

# PROPOSAL FOR A PILOT GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

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## General Education Council

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# Proposal for a Pilot General Education Program

## A. Why a New General Education Pilot Program?

Review of courses by the General Education Council reveals that General Education at present contains very good courses. Unfortunately, these courses tend to have little to do with one another and fall short of forming an actual "program." In fulfilling General Education requirements students can now bypass contact with significant areas of knowledge. We believe General Education can do more to offer students experience with various areas of knowledge while at the same time fostering an understanding of the connections among different knowledge bases. We also believe that General Education can serve as a more significant companion piece to the major than our current program does. We recommend this pilot as a program that will provide students with a solid and challenging general background and that will nurture in them both breadth and depth of understanding as they specialize in a major field.

## B. Guiding Principles

1. The pilot General Education program will provide students with a common academic experience while they pursue different majors and different interests at the University. With a core of courses that all students in the pilot will be required to take, this program will promote a stimulating exchange of ideas among both student and faculty participants. Such common ground is at present difficult for our students to find due to the disjointed nature of the current General Education program.
2. The pilot will offer a more highly integrated General Education curriculum. The *World of the Liberal Arts* sequence of three courses will help students to discover connections between history, literature, philosophy, and fine arts, as well as the social and natural sciences. The *Natural World* sequence will integrate all of the natural sciences in an introductory course, and the *Social World* sequence will do the same for the social sciences. Finally, the pilot will seek to acquaint students with cultural diversity not only by offering the *Multicultural World* category, but by including in the Social and Liberal Arts sequences the study of contributions to our common heritage made by many different cultures, and by requiring intermediate-level proficiency in a second language.
3. The pilot's curriculum will be sequenced for students so that they can progress from introductory to more specialized courses in the *Natural World* and the *Social World*, and so that they can build each semester on what they have learned the previous semester in the *World of the Liberal Arts*. After they have completed requirements in the *Skills* and *Content* categories, they will be asked to select one of three integrative *Capstone* courses which will focus on the critical analysis of contemporary issues in the Liberal Arts, Natural World, and Social World.
4. The pilot will reinforce the development of learning skills among students by integrating writing, information accessing, computer literacy, and critical thinking skills across the General Education curriculum.
5. The pilot will offer an exciting range of possibilities for faculty to explore connections across disciplines, to examine familiar topics from new perspectives, and to work together in developing and teaching interdisciplinary courses.

## C. Principal Features of the Pilot

1. It requires a maximum of 43 semester hours. Students who come to UNC already having taken three or more years of formal training in a second language or having tested out of other skills courses will be able to meet their minimum General Education requirement of 40 hours by taking more than one Capstone or Multicultural course, or by taking more than one discipline-oriented course in *The Natural World* and/or *The Social World*.
2. Students who take the full 43 hours will enroll in a total of 14 General Education courses—the same number of courses students take in the present General Education program. Those who test out of one or more skills courses will enroll in a total of 13 General Education courses for 40 hours, one course fewer than students take in the present program.

3. The pilot strengthens the writing component of General Education by promoting writing across the General Education curriculum as well as requiring two composition courses.
4. It strengthens the multicultural component of General Education by promoting multiculturalism across the General Education curriculum as well as requiring one multicultural course and by expecting UNC students to achieve intermediate-level proficiency in a second language.
5. It recognizes the importance of effective oral communication for UNC undergraduates by incorporating this requirement within General Education.
6. It strengthens information accessing and computer literacy by reinforcing these skills in courses across the General Education curriculum.
7. It offers a new, integrated *Natural World* introductory course that will involve all the natural sciences, train students in methods of scientific inquiry, and prepare them for discipline-based science laboratory courses. (See description on p. 8.)
8. It offers a new, integrated *Social World* introductory course that will involve all the social sciences, introduce students to theory and research methodology in the social sciences, and prepare them for discipline-based courses in this area. (See descriptions on p. 9.)
9. It offers a new, integrated *World of the Liberal Arts* sequence that will involve all the humanities and fine arts as well as the natural and social sciences, cultivate in students a substantial sense of our shared intellectual and artistic heritage within a global and historic framework, and prepare them for a lifetime of learning and creative expression in the humanities and fine arts. (See descriptions on pp. 5–7.)
10. In addition to being integrative, the pilot is structured to be sequenced in its approach to General Education, with students expected to take the *World of the Liberal Arts* courses sequentially, and the introductory courses in the *Natural World* and *Social World* before the discipline-based classes. Students also will be expected to take all *Skills* and *Content* courses preparatory to taking a *Capstone*.
11. The *Capstone* courses will bring still greater coherence to the pilot program while focusing on contemporary issues. They will be planned with the expectation that student participants will be prepared to utilize the skills in writing, speaking, computation, information accessing, computer literacy, multicultural awareness, and critical thinking that they have developed in earlier General Education courses. *Capstones* will also provide a vehicle for assessment of the pilot. (See statement from the Council's policy on assessment on p. 12.)
12. The pilot will encourage members of the faculty to work together in designing, preparing for, and team-teaching courses that transcend the boundaries of traditional disciplines.

