

General Education Memo, n. d.

GENERAL EDUCATION

Members of the Board --- Dr. Farley:

With so much anticipation for the events of the coming week-end I feel something like the filler following the main act.

It is instructive to note, however, that a recurring theme of much of your efforts is a new society of exotic industry with demands for trained personnel to meet the challenges of new management, new labor, and in essence, the demands of what is rapidly emerging as a new culture. There is a little anecdote that can demonstrate this, it is an anecdote about destiny. Destiny came down to an island many centuries ago and summoned three of its inhabitants before him -- "What would you do", Destiny said, "if I told you that tomorrow this island would be inundated by an immense tidal wave?" The first man, who was a cynic, said: "Why, I would eat, drink and carouse all night long." The second man, who was a mystic, said: "I would go to the sacred groves with my loved ones, make sacrifices to the gods, and pray without ceasing." And the third man, who loved reason, thought for a while, confused and troubled, and said: "Why, I would assemble our wisest men and begin at once to study how to live under water." Destiny surely delivered an ultimatum to the people of this area and I think that there is no question but that the events in this community leading to this week-end, are the results of the effort of the individuals who brought to bear all of their wisdom to solve the problems of living in a new economic environment.

Indeed, one of the greatest tasks facing higher education, and particularly the liberal arts colleges, is to produce a new breed of men who can cope wisely with this strange and complex world we are building. It is a strange and complex world. Because we are living in the midst of it, we tend to become a bit blasé, even jaded, with the demonstration of the nature of this world.

You have frequently heard statements concerning the rate of increase of our knowledge, where it took approximately five generations, 150 years, from 1750 to 1900, to accumulate a certain fund of knowledge. The next 50 years, 1900 to 1950, saw the doubling of this fund of knowledge. From 1950 to 1960, just 10 years, saw it doubled again, and it is expected that it will redouble in the seven years from 1960 to '67.

We also have frequently heard and know that we are on the threshold of understanding of biological phenomena that will make the techniques of Brave New World not fiction but reality.

We also know that in terms of human experience we have made man the equivalent of Methuselah's; the speed of modern transportation and communication enabling a man today to accomplish infinitely more than ever before. Mathematical computations that took Kepler and Newton thirty years of their lives are done with computers in five to ten seconds.

Lasers and Masers will make even the miracles of contemporary electronics "old hat."

Sixty years ago there was not a single industrial research lab in the country. Today the new knowledge coming from such laboratories is a veritable torrent. Thus it is that 75% of the drugs used in our hospitals and 50% of all products used by DuPont were unknown to the human mind just a decade ago.

This revolution has created a situation like a loaded rifle...its neither good nor bad until a human uses it. We must populate our nation with a people who can harness the power and potential of technology for the good of all men; who can give content to form, and direction to the means. This is no task for small minds. Dr. Farley, in his charge to the Class of 1966, titled his presentation: "A New Responsibility," and developed his theme around the influences that go beyond books and intellect, into the hearts and minds of every student. He noted that an educated person is not a walking encyclopedia of knowledge but that they are compelled to support their knowledge with judgment and wisdom. We must educate our young people to meet unknown challenges. This new individual must be a humanist in the broadest sense with an awareness of this heritage, of faith in the cardinal, spiritual concepts which gave birth to human freedom and an acceptance of his responsibilities to his fellow man. And he must at least be literate in science. Nobel prize winner, physicist Glenn Seaborg, has listed the attributes of this new individual. He: "must comprehend the value of freedom and truth and be sensitive to significance in art, literature, music and philosophy. He should be intellectually flexible and receptive to new knowledge and new patterns of living as old worlds crumble. He must be able to differentiate between intrinsic and superficial values, to understand and act upon the knowledge that the value of creative evolution lies not in the mere acquisition of material wealth but in the capacity of these things to help him achieve a more meaningful fulfillment. He must be responsible and contribute his full share intelligently to the democratic processes."

These are not new goals by any means. All education was a general education, covering the whole spectrum of human experience, until our knowledge grew to the point where specialization became a necessity. Now

we have reached the point where specialization has removed the specialist from the situation around him and we are being forced back to the awareness of the perspective necessary for any intelligent, educated person to function as a member of society. Today, general education is regarded as a part, but not the whole, of a liberal education. Quite naturally important problems have developed out of this two-fold conception of a liberally educated person and a trained specialist as the product of a liberal arts college.

(1) What is the proper content of this common intellectual experience? (The general as distinct from the study in depth.)

(2) What proportion of the student's time during his undergraduate years should be given to general education?

Specifically, our program in general education is an attempt to answer these questions in the context of Wilkes College, its students, its facilities, its finances, and its faculty. I think there are some guideposts that we have used in our approach that may prove enlightening.

(1) We must view learning as a vital and continuing human process, with emphasis on genuine understanding rather than mere knowledge.

(2) We must practice what we preach in our catalogue about character building and love of freedom.

(3) We must educate more generalists, more leaders who understand the totality of human existence, who are as skillful in devising a total program of peace and progress as specialists are in constructing the engines of destruction.

