1990, departments should review their goals for the major and develop assessment plans based on those goals. A budget for the development of a final assessment plan should be submitted to the Academic Vice President, along with a timetable for implementation. For example, funds could be requested to support departments who wish to develop their own comprehensive exam or to pilot test the ETS Major Field Achievement Test. Other departments could receive an additional TA to coordinate the development of senior portfolios and essays. During the Spring Semester 1991, pilot assessments should be undertaken and evaluated. Final plans for departmental outcomes assessment can be revised during Fall 1991.
The following assessment alternatives are constructed to offer a broad range of possible assessment designs. In some departments where the numbers of majors are small, the faculty might choose to focus on the achievement of all students. Other departments, perhaps with large numbers of majors, may decide to study representative groups of students. The aim of this assessment is not to magnify any particular student's success or failure, but rather to judge in whatever ways we can the interdependence between students' abilities to construct knowledge for themselves and our work as a faculty in nurturing, enhancing, and enabling those abilities. Our assessment goal is to ask faculty to examine what it is that students are acquiring when they major in a particular discipline and to use that information to enhance the learning experience for future students.

Plan 1: Senior Thesis/Research Project

Several departments at Albany already require that all their seniors, or in many cases only honors students, complete a senior thesis or research project. We recommend that departments with this requirement for some students expand it to others and that where feasible, other departments and programs consider this option. Such a requirement encourages students to use the tools of the discipline on a focused task as the culmination of their undergraduate academic experience. Under ideal conditions, each department or program uses the students' work to reflect on what students are achieving with the aim of evaluating, and if necessary strengthening, the curriculum and experiences of students within that major.

Plan 2: Performance Experience

In some fields it is appropriate to ask students to demonstrate in some practical, or even public way, the knowledge and skills they have learned and acquired. Such a requirement may be especially fitting in professional and performing arts fields. Examples include student recitals, exhibitions, practice teaching, and supervised field experiences. The emphasis should be on the integration of the separate facets of the academic major.

Plan 3: Capstone Course

In this plan, departments require a "capstone" course designed to integrate the study of their discipline. A few departments at Albany now have such a course, and it often has a heavy research and writing component. Such courses offer ideal opportunities both to assess student learning and to strengthen the curriculum of that major.

Plan 4: Comprehensive Exam

Assessment in the major on some campuses has taken the form of comprehensive exams administered to all seniors. When such exams are designed locally by the faculty, they have the advantage of being shaped to fit the department's curriculum. Departmental exams have the disadvantages of needing annual revision by the faculty, of requiring local scoring, and of lacking a comparison group. Standardized instruments provide more reliable and valid comparison groups and scoring services, but may or may not fit the department's curriculum, and are not useful in disciplines wishing to go beyond a multiple choice format.

Some campuses use the GRE Advanced Test to measure student attainment in the major. This is not generally recommended by most assessment researchers because the comparison group is graduate school applicants, rather than all seniors, and because the GRE tests give only relative, rather than absolute scores (i.e., there is no indication of the number of items correct and incorrect, only an indication of each student's score relative to others).
Working with faculty across the country, ETS has designed achievement tests which are recommended for departmental assessment purposes. Available in 15 fields of study, the "Major Field Achievement Tests" provide subfield scores as well as totals and may be of some interest to departments which want to try this approach. In addition, the professional associations in some fields, such as chemistry, physics, and education, have developed or are developing comprehensive exams for use by campuses. Departments might wish to investigate their suitability.

Plan 5: Student Portfolio

Under this option, a portfolio of student work is collected, analyzed, and discussed. In this mode of assessment, students collect systematically the work that they have completed in their study of a discipline. They undertake and write a self-examination of the material, demonstrating how they have constructed the discipline through their writing and thinking over two years of study. Afterwards, faculty meet with students to go over this portfolio. The faculty then could use their own and the students' analyses of portfolios, coupled with their perceptions of the student conferences, as bases for conversation among faculty about the curriculum and practices within a discipline. In departments selecting this option, all faculty responsible for undergraduate education should be a part of this process, but the plan becomes difficult to implement if each faculty member has to interview overly large numbers of students (three to five students is a reasonable number).

