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Summary Report of Admissions and Graduation Requirements of Selected Units and Programs at Western Washington University

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Report 1991-03

Gary McKinney
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February 1991

<u>Executive Summary</u>

During Winter Quarter of 1990, all college department chairs
and the deans of Huxley and Fairhaven Colleges were sent a
questionnaire intended to delineate admission and graduation
requirements. The questionnaire was followed by a telephone or
in-person interview. For the purposes of readability, all
respondents are referred to as departments.

The survey results showed that nineteen departments have
self-generated admission requirements, whose categories are as
follows: 1) overall university GPA; 2) completion of foundation
courses; 3) GPA within foundation courses; 4) credit completion;
5) audition, portfolio, or resume review. Sixteen of the above
nineteen departments have multiple requirements.

There are three departments that both collect baseline
information and use it as a comparative tool.

Twenty-seven departments have capstone experiences, whose
categories are as follows: 1) overview courses; 2) senior theses,
project, performance, or portfolio; 3) internships or student
teaching. One department's students take a state accrediting
test. Six departments use two capstone experiences.

Ten departments utilize standing committees to evaluate, to
varying degrees, the quality or content of their programs.

Fourteen departments have graduation requirements evaluated
by more than one faculty member, or by outside professionals.

Departments were asked about the number of courses with
"substantial production of written English", defined as having at
least two of the following criteria: 1) mid-term and/or final
essay exam; 2) one lengthy (10+ pages) term paper or report; 3)
multiple short (1-10 page) papers or reports; 4) opportunities
for students to revise papers written under either item 2 or 3.

The number of such courses varied widely, from 1 to 27.
Evaluation of these courses was based usually on the first three
criteria; generally, the opportunity to revise was reserved for
courses specifically designated as writing intensive. Two
departments required a senior thesis; one required a summary
report of all clinical experiences.

There were two departments that required unqualified passage
of the Junior Writing Exam. All others required only that the
student take the Junior Writing Exam.

Introduction

In early December, 1989, all Western Washington University department chairs and the deans at Fairhaven and Huxley Colleges received a memo from the Office of Institutional Testing and Assessment requesting their participation in a survey intended to identify and delineate department- and college-generated requirements for admission and graduation. After an initial contact with the chairs and deans, two departments, Physical Education and Technology, opted to have area supervisors provide the answers to the survey, which brought on board the disciplines of Health Education and Recreation, in addition to Physical Education, plus the six areas of study within Technology. For the purpose of readability, all respondents will be referred to as departments, whether they are a discipline, subdiscipline, or a college.

To further facilitate readability, the report on Technology has been given a separate section and follows the General Survey Results. Fairhaven's response to the survey has been included in its entirety, and follows the section on Technology.

In all, forty participants were finally selected for the study, and later that month interviews with them began, about equally over the phone and in person--although in a number of cases written responses either eliminated the need for the interview or kept it short. Subsequently, the chairs, deans and area supervisors were sent a follow-up questionnaire. Copies of the original survey questions and those of the follow-up questionnaire are included in Appendix A. The report has been organized on a question-by-question basis following the sequence of questionnaire items.

Question #1: What requirements must students meet for admission to the major? Include minimum GPA and any courses or other experiences.

The departments with departmentally-generated admission requirements for their majors were:

College of Arts & Sciences

Communications	Health Education	Psychology
Computer Science	Liberal Studies	Recreation
Home Economics	Physical Education	Speech Pathology

College of Business & Economics

Accounting	Finance, Marketing & Decision Sciences (FMDS)
Economics	Management

College of Fine & Performing Arts

Art
Music

Woodring College of Education

Education Curriculum & Instruction (EdC&I)

NOTE: Mathematics has requirements to its MATH/CSCI degree
program, but to no others.

At the time of this report, no other departments at Western had special requirements for admission to their majors, although a few of the chairs mentioned that their departments were either considering requirements, or had requirements pending. (Huxley College, for example, will have admission requirements beginning the Fall of 1991.)

With two exceptions, departmental requirements fell into the following categories: 1) Overall University GPA; 2) Foundation Courses; 3) GPA within Foundation Courses; 4) Credit Completion; and 5) Audition or Portfolio/Resume Review

The two exceptions were EdC&I and Physical Education, which had requirements unique to their departments. In EdC&I, they were: minimum scores on college school entrance tests, a five-day in-school observation, competencies in computer and speech, and certification in classroom equipment usage. In addition, Elementary Education and Special Education majors must complete a mathematics competency requirement. In Physical Education, the

3

requirement was practical experience in a variety of physical activities or outdoor pursuits.

The department with the most requirements for its major was EdC&I, utilizing four of the five categories, plus its own. By default, any EdC&I major will have to meet at least those standards, plus those of their academic major, if there are any.

Eight departments had requirements in three of the above categories: Communications, Health Education (BS), Home Economics (Apparel Design, Interior Design, and Fashion Marketing), Speech Pathology, Accounting, Economics, Management, and FMDS.

Five departments had requirements in two categories: Computer Science, Liberal Studies, Physical Education, Psychology, and Recreation.

Four departments had requirements in one category: Art, Music, Mathematics (MATH/CSCI), and Home Economics (General).

In departments that required an overall university GPA for admission, those GPA's were:

```
3.00. . .Liberal Studies
2.80. . .Computer Science
         Speech Pathology
2.75. . .Health Education (BS)
         Home Economics (Apparel Design, Interior Design,
            and Fashion Marketing)
         Economics
         Education Curriculum & Instruction
2.50. . .Communications
         Home Economics (General)
         Psychology
2.00. . .Physical Education
         Recreation
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In departments that required the completion of foundation courses for admission, the number of courses was:

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8. . .Accounting
      Finance, Marketing & Decision Sciences
      Management
7. . .Health Education
6. . .Computer Science
5. . .Communications
4. . .Liberal Studies
      Speech Pathology
3. . .Economics
1. . .Education Curriculum & Instruction
      Psychology
      Recreation
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NOTE: Entrance into the MATH/CSCI degree requires the
         student to take a six course foundation, or receive
         an A grade in three of the courses.

In departments that further required a certain GPA within
the foundation course or courses, that GPA was:

3.00. . .Communications
         Speech Pathology
2.75. . .Accounting