#### **D. Implementing the Pilot**

1. *When will it begin?* Fall semester, 1994.
2. *Any sunset rules?* Yes. The following provision was proposed by the General Education Council to the Faculty Senate and approved by the Senate on March 30, 1992: No later than five years after implementation of the pilot program, the faculty will be asked to vote to continue or discontinue it.
3. *How many students will be enrolled?* Between 200 and 300 students will be accepted each year. No more than 300 will be accepted into the pilot per year without authorization by faculty vote as noted in #2 above.
4. *How will students be selected for participation in the pilot?* All incoming freshmen will be eligible, up to the cut-off of 300. Students will self-select the program. A brochure will be published informing them about its availability. Every effort will be made to inform faculty advisors and Student Advising Center staff members about the pilot.

5. *Will students be able to receive General Education credit for courses in both General Education programs?* Certain courses will satisfy requirements in both programs. Courses in composition and mathematics are the most obvious examples, but: (1) foreign language courses, which are content courses in the existing program, will appear as options in the Foreign Languages category in the skills area in the pilot program, and (2) at least some discipline-oriented courses in the natural sciences and social sciences and some multicultural courses will be listed as options in both programs. Otherwise, no: students who have opted for the pilot program will not be able to receive General Education credit for courses that are listed as General Education courses only in the existing program, and students who have opted for the existing program will not be able to receive General Education credit for courses that are listed as General Education courses only in the pilot program.

6. *What about transfer students?* The General Education Council is committed to ensuring that our General Education offerings meet UNC's obligations to the junior colleges. If the pilot program were ever to supplant General Education as it now stands, specific provisions would have to be made to accommodate various types of transfer students. Presently, however, since the program is proposed as a pilot, we envision only UNC freshmen entering this new General Education track.

7. *Will students be able to test out of General Education skills classes, and if so, how will they use their extra hours?* An incoming freshman could conceivably test out of all skills courses required in the pilot. The State of Colorado mandates that one-third of a student's 120 hour undergraduate curriculum be devoted to General Education. Therefore, students who test out of skills courses will be expected to take other courses in the pilot, including more than one *Capstone* or *Multicultural World* course or more than one discipline-based *Natural World* or *Social World* course, to bring their General Education total up to at least 40 hours.

8. *How will students decide which of the three Capstones to take?* We recommend that students be encouraged to choose any one of the three capstones, regardless of their majors.

9. *Will students have to complete the new General Education program before embarking on their major?* While it will be desirable for students to complete the General Education pilot in their first two years at UNC, they may complete their General Education requirements at any time before graduation.

10. *How will courses be staffed? Will participating departments be rewarded or penalized in any way? Who will "own" these courses?* Student generated FTE will be credited to the participating faculty member's department in the same way that this has been done over the past seven years for faculty teaching Life of the Mind classes. The General Education Council and the Dean of Arts and Sciences will be responsible for monitoring class quality, just as is the case for classes in the current General Education program.

11. *How will class sizes in the pilot compare with class sizes in the current General Education program?* Pilot classes will be comparable in size to current General Education classes, i.e., 25 in composition, 30–40 in foreign language classes, and 50–60 in math and content classes. The capstones will be held to 25 students to encourage the fullest possible development of writing, computer literacy, critical thinking and other skills.