Plan 6: Senior Essay and Interview

Many departments we contacted would like more qualitative information from their seniors. Grades in courses and student responses to multiple choice questions do not provide the desired breadth of information about student performance. On the other hand, large departments might find the qualitatively rich construction and review of student portfolios to be too arduous. Accordingly, we recommend that departments consider the possibility of requiring a short senior essay which works roughly as follows: The faculty construct probing questions that ask students to demonstrate their conceptual understanding of the discipline, and to reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of their programs at Albany. (See Appendix E for sample questions.) The students respond in writing and subsequently meet with faculty to discuss their written statements. The faculty, then, meets to discuss the results of their conferences with students for the purpose of strengthening the major. Large departments may sample a cross-section of seniors rather than the entire population. The Panel suggests that all departmental faculty responsible for undergraduate education be part of the process, but that no one faculty member needs to be asked to interview large numbers of students (three to five students seems reasonable).

If a large department should decide to use a cross-section of students, some steps might be taken to compensate students for the extra work involved in the assessment. In this way the students would be giving their best efforts and would not see this procedure as an unfair add-on. An alternative might be to require all seniors to write the essay but only a stratified random sample would be interviewed. All essays could be filed in department or university folders and used as a resource for career advisement and reference letters.

Plan 7: Departmental Alternative

Finally, departments may propose their own alternative plan for assessment in the major which meets the approval of the Council on Educational Policy. Alternative plans might combine some of the elements discussed above, or might include a new idea, not considered by the Committee.
The assessment of general education skills and other measures of intellectual growth among Albany students has been based almost entirely on self-reported responses to a series of items developed by Patrick Terenzini and now used at a variety of colleges across the country. As noted in last year's report to the EPC, the Albany campus has been a leader in developing these measures, and Assessment Reports #2, #4, and #6, published by the Office of Institutional Research, each investigates various aspects of general education outcomes among Albany students.

Support for the Albany outcomes approach (i.e., student self-reported measures) has been reinforced by two educational research discoveries. First, Robert Pace, a distinguished researcher at UCLA, found a correlation between student self-reported measures of their own growth and their growth measured by other more objective (and more expensive) means. The evidence is that self-reported measures are only moderately reliable for an individual student but highly reliable for groups of students such as freshmen, transfers, seniors, women and minorities. Second, a recent nationally funded multi-campus study of college students in the State of Washington casts doubts on the value of the existing national instruments which purport to measure general education skill attainment and student growth. The researchers conclude that the current outcomes tests published by ETS and ACT primarily measure verbal and quantitative aptitude and the results essentially reiterate what is already known from student course grades and admissions test data.

This background, then, shaped the Panel's attitude toward assessing general education at Albany. On the one hand, our existing studies of freshman-to-senior-year cohorts using self-reported general education scales constitute adequate, if not ideal, measures of student growth and intellectual attainment. On the other hand, our General Education Curriculum is in a state of re-evaluation and transition.

We believe there exists a faculty consensus that the General Education Curriculum at Albany, while sound in design, needs improved implementation. During the Fall of 1988, two committees, the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Advisory Council and the Curriculum Committee of the Undergraduate Academic Council, began discussions concerning the evaluation and possible revision of the general education program. In March 1990, the President appointed a special task force, comprised of members of these two committees, a representative from the Assessment Panel, and representatives from the university at large to conduct a complete evaluation of the general education program and make recommendations by the Spring of 1991 for its continuance or revision. New initiatives for assessing student growth in General Education skills seem pointless in the face of a major program reevaluation and in the absence of clearly articulated program goals. However, the current mode of assessment using self reported measures should continue as a point of reference for examining the impact of future changes.

Recommendation 3: Continue the existing studies of student intellectual growth, using self-reported responses to scales administered to freshmen and transfer cohorts every four years. A more complete General Education Assessment Plan should await the completion of the General Education Task Force's final report.
PERSONAL/SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

Last year's Assessment Report to the EPC noted the continuing efforts to measure the growth and maturity and satisfaction of Albany students over the past dozen years. Our studies of freshmen, transfers, seniors, and alumni have given the University a good deal of self-reported information from our students and graduates. The students we know the least about are those who leave the institution. We need to administer both exit interviews and satisfaction surveys to students who indicate their intention to withdraw and/or do not reenroll for subsequent semesters. These activities will be in addition to ongoing student assessment activities which will be enhanced this year to include an examination of several non-cognitive variables as predictors of retention, academic performance and growth.

In recognition of the institution's need to track student attrition and to collect and analyze data to support enrollment management retention efforts, the University recently brought together within one office retention-related functions which had previously been carried out in three different locations by three different units. The resulting Office of Withdrawal and Reentry will be situated in the Campus Center as a constituent unit within the Department of Student Services. Its immediate charge is not only to assist students who find it necessary to depart (short- or long-term) from the University and to facilitate their reentry, but also to "collect, analyze, and distribute data regarding student withdrawals, leaves of absence, reentry and degrees in absentia for use in institutional assessment, policy-making, and enrollment management."¹

Recommendation 4: The University should develop an exit interview and/or survey, and, to the extent possible, administer it to each student who declares an intention to leave. Information to be determined from this instrument should at a minimum include the reason(s), primary and otherwise, for taking leave; whether the leave is temporary or permanent; and, if temporary, the expected date of return; other information can be collected for improving campus programs and planning.

Recommendation 5: Active measures need to be taken to identify, as early as possible, continuing students who are "no shows" for their next eligible semester of study; to categorize them appropriately as leaves or withdrawals; and to administer the survey noted above. Attempts by telephone or mail should be made to obtain similar information from those students for whom an exit interview is not possible or feasible.

Recommendation 6: Incentives (and/or sanctions) should be developed to reduce the number of students who leave without formally withdrawing or who fail to respond to these requests for information.

Recommendation 7: Staff from Institutional Research and from the research unit within the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs need to be consulted on the development, administration and compilation of data from this process. In turn, findings need to be widely shared with appropriate governance and administrative bodies and tied closely to campus planning processes.

¹ Five Year Plan, Office of Withdrawal and Reentry, 1989-93
BASIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Basic Skills Assessment aims to determine whether students, in the opinion of faculty, possess a threshold level of skills necessary for success in college; and if not, whether instructional services can be provided for those who need them. Therefore, faculty must first define what is "basic" before determining the nature of support services. Yet defining a "basic skill" for this Panel proved more difficult than we initially thought. For example, common definitions of what count as basic skills seem to involve reading, writing and math. However, in the university setting, it is not clear that these are always easily separated from content knowledge. It is unquestionably easier to write well on a topic which is well understood, and similarly easier to read material which relates to relatively familiar concepts. In addition, what kind of performance counts as "basic" is determined, at least in part, by the demands placed on students by course instructors and by the support provided to help them meet those demands. The recommendations of this panel, then, developed out of our understanding of what the faculty consider to be students' necessary prior knowledge and skill before entering beginning level courses and our understanding of the support services available to assist students who fail to meet this threshold level. Our recommendations, therefore, must be seen in the light of the diverse array of instructional support services supplied on campus for students who feel that they need academic support. Educational Opportunity (EOP) students, indeed, are admitted to the university contingent on their using many of these services. The academic support for basic skills include the following:

1. Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (C-Step). Sponsored by the Department of Student Services, and aimed at underrepresented students moving toward careers in scientific, technical and health-related fields, this program provides tutoring, study groups, counseling, seminars, workshops, field trips, and graduate school test preparation.

2. Minority Assistants Program. The Minority Student Services Office arranges tutorial assistance for those who need it. In addition there is a Residential Life Program which helps students of color develop peer support networks.

3. Educational Opportunities Program (EOP). This program provides counseling, developmental courses in reading, writing, math and science, and personal growth workshops.

4. Mathematics Tutoring Program. Staffed by graduate students in the Department of Mathematics, this lab provides one-on-one help with the entry level math courses including pre-calculus and calculus.