(4) We must make the humanities more vital in education. There is no inherent value in the humanities - they are meaningful only if they humanize a man, if they enable him to understand the human situation and his own place in it, if they equip a man to live creatively in his own times and contribute to them. Unfortunately, the humanities often become just an academic speciality like physics or biology. It does not necessarily follow that a scholar in the humanities is also a humanist, but it should.

(5) We must teach people to communicate with logic and clarity, for this is the prerequisite to understanding. We cannot call a man educated who does not know how to use the language, including the language of science, mathematics. But our specialized men today all too often speak in strangely fractionated jargons and do not understand even the words, let alone the

rationale of other eminent specialists.

Historically the curriculum at the college has included the experience that we feel would provide the students with the knowledge and the understanding of the basic disciplines or areas of human experience that would fulfill these five objectives. These programs were, however, distributed at random in the various curricula with no consistent pattern that was required of all students. The present program that we are establishing is a result of a faculty committee effort to agree upon those courses which we consider the basic areas of activity which every Wilkes College student must be trained in if he is to properly and intelligently become a liberally educated student in the new society.

I refer you now to the ditto sheets which list these general requirements approved by the faculty. Note the subject areas covered relative to our guideposts to liberal education.

It is necessary, however, that this be a coherent curriculum designed as a whole, to serve a common purpose; not a haphazard collection of intrinsically valuable but functionally unrelated courses. In this context there was also common agreement that general education does not bind nor restrict itself to the historic disciplines - that a course in history must also develop an awareness of the concomitant philosophy, science, and literature of the period - that a course in literature should also develop an awareness of the roles played during that period of time by the activities on the political, the social and the scientific scenes.

In essence, no course should be bound by the walls that have been built up delineating them as particular specialties. Ultimately we would like to see the basic general education courses of the College truly interdisciplinary in terms of the staff teaching in these programs and in terms of the distribution and titles of these programs. As a step along this way we feel that it is necessary to first take as our basic goal that of providing the student with a firmer grasp of the principal ways of thinking about reality in its various forms and of the principal techniques by which his understanding of reality may be enlarged. This is far more important than aiding the student in the acquisition of a given body of information, whatever his future profession is to be, for human knowledge is growing so rapidly that it is impossible to foretell what minimum body of knowledge will be necessary to successful practice as a doctor, chemist, teacher, engineer, or business man, ten, twenty or fifty years from now. The key to professional achievement in future generations will be intellectual flexibility and the capacity to acquire and handle new information. Undergraduate education then, must be

designed to provide the foundation of intellectual development to which special knowledge and professional skills may later be added but for which they are not a substitute.

This is essentially what we have tried to do in our general education core program. The inclusion of this into our curriculum is now in progress. We consider this to be a big step forward toward our goal for a general education experience for our students. We hope this program will help develop a breadth of experience and perspective that will continue to influence the learning experience of the students beyond their college years. We hope through cooperative faculty effort to have these courses become more and more interdisciplinary and less and less specialty oriented. Eventually we hope this core will evolve into a general education program in the true sense of the word; one in which there no longer will be any special emphasis on a particular subject area, but rather a course, or series of courses oriented around a total human experience in all fields of activity. How well we accomplish this will depend a great deal upon the ability and understanding of the faculty that are charged with the instruction of these courses. This is true of any course of study, it is especially true in a general education program.

In conclusion it is appropriate to dwell upon the goals that all of us have for the development of the community environment that will be favorable in attracting new industry and new personnel into our community. It is equally important, I think, to recognize the influence that this experience has upon us in dealing with our own undergraduate educational efforts. The same motives that have prompted so much activity on the community scene have also prompted a great deal of less obvious activity in our academic program. We are equally concerned with creating the environment in the College that will develop the intellectual capacity of our students to live in and lead this new society and this new culture that we are so actively and intensively trying to create.

Thank you.

The catalogue will list the following as:

General Requirements for Bachelor of Arts Degree

The following courses are required of all candidates for the Bachelor of Arts degree. They will usually be taken in the sequence indicated.

In a curriculum that requires a student to begin with courses at a more advanced level, the advanced course will be accepted as fulfilling the general requirements in that subject.

<u>Course</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>To Be Taken in Semesters</u>
Eng. 101, 102.....	6	1 - 2
Eng. 151, 152.....	8	3 - 4
Hist. 101, 102.....	6	1 - 2
Phil. 101, 102.....	6	3 - 4
Art 101) (Choose one)	3	1 or 2
Mus. 100)		
For. Lang. 101, 102, 103, 104.....	12	1-2-3-4
Math 101, 102)		
Phys. 101, 102) (Choose two).....	12	1-2-3-4
Bio. 101, 102)		
Ec. 101, 102)		
P. S. 101, 102) (Choose two).....	12	3-4-5-6
Psy. 101, 102)		
Soc 101, 102)		
P. E. 101, 102, 103, 104.....	0	
P. E. 105, 106.....	2	

FINE ARTS BUILDING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Fine Arts Building Committee was called for Tuesday, December 31, 1963, at 12:15 p. m. in Hotel Sterling.

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain the opinions of John MacCartney, mining engineer, and James Lacy, architect, as to the advisability of starting construction.