12. *Will classes be team-taught? If so, how will this be funded?* The general frameworks for pilot courses will be team-planned by faculty in relevant disciplines. When classes are team-taught, student-teacher ratios will stay the same as in other General Education classes, i.e., 25/1 or 50–60/1.

13. *There are departments and programs on campus that must be allowed to have their students fulfill General Education requirements in such a way that they are simultaneously completing courses essential to their programs. Will this be possible in the pilot?* The answer to this question will be somewhat different for departments in each of the three *Content* sequences.

- For departments in the current General Education Arts and Letters category, it will depend on whether they accept one or more courses in the *World of the Liberal Arts* sequence or *Capstone* category for credit in their majors.
- For departments in Mathematics and the Sciences, both General Education programs count one discipline-oriented General Education course in the major. Departments may also accept the interdisciplinary *Natural World* course or *Capstone* for credit in the major.
- For departments in the Social Sciences, both General Education programs count one discipline-oriented General Education course in the major. Departments may also accept the interdisciplinary *Social World* course or *Capstone* for credit in the major.

14. *What impact, if any, will funding for the pilot have on the resources needed to continue offering courses in the present General Education program?* No impact is anticipated on funding for the present General Education program. We plan to seek external grants to pay for faculty development workshops and for faculty release time to develop pilot courses.

15. *How will the new foreign language requirement work? Does the university have sufficient resources to offer the necessary courses?* In order to encourage acquisition of language skills prior to entry into college, we propose for the pilot program a foreign language *entrance* requirement of at least two years training in a single foreign language. Foreign language entrance requirements are already in place at many other universities in our region. (The University of Colorado at Boulder is currently recommending three years of foreign language training prior to admission.) Incoming freshmen without two years of a foreign language could still join the pilot, but they would have to take more than one semester of a foreign language here at UNC. We note that at present more than 80 percent of regularly admitted UNC freshmen have had two years of foreign language instruction in high school, and that over 95 percent of school districts in Colorado offer at least two years of some foreign language.

With two years of prior foreign language training, a student in the pilot program will meet the language requirement with just one additional three-hour course in the same language at the intermediate level (i.e., 201).

We recommend exempting all students from this language requirement who have had at least three years of the same foreign language in high school or who are already proficient in a language through other means.

Students in the pilot will still be able to take beginning language classes if they have not had them in high school or if they decide to start a new language. However, the proposed pilot will shift the emphasis in foreign language instruction at UNC from the beginning to the intermediate level. We will aim at "intermediate proficiency," meaning a specific level of communicative skill established by the Educational Testing Service and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. "Intermediate proficiency" is the goal of all 200-level foreign language courses at UNC.

Concerning the question of resource needs for this new foreign language requirement, the following points bear special notice:

- a. Four of five incoming students will need no more than one foreign language course at UNC, and some will already have met this requirement by having taken three years in high school.
- b. For the first five years, during which enrollments in the pilot will be limited to 300, only an estimated 60 students (1/5 of 300) will need more than one foreign language class, and many of the remaining 240 will gain exemption from any foreign language requirement by having had three years training in high school.
- c. The requirement is for an intermediate-level (201) class. These classes will carry only 3 hours of credit, vs. 5 hours for 100-level language classes. Thus the new General Education pilot would utilize scarce FTE more efficiently than the current General Education program where many students enroll in 5-hour 100-level language classes even when they have had extensive foreign language training in high school.
- d. All of the above factors lead us to conclude that implementation of the foreign language requirement in a new General Education pilot will not require new FTE.

16. *How will the fine arts be integrated into the pilot?* The proposed *World of the Liberal Arts* sequence includes "hands-on" experience in the arts as an integral part. Faculty from the College of Performing and Visual Arts will be involved in planning and team-teaching this sequence, including the *Capstone*.

17. *How will other faculty outside the College of Arts and Sciences be involved in the pilot?* Faculty participation across the university, in the library and all colleges, will be welcomed, especially in the development and teaching of the *Capstones*.

18. *Who will be responsible for oversight of the new General Education program?* The General Education Council and Dean of Arts and Sciences, who are jointly responsible for oversight of the current General Education program, will be responsible for the new program as well.

## E. Descriptions of the Components of the Content Area of the Pilot

### 1. The World of the Liberal Arts Sequence (9 hours)

The overall goals of the courses that will constitute the *World of the Liberal Arts* sequence are as follows:

- To engage students and faculty in serious reflection on our shared intellectual and artistic heritage through a joint exploration and analysis of classic texts and works of fine art in their historical contexts.
- To do this within as large a global and historic framework as is possible consistent with a profound experience of this heritage.
- To encourage our students to begin to think of themselves as men and women who can enrich this heritage through their own creative work.
- To help our students realize that whatever they choose to cultivate as an area of special expertise, they need to remain open to and continue to participate as fully as possible in a wide range of the world's intellectual and artistic endeavors.

The three basic courses in the sequence—entitled, tentatively, “Antiquity and the Classical Age,” “Evolutions of Cultures,” and “Challenges to Traditions”—will cover the period of time from the dawn of history to the beginning of the 19th century. The capstone course in the *World of the Liberal Arts* will, in effect, be a continuation of the sequence, as it will focus specifically on more recent developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

These courses will all be team-planned. We hope that whenever possible, they will be team-taught. The ratio of students to instructors will in any case be kept to a maximum of 60/1.

The primary emphasis in the sequence will be on subjects traditionally thought of as belonging to the areas of the humanities and the fine arts—including literature, of course—and although faculty from all disciplines will be encouraged to become involved in the design and delivery of these courses, we anticipate that the instructional staff for the courses in the sequence will consist primarily of members of the Departments of English, History, and Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences and members of the various Departments of the College of Performing and Visual Arts.

Instructors will select primary sources from a common list—a list to be developed and revised regularly by the faculty members involved in delivering sections of these courses. There will, therefore, be ample room for choice regarding course materials: it is not at all anticipated or expected that the various sections of each course will focus on the same texts and works of art in the same semester in any sort of lock-step fashion.

What will help to provide a degree of coherence and unity across the sections of each course during each semester is the following:

- Early each semester, the instructors who will be teaching sections of a particular course during the following semester will meet to select one or more questions of contemporary interest that can be used as springboards for thought and comparative study. All sections of each course will address the same “springboard” questions during any given semester, but those questions may well change from semester to semester, at the discretion of the faculty members involved.
- Calendars for visiting lecturers and creative artists and for on-campus cultural events will also be integrated into course schedules as much as possible, and upcoming visits and events may well help to provide faculty with ideas for “springboard” questions that can be used to provide the various sections of these courses with a substantial degree of thematic unity.

The courses in the *World of the Liberal Arts* sequence are *not* meant to be *survey* courses. Depth of intellectual inquiry and understanding, and not superficial coverage of enormous quantities of material, will be stressed.

The courses *are* meant to be as *interdisciplinary* as possible. We challenge interested members of the faculty to join together in an effort to break down the barriers that tend to separate the disciplines and to design courses of the kind we are proposing—intellectually challenging courses in which connections can be sought out between things ordinarily kept thoroughly compartmentalized and in which, in the process, students can begin to get a sense of how deeply and in what extraordinarily tangled ways the roots of the present penetrate into the past.

We offer, for the sake of concreteness, tentative course outline ideas devised last spring by faculty who responded to the Council's call for help in beginning to think about ways in which these courses might be structured. We emphasize that these ideas for course outlines are just that: tentative and unrefined ideas that are as far as can be from being cast in stone.

#### World of the Liberal Arts I: Antiquity and the Classical Age (3 hours)

- A. Human interaction with the environment: how we are shaped by our environment, and how we, in turn, shape our world.
  - 1. The neolithic revolution.
  - 2. The origins of agriculture and the ensuing struggle to control and harness sources of water.
  - 3. The rise of cities and of "civilization."
  - 4. Differences between city-centered cultures, rural cultures, and nomadic cultures.
- B. The arts.
  - 1. The inseparability of the arts from other aspects of life in the ancient world.
  - 2. The connections between poetry and the old oral traditions.
  - 3. Interconnections between technology and the arts.
  - 4. The invention of writing.
- C. The social order.
  - 1. Male-female relations.
  - 2. Patriarchy vs. matriarchy.
  - 3. Social, economic, and political groups.
  - 4. Hierarchy vs. equality.
  - 5. The origins of law.
  - 6. The good ruler; forms of political constitution.
- D. The good.
  - 1. Reflections in antiquity on the nature of human goodness.
  - 2. Early ideas about goods and evils in other realms of being (nature, the divine order, and the like).
  - 3. Early economic systems; the invention of money.
  - 4. Theory and practice in the sphere of education.
- E. The sacred.
  - 1. The origins of the world's great religious traditions.
  - 2. The realm of the sacred in various cultures in the ancient world.
  - 3. The role of myth and ritual in ancient cultures.
- F. The natural order.
  - 1. The development of mathematics.
  - 2. The origins of medicine.
  - 3. The rise of philosophy.
  - 4. The beginnings of natural science.

#### World of the Liberal Arts II: Evolutions of Cultures (200 B.C.E.–1400 C.E.) (3 hours)

In each segment of this course, which would be devoted to a study of the consolidation and the development of the great and enduring religions and associated cultural traditions that have their roots in the ancient world, themes like the following would be explored:

- A. Religious systems and practices.
  - 1. Origins and basic teachings.
  - 2. Spread (proselytism).
  - 3. Institutionalization.
  - 4. Governance and control.
  - 5. The role of women.
  - 6. High tradition vs. folk tradition.
  - 7. Provisions for education.
  - 8. The relation of the secular to the sacred.
- B. Contact between cultures.
  - 1. Hostile contacts.
  - 2. Peaceful contacts: trade.

World of the Liberal Arts II: Evolutions of Cultures (cont'd.)

- C. Governance of empires.
  - 1. Concepts of rulership.
    - a. Mandate of heaven (divine right).
    - b. *Noblesse oblige*.
    - c. Theocratic rule.
    - d. Hereditary rule.
  - 2. Social hierarchy.
  - 3. The place of women in society.
  - 4. Slavery.
  - 5. Systems of justice.
  - 6. Exploitation and coercion.
  - 7. Military: war, crusades.
  - 8. Imperial disintegration.

The traditions examined in the course would include: (1) the Confucian tradition, (2) the Hindu-Buddhist tradition, (3) the Judeo-Christian tradition, (4) the Islamic tradition, and (5) animist traditions in Africa, Mesoamerica, and North America.

World of the Liberal Arts III: Challenges to Traditions (1350–1808) (3 hours)

- A. Understanding humanity and the world.
  - 1. The assertion of secularism; humanity at the center.
  - 2. The revival of the ancient perspective.
  - 3. Reason the solution.
  - 4. The rise of modern science.
- B. Organizing civic society.
  - 1. The individual, the community, and the state.
  - 2. Gender relations.
  - 3. Great leaders.
  - 4. Art and politics.
  - 5. The impact of new technologies—and in particular of movable type.
- C. Challenges to orthodoxy.
  - 1. Back to the basics! (Revivalism, fundamentalism.)
  - 2. Away with corruption!
  - 3. Down with authority!
- D. Conquest and exploitation.
  - 1. Pre-conquest, pre-slave trade.
  - 2. Africa, the Americas, and the Pacific before the age of exploration.
  - 3. The exploring spirit and the spirit of superiority.
  - 4. Demographic devastation and cultural destruction.
  - 5. Adaptation and survival.

## 2. The Natural World Sequence (7 hours)

The courses in the *Natural World* category will consist of (1) a foundational interdisciplinary course emphasizing the nature of natural scientific inquiry, and (2) a discipline-based laboratory course in one of the natural sciences.

The foundational course is still in the design stage, but it will be a course delivered by faculty from all science departments. The course will serve to prepare students for the discipline-based laboratory course to follow. Examples from the various scientific disciplines will be used to emphasize that education regarding scientific reasoning and inquiry is an important component in the education of any well-rounded human being. A tentative sketch:

### Science as a Way of Knowing—A Philosophical Approach to Science (3 hours)

- A. The nature of science.
  - 1. The scientific world view.
  - 2. The nature of scientific inquiry.
  - 3. The scientific enterprise.
- B. Application of mathematics, logic and reasoning.
  - 1. Use and interpretations of graphs/graphical displays.
  - 2. Students demonstrate their understanding through these constructions.
  - 3. What concrete examples lead to abstract concepts?
- C. Why is science important to our world?
- D. The nature of technology and its relation to science.
- E. Ethics, politics, human failings, and science.
  - 1. Observations and values: which observations and studies deserve more weight, priority in solving, etc.
  - 2. Grantsmanship, 'politically correct' research, egomania.
  - 3. Pseudoscience.
- F. How scientists work.
  - 1. Defining problems; playing creative hunches.
  - 2. Developing solutions to defined problems.
  - 3. Topics that illustrate how scientists work: one or two examples from each of the scientific disciplines.
  - 4. Careers in science and science-related areas.

What follows is a list of topics that could be used as examples (suggested in *Science for All Americans*):

#### The physical setting:

The universe.  
The earth.  
Forces that shape the earth.  
The structure of matter.  
Transformations of energy.  
The motion of things.  
The forces of nature.

#### The human organism:

Human identity.  
Life cycle.  
Basic functions.  
Learning.  
Physical health.  
Mental health.

#### Common themes:

Systems.  
Models.  
Constancy.  
Patterns of change.  
Evolution.  
Scale.

#### The living environment:

Diversity of life.  
Heredity.  
Cells.  
Interdependence of life.  
Flow of matter and energy.  
Evolution of life.

#### The mathematical world:

Numbers.  
Symbolic relationships.  
Shapes.  
Uncertainty.  
Summarizing data.  
Sampling.  
Reasoning.

Bibliography (for course design concepts):

Flaste, Richard, ed. *New York Times Book of Scientific Literacy*. Harper Perennial, 1992.  
Rutherford, F. James, and A. Ahlgren. *Science for All Americans*. Oxford University Press, 1990.  
Tobias, Sheila. *Revitalizing Undergraduate Science*. Research Corporation, 1992.

### 3. The Social World Sequence (6 hours)

The courses in the *Social World* sequence will consist of (1) a foundational interdisciplinary course emphasizing the nature of social science inquiry, and (2) a discipline-based course in one of the social sciences or an interdisciplinary course on a topic that cuts across the boundaries of the social science disciplines. A course like the following might serve as the first course in the sequence:

#### Inquiry in the Social Sciences and Social World (3 hours)

This course is designed to foster analytical thinking about human behavior in the context of research in the social sciences. A study of the approaches utilized by each of the social sciences and of the methods of social science characteristic of each discipline will introduce the student to research in the social world. Overall, this course is intended to reveal the breadth, depth, and integration or interconnectedness of the social sciences disciplines. The course will also assist students in understanding how interpretations of the social world and how we live in it are formed.

- A. Social inquiry and the social world. (An introduction to the system of social inquiry and to the ways in which social science is predominant in that system.)
  1. Approaches to social science and methods of science.
  2. Natural science and its relation to social science.
  3. Modern social science: classifications (typologies), statistical methods, simulations, and models.
- B. Methods and disciplines of social science. (An exploration of the major methods of social inquiry and social science in the context of a survey of the major disciplines.)
  1. Sociology and collection of data.
  2. Geography and methods of observation and measurement.
  3. Economics and deductive explanation and models.
  4. Political Science and explanation by intention, probability, and problem solving.
  5. Psychology and explanation of personality and group behavior.
- C. Applications of social inquiry in the social sciences. (A look at the practical application of scientific knowledge and the testing of this knowledge in social science in connection with selected problems of planning, education, and social work.)
  1. Applications of social science—urban planning.
  2. Applications of social science—education research.
  3. Applications of social science—social work.
- D. Social inquiry and the social world: its future. (An overview of social science in a broader humanistic frame of reference.)
  1. Outlooks for social science and inquiry into the social world.
  2. Uses and future of social science.

#### Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of two examinations and a project concerned with research materials that identifies theoretical and methodological differences and similarities of at least two social science disciplines. The project will be an interdisciplinary research assignment.

There is no textbook for this course. A bibliography and assigned books and journal articles will be on reserve in the library.

#### Possible sources for assignments:

- Babbie, Earl. *Survey Research Methods*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1990.
- Baker, Therese L. *Doing Social Research*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988.
- Katzer, Jeffrey, Kenneth H. Cook, and Wayne W. Crouch. *Evaluating Information: A Guide for Users of Social Science Research*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991.
- Lofland, John, and Lyn H. Lofland. *Analyzing Social Settings*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1984.
- Nachmias, David, and Chava Nachmias. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. New York: St. Martin's, 1992.
- Reinharz, Shulamit. *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Rubin, Allen, and Earl R. Babbie. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1993.

The following course will serve to provide some idea of what an interdisciplinary course at the more advanced level might look like:

#### Public Policies in the Social World (3 hours)

This course is designed to foster analytical and integrative thinking about public policy making within a social environment. Public policy models, strategies, and outcomes will exemplify the interconnectedness of theories and approaches of different social science disciplines.

Acquisition of general and specific knowledge of current major social policies in selected nations will be provided and measured by examinations, class discussions, and a written research project.

- A. Introduction to policy analysis and social choice in the social world.
  1. Cultural pluralism, theory and function.
    - a. Health care and education—social classes and public response.
    - b. Innovation and origin—disciplinary approaches of political science and economics.
  2. Choices in economic policy.
    - a. Elitism, crises, and social change.
    - b. Impact analyses—disciplinary approaches of economics and sociology.
- B. Cross-national typologies, dynamics of models and comparison:
  1. Public opinion and public policy.
    - a. The cases of taxation and housing policies.
    - b. Reform and development—disciplinary approaches of psychology and geography.
  2. Types of political regimes: authoritarianism and democracy.
    - a. Human rights and environmental protection policies.
    - b. Regulatory and market behavior—disciplinary approaches of economics and political science.
- C. Comparison, prediction, and evaluation of public policy in the social world. Integrated disciplinary approaches: sociology, political science, economics, geography, psychology.

#### Required texts:

Dogan, Mattei, and Dominique Pelassy. *How to Compare Nations*. 2nd ed. London: Chatham House, 1990.  
 Heidenheimer, Arnold J., H. Hecl, Caroly Adams. *Comparative Public Policy*. 3rd edition. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990.

#### Evaluation:

There will be two essay examinations and a written research project integrating the approaches, methods, and social findings of a societal public policy or policies.

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#### Additional Course Possibilities:

There are several possibilities for course sources for this category. New courses could be proposed under the 302 special topics designation to provide a variety of changing subjects. Departments could also use courses presently in their curricula provided that these are approved by the General Education Council. A department could, for example, offer a special section of an existing course with a more interdisciplinary perspective, waive prerequisites, and specify that it not be taken by majors.

#### Sample Possibilities:

SOC 270 World Population Problems  
 GEOG 365 Urban Geography  
 PSY 369 Environmental Psychology  
 ECON 345 International Trade  
 PSCI 321 War and Peace

#### 4. The Multicultural World (3 hours)

The *Multicultural World* category will offer several multicultural courses and courses on cultural diversity from which a student may choose. These courses will study one or more cultures within the United States. The courses will address such factors as historical experience, social class, gender, life styles, social relationships, discrimination, relative access to scarce resources, and political issues as they relate to a culturally diverse society.

#### 5. Capstone Courses (3 hours)

Each student in the pilot will be required to take at least one of the three *Capstone* courses described below.

##### Capstone I The Contemporary World of the Liberal Arts (3 hours)

This course will be, in effect, a continuation and completion of the *World of the Liberal Arts* sequence, focusing on developments that have contributed to the shaping of the contemporary world. What follows is a description of one possible set of themes. Again, this is only a tentative sketch.

##### World of the Liberal Arts Capstone: The Industrial Age (3 hours)

- A. Transformations in the economic base.
  - 1. Consolidation of capital.
  - 2. Creation of the modern worker.
  - 3. Differentiation of the industrial and fine arts.
- B. Transformations in technology.
  - 1. New techniques of production.
  - 2. New sources of energy.
  - 3. New methods of transportation and communication.
  - 4. New methods of calculation.
  - 5. New ways of waging war.
- C. Transformations in the realm of art.
  - 1. Romanticism.
  - 2. Impressionism.
  - 3. Post-impressionist movements.
  - 4. New currents in literature.
  - 5. Post-modernism.
  - 6. The invention of new art forms.
  - 7. Non-western art.
- D. Transformations in the social and political order.
  - 1. Anti-slavery movements.
  - 2. Nationalism.
  - 3. Totalitarianism.
  - 4. Liberation movements.
  - 6. Environmentalism.
- E. Transformations in the realm of thought.
  - 1. Mathematics.
  - 2. Natural science.
  - 3. The rise of social science.
  - 4. The humanities.
  - 5. Theology.

##### Capstones II and III The Contemporary Natural World and the Contemporary Social World (3 hours each)

These courses will be designed to enable students to make connections between the training they have already received in their earlier natural science and social science courses and one or more contemporary problems that the natural or social sciences help us to understand but that have dimensions that transcend the limits of what can be completely understood from within the perspectives of natural or social scientific inquiry.

## Assessment of General Education

The General Education Council is now in the process of working up a formal assessment plan for the *current* General Education program. What follows is taken from a policy statement on assessment of the current program adopted by the Council at its meeting of October 20, 1992.

### I. Skills.

- A. **Composition.** The ACT CAAP (Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency) Writing Sample and Writing Skills Test should be adopted as the basic measure of the degree to which students are making progress in acquiring and refining skills in the area of writing. The Council suggests that these two tests be administered to all students who complete both their elementary and intermediate composition courses at UNC, and that they be administered, if at all possible, at or near the end of the semester in intermediate composition courses. Pass/fail rates on the English Essay Examination should also continue to be monitored as these provide an additional indication of the general level of student writing ability at the university.
- B. **Mathematics.** The ACT CAAP Mathematics Test should be adopted as the basic measure of the degree to which students are making progress in acquiring and refining skills in the area of mathematics. The Council suggests that it be administered to all students who complete their general education requirement in mathematics at UNC and that it be administered, if possible, at or near the end of the semester in general education courses in mathematics. The Department of Mathematics may wish to continue to develop an assessment instrument of its own.
- C. **Reasoning.** The ACT CAAP Critical Thinking test should be adopted as the basic measure of the degree to which students are making progress in acquiring and refining skills in the area of rigorous reasoning. The Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal should be used as an independent measure of levels of achievement in overall reasoning ability.
- D. **Physical Activity.** The Council does not now know how to assess the effectiveness of offerings in this area. We will work with the College of Health and Human Sciences to develop a way to do it.

### II. Content.

- A. **The ACT CAAP Reading Test and Science Reasoning Test** should be adopted as the basic measures of the degree to which students are making progress in becoming more capable of understanding things done in the arts and letters, the social sciences, and the natural sciences. These tests provide measures of reading comprehension levels and more specialized reasoning abilities in relation to prose passages relevant to these three broad areas.
- B. **Interdisciplinary Multicultural Studies.** The Council does not now know how to assess the effectiveness of offerings in this area either. We will work with the departments and teaching faculty that will provide these courses to develop a way to do this too.

For the *pilot* program, student outcomes assessment will be done in a way that involves, as much as possible, the use of the same procedures and instruments as those that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the current program. There is, after all, a substantial overlap between the two programs in both the skills and the content areas. In the pilot program, the capstone courses will be the natural places for the administration of both the two critical thinking tests and at least one of the two tests we propose to use to assess the effectiveness of the greater part of the content area of the current General Education curriculum—the CAAP Reading Test. The other CAAP tests can be administered at the same times and places at which they are given to students in the current program. Additional measures will, of course, have to be adopted to assess the effectiveness of offerings in the pilot program that have no direct counterparts in the current program, namely those in oral communication and foreign language. The Council will work with the departments and teaching faculty that will provide those courses to develop ways to assess their effectiveness.