5. Writing Center. Provides one-on-one help with any type of writing project at any stage of development. The lab is staffed by faculty and students in the English Department.

6. Chemistry Tutoring Program. Staffed by graduate students from the Department of Chemistry, support is provided for students in Chemistry 120, 121, and 216.

7. Biology Tutoring Program. Provides assistance for students in Biology 110 and 111. The lab is staffed by graduate students in Biology and provides tutorial assistance as well as review sessions. This lab has just been introduced and is in the trial stages.

8. Physics Learning Center. This center provides tutoring in physics.
9. **Study Group Plan.** Instructional Services helps organize study groups for many first and second year courses. Each study group is provided with a facilitator and two undergraduate honors student tutors who can also provide individual assistance on occasion.

10. **Middle Earth.** This program provides counselling and workshop packets for staff or students to provide assistance with study skills. This is a volunteer organization of students helping students, located in the Health & Counseling Services Building.

11. **Studying and note-taking workshops** are also provided through the Office of Academic Support Services.

An increasing number and diversity of students avail themselves of these services. For example, the study group program has been in operation for only two years, and the number of students using it has doubled to 550. The University has in place advisement services and an "Academic Early Warning Program," in which professors participating in the Study Group Program develop a list of students at risk of failing and circulate it to the Center for Undergraduate Education advisors, EOP Counselors, and Student Services Officers who contact the student and help arrange for support. It appears, however, that there is room for improvement in the coordination among these programs and in their advertisement. Many faculty and students appear unaware of the diversity of available programs. Steps should be taken to inform faculty and students about the available support services.

Students enter the University at Albany through several different routes, bringing different histories with respect to basic skills. The majority of students enter the University through the regular admissions procedures. A second group of students enters through the Educational Opportunity Program. These students are different from the mainstream students in terms of their educational and economic histories. A third major group of students transfers to the campus from other colleges and universities bringing yet another, perhaps more heterogeneous, set of educational experiences to their course work.

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**Reading**

**EOP Students.** By virtue of the nature of their admission to the university, Educational Opportunity students present themselves with potential difficulties in the area of reading. These students enter with an average total SAT score of 790. The EOP program uses a standardized test, The Nelson-Denny Reading Test, to identify the difficulties of individual students and to document their development in reading as they are tutored within the program. This evaluation system currently appears to serve the purposes of both students and instructors, and to provide data on the effectiveness of the EOP program.

**Regular Admissions Students.** Students admitted through the regular admissions program to The University at Albany have an average SAT total score of approximately 1150. This alone suggests that few have "basic" reading difficulties. Given the status of the majority of our students, it does not seem reasonable to propose the expense and time of testing all entering students in any manner. Beyond a basic level of reading ability, problems almost certainly arise for students, but they are more likely to stem from reading about content with which they are not especially familiar. This type of difficulty is essentially indistinguishable from content knowledge in the domain of study, and its evaluation would be hard to separate from general education knowledge or attainment in the major.
Transfer Students. Students transferring to our campus do not bring with them data such as SAT scores which allow simple comparisons with the native freshmen. Studies of this group do not allow analyses of their "basic skills" as such. However data which are available show that their retention and graduation rates are comparable to those of regularly entering freshmen, and over twice the national average. Although there are initially differences between the two groups' G.P.A.'s, there are no reliable differences by the end of their degree programs. This lack of difference cannot be accounted for by differential attrition rates. Apparently, whatever the basic skills required of these students, they either have at entry or, through the existing support systems, acquire them during their studies.

Recommendation 8: The EOP procedures for assessing reading skills should remain as they are. No additional assessment is needed in this area for students admitted through the regular admissions procedures or for transfer students. Students at risk, on probation, or otherwise suspected of reading deficiencies ought to be referred to Academic Services for testing and skill building, as they are now.

Mathematics

EOP Students. Just as in the area of reading, students entering the university under the EOP program have already demonstrated a probable difficulty in the area of math, and the EOP program currently handles this well, through a program of assessment and tutoring. Their assessment procedures also provide data on program effectiveness.

Regular Admissions Students. Students entering the university through regular admissions, arrive with an above average range of quantitative SAT scores. Although a small group of students may have less than adequate skills in math for particular courses, the Math Department appears to have in place a program of assessment which examines the minimum skills of those students who intend to enter programs with heavy mathematics demands and advises them accordingly. A large group of students enter programs which have limited or no math requirement.

Transfer Students. The data available on this group of students suggests a diversity in math background with an average slightly less than that of the native freshmen. Again, however, by the end of their program, they are essentially indistinguishable from the native freshmen in their G.P.A.s. (Moreover, this research finding occurred before the establishment on campus of our increasingly extensive support services. Pretesting all students in math, even though a large group of them will not need a great deal of mathematical sophistication, seems an unnecessary expense in both time and money. Individual programs have considerable diversity in their math requirements, and departments could sensibly handle any testing as part of their own programs. Currently, departments with limited demand on math competence seem to handle the diversity of student background in sensible ways.

Recommendation 9: The math assessment within the EOP program, and the existing testing for math placement should remain as is. No further math assessment seems appropriate, as distinct from attainment in the major.
Writing

Writing is somewhat similar to the areas of reading and math, and is an important concern for many departments. Once again, however, we have different groups of students.

EOP Students. The EOP students are admitted to the university having already demonstrated a probable difficulty in writing. Their writing is evaluated when they first come to campus, and they are given instructional support in that area. Writing samples are also collected prior to their exiting the program which allows the EOP program to provide for students' needs and to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

Regular Admissions and Transfer Students. It appears from discussions with faculty in general and directors of the writing program in particular, that we have very few new freshmen and transfer students admitted through regular admissions who fail to exhibit basic writing skills.

Thus, the enormous expense of administering a writing test to all entering freshman appears to be ill-advised. In the first place, it would pose a heavy drain on already scarce resources. Second, most students who need basic writing instruction are either identified through the EOP admissions program, or become apparent when they take an intensive writing course which is already a requirement on campus. Third, we already have campus mechanisms for faculty referral of individual students to the Writing Center. Moreover, the bulk of students need to develop their writing in a specific domain, and to learn about writing in the academy, which is exactly what is supposed to occur in the writing intensive courses. Last, a general writing test would give us no information on how to improve the writing component of instructional programs. Writing, like reading, becomes specialized within particular domains in terms of the conventions, the audience, and the logic. Thus, writing attainment also becomes tied ultimately to attainment in the major.

Recommendation 10: Existing writing assessment and remedial support services should continue. Students who need basic writing skills should continue to receive them through the EOP Program, through referral to the Writing Center, through writing intensive courses, and through their majors.
CONCLUSION

Common Concerns Among All Four Assessment Areas

Our thinking about issues of assessment was necessarily shaped by prior thinking both in the professional literature and within our own University. The boundaries among these four assessment areas, then, were selected primarily because of custom, our habitual ways of demarking curricular areas and student achievement. As our thinking progressed over the course of this year's work, however, we began to understand how fluid the boundaries are among all the areas of this report — how, in fact, this institution creates an ecologically interdependent environment. For example, student attainment in the major grows directly out of student reading and writing and mathematics skills. Further, the educational breadth of our General Education program and the intellectual depth of the major are mutually reinforcing. Moreover, students must assume personal responsibility for their own growth in order to meet their responsibilities to the faculty. A student's intellectual development cannot be easily separated from personal and social development, nor can liberal learning and disciplinary expertise be independent. As a university community committed to excellence, we must be willing to call into question our customary ways of organizing teaching and learning; we must examine how limited and limiting any division of responsibility for assessment is; we must be willing to see ourselves implicated in the success or failure of our students whether it be in terms of admission, advisement, instruction, support services, or administrative oversight. Our concluding recommendations, therefore, provide a means to continually audit our existing practices, to raise questions about the categories contained in this report, and to assist us in discovering new directions for improving the quality of the intellectual lives of those within our university community.

Recommendation 11: The University should undertake appropriate studies which examine the qualitative experiences of students. At least three concerns should be addressed by such research:

(a) Concerns about how basic skills, general education, personal and social growth, and attainment in the major interact;

(b) Concerns about student writing development;

(c) Concerns about student advisement.

We realize that these sorts of studies are extremely labor-intensive and that they would need to overcome a number of research problems, not the least of which are problems of sampling, anonymity, and staff resources. However, during our year of work, we discovered that the University has already gathered a great many statistics about our students. To reach the next higher level of understanding, we need to examine student experiences in greater depth. How do students spend their time, and which of these "investments" produce learning? At what points in their academic careers do our students take General Education and writing intensive courses? When and how do students discover and use academic support services? In view of widespread student dissatisfaction with advisement, what actions can be taken by the Center for Undergraduate Education and by academic departments to improve it? These issues seem critical to us because we know so little about the dynamics of undergraduate learning and growth. Our existing studies of freshman-to-senior-year cohorts, while they give us important quantitative information via questionnaires, fail to give us the qualitative information that we have discovered is vital.
With respect to the development of writing, we could, for instance, take a small group of students and systematically sample the writing that they do over the course of their careers at the university. Students are required to take at least two intensive writing courses. This provides a natural opportunity to capitalize on existing writing samples produced in the context of normal academic writing, and with a time span between. These records would allow for analyses of the development of writing over the course of a student's time at this institution. At the same time, they might allow departments to study how their students' writing changes, and to make some inferences about what might be done to improve the course of that development.

We are concerned about student advisement both because advisement is a source of student dissatisfaction, and because its effectiveness is a factor in any successful assessment program linked to student development. We need to develop better connections among assessment, student self appraisal, and advisement.

Recently, the Panel learned that the Offices of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs are planning to test a student self-appraisal instrument at freshman orientation. In addition, a study skills software package is being purchased for the Interactive Media Center. By combining the self-appraisal with menu-driven skills lessons on the PC, the hope is that freshmen will receive a potential tool for self improvement. This is one model worth trying and evaluating to see if it has potential value, but other steps ought to be attempted as well. Which modes of assistance promote student growth and skill development? Which students will most benefit from computer assisted instruction, and which need other kinds of interventions? Are there better ways of assisting students to make informed decisions based on realistic self-appraisals? For example, if students entering the university with a math SAT score within a given range knew that students within that range of scores had in the past achieved a grade in math intensive courses of C or worse with x probability, B or better with y probability, then they might be able to make more informed decisions about the use of instructional support. Yet the use of such data depends on the quality of advisement available, and the extent to which students avail themselves of it. What kinds of studies need to be undertaken to help this university better recruit and retain students, advise students, enrich their academic experiences?

Without such studies, key questions remain vexing. To what extent are the large numbers of students on academic probation attributable to lack of basic skills, to poor advisement, to inadequate study habits, or to faculty grading practices (for example, if faculty grade on a curve, then certain numbers of students will always fail)? Which students use the extensive academic support services and does it make a difference in their performance? How do they judge their own abilities and assess their need for support? We hope future studies will provide us with this information, keeping us ever vigilant of our interdependence and our responsibility to each other.

This Assessment Panel carried out its responsibilities during 1989-90 recognizing that our work may continue beyond the boundaries of this academic year. If assessment is to grow at Albany and reinvigorate the curriculum, then ongoing support and organization must be provided by the University. Accordingly, we make the following additional recommendations:

Recommendation 12: Ongoing faculty oversight of assessment activity needs to be continued and should be provided either by the EPC, if it elects, or by the continuation of this Panel.

Recommendation 13: Incentive funds should be set aside to support assessment plan development.
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<td>Attainment in the Academic Major</td>
<td>Freshmen-Senior Cohort Studies and Alumni Surveys with Analysis by Major</td>
<td>Discipline-Specific Strategies Comprehensive Exam (11 depts) Capstone Course (10 depts) Essay &amp; Interview (8 depts) Thesis/Research Proj (6 depts) Performance/Exhibit (3 depts) Internship/Field work(2 depts) Portfolio (2 depts) Multi-Method (14 depts) Student Grades in Courses in the Major (All)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEPS TAKEN SINCE THE ASSESSMENT PANEL REPORT WAS APPROVED BY THE SENATE IN 1990

The President accepted the report and the Vice President for Academic Affairs began implementation with the Deans, Chairs, and Senate Council on Educational Policy.

1. Student Attainment in the Major
   * Plans were reviewed by the Committee on Evaluation Policy in 1991-92 and a few departments began to initiate their plans.
   * Institutional Research supplied academic departments with alumni survey research results in 1992 and, with the Dean for Undergraduate Studies, began a series of college and department meetings aimed at helping departments get started.
   * An assessment workshop for academic departments is scheduled for November 20.

2. General Education and Intellectual Growth
   * Discussion of specific assessment set aside until design and approval of new General Education Program. This discussion scheduled for 1992-93.
   * Institutional Research continues its series of Freshman-Senior Cohort Studies begun in 1978 and using the General Education self-reported measures recommended by the EPC in 1980. These are summarized in Assessment Report No. 12 and will be presented in greater detail in the forthcoming Report No. 13.

3. Personal Social Growth
   * The Institutional Research Cohort Studies and Student Opinion Surveys, summarized in Assessment Report No. 12, continue to be the primary source of systematic information in this area.
   * Co-curricular efforts aimed at promoting both student growth and retention have been strengthened, as recommended.
   * The University strengthened its exit interview procedures for departing students.
   * A survey instrument for non-returning students was designed and pilot tested.

4. Basic Skills
   * The current variety of discipline-specific and population-specific campus programs in this area have been continued, as recommended by the Panel.

5. On-going Concerns
   * The concerns expressed in the report about student advisement, about student writing development, and about the connectedness among basic skills, general education, personal and social growth, and attainment in the major all constitute long term challenges for the University.
SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT PLANS
IN THE MAJOR AT ALBANY

OPTION 1: Senior Thesis or Research Project
Africana Studies
German Language & Literature
History
Latin American & Caribbean Studies
Music (theory)
Political Science & Public Affairs

OPTION 2: Performance Experience
Art (exhibit)
Music (performance)
Public Affairs (internship)
Social Welfare (field internship with seminar)
Theatre (performance)
Women's Studies (internship)

OPTION 3: Capstone Course
Accounting
Business Administration
Communication - (with interviews)
Geography & Planning (under review)
History
Mathematics
Philosophy
Religious Studies
Social Welfare (seminar with internship)
Women's Studies (with research paper)

OPTION 4: Comprehensive Examination
Accounting (CPA exam)
Biology
Chemistry (pilot test ETS exam)
Computer Science
Hispanic & Italian
History
Music
Psychology - (pilot test ETS exam)
Physics (pilot test ETS exam)
Social Studies
Sociology (pilot test ETS exam)
OPTION 5: Student Portfolio of Learning Experiences

- Art (portfolio of artistic work)
- English (writing portfolio)

OPTION 6: Senior Essay (or Survey) and Interview

- Atmospheric Science
- Biology
- Classics (joint faculty-student review)
- East Asian Studies (with Faculty Student Retreat)
- Geological Sciences
- German Language & Literature
- Judaic Studies (with Faculty Student Retreat)
- Linguistics & Cognitive Science

OPTION 7: Other Departmental Alternative

(A) Multi-Method Combination
- Accounting & Business Administration
- Anthropology
- Art
- Atmospheric Science
- Communication
- French Studies
- Geography & Planning
- Geological Sciences
- Hispanic & Italian
- Linguistics & Cognitive Science
- Public Affairs
- Slavic Languages & Literature
- Social Welfare
- Sociology
- Women's Studies

(B) External Examiners
- Theatre

(C) Alumni Studies and Use of Existing and Historical Departmental Data
- Anthropology
- Atmospheric Sciences
- Business Administration
- Economics
- Geological Sciences
- Hispanic & Italian
- Linguistics & Cognitive Science
- Sociology