Because of illness, Mrs. Darte and Miss Evans were unable to attend, and other business commitments detained John MacCartney.

In spite of our inability to obtain a quorum, Mr. Waller, Dr. Farley, and Dr. Michelini met with Mr. Lacy.

Mr. MacCartney submitted a report which was passed on to the group by Dr. Farley. Mr. MacCartney indicated that, in his opinion, the water would reach its high level in the area by May, 1964, and that, in consequence, conditions would not change appreciably thereafter. He indicated that he could see no reason for delay beyond May and reported that Dan Connelly of the Bureau of Mines agreed with this opinion.

Mr. Lacy reported that under these circumstances he saw no reason for delaying construction provided the building was erected upon a reinforced concrete foundation. He indicated that reinforcing reduces to a minimum the possibility of any major strain being placed upon the supporting walls of the Recital Hall. He indicated that there is always a possibility of some shift in the alluvial gravel. This is true any place in the Valley. He feels, however, that with reasonable precautions, there is no reason why we should not start construction in the spring of 1964.

After receiving both reports, Mr. Waller expressed the opinion that with both experts in agreement, we are hardly justified in delaying construction.

Mrs. Darte and Miss Evans were informed of the reports and of the conclusion drawn by Mr. Waller. Both expressed agreement with his opinion and indicated a willingness to begin construction in the spring of 1964.

E. S. Farley
Acting Secretary

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MINUTES OF MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF WILKES COLLEGE

Held on Thursday, January 9, 1964, at 12:00 M. in Hotel Sterling. Those present were:

Mr. Shaffer	Dr. Kocyan
Mr. Miner	Mr. Levy
Mrs. Clift	Mr. Parkhurst
Mr. Conyngham	Mr. Savitz
Mrs. Dart	Mrs. Walker
Dr. Davenport	Mr. Waller
Dr. Farley	Dr. Detwiler
Mr. Hourigan	Dr. Michelini
Mr. Kiley	

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Louis Shaffer, Vice Chairman, in the absence of Admiral Stark.

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held on October 7, 1963, were approved as mailed.

HONORARY DEGREE AWARDED TO WALTER CARPENTER Dr. Farley said that inasmuch as the Board of Trustees had indicated by mail their approval of the awarding of an honorary degree to Mr. Walter S. Carpenter, application had been made to the proper authorities of the State of Pennsylvania for authority to grant such a degree, which application was approved by the State of Pennsylvania. On motion regularly made, seconded and carried, the action taken as a result of the mail vote of the Trustees in arranging for the granting of an honorary degree to Mr. Carpenter was approved.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT Dr. Farley reported on the action of the Executive Committee in connection with the purchase of the Barney plot in Kingston adjacent to the existing athletic field. On motion regularly made, seconded and carried, it was voted that the action of the Executive Committee in this connection be approved.

Dr. Farley stated that an additional one-half acre of land now owned by Glen Alden Corporation in the middle of the athletic field has now become available for a price of \$1,500. On motion regularly made, seconded and carried, it was voted that the Buildings and Grounds Committee be given authority to make said purchase and to have the existing buildings thereon removed or rehabilitated.

CAMPAIGN PLANNING COMMITTEE Mr. Shaffer reported on the proposed annual scholarship campaign to be held from March 4 to April 15, 1964 with the final dinner on April 8, 1964. Mr. Shaffer said that the College was most fortunate in that Mr. Ralph Lisman

January 9, 1964

has agreed to become Chairman and has already made substantial progress in setting up the campaign organization. He said that it is important that the Board members make their contributions first as they are a big factor in the success of any campaign.

FINE ARTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Waller gave the report of the Fine Arts Building Committee and stated that he has had a recent investigation made by John C. MacCartney, Mining Engineer, relative to the danger of movement of the surface after the building is erected. Mr. MacCartney reported that the water in the mine workings in that area will have risen by May 1, 1964, to a sufficient level to make it likely that there will be no further dangerous movement of the surface therefrom. Mr. Waller said that the architect plans to have the basement constructed of reinforced concrete to further protect against damage by subsidence. On motion regularly made, seconded and carried, the matter of awarding a contract for the erection of the building was given to the Committee on Buildings and Grounds.

GENERAL EDUCATION TALK BY DR. MICHELINI

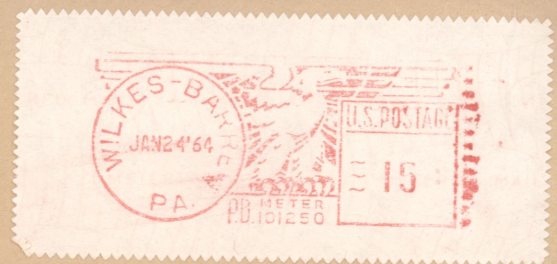
The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m., following which a most interesting talk was given by Dr. Francis Michelini, Dean of Academic Affairs, on the subject of general education.

Charles H. Miner, Jr.
Secretary

WILKES COLLEGE

WILKES-BARRE
PENNSYLVANIA

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Admiral Harold R. Stark

4900 Glenbrook Road, N. W.

Washington 16, D. C.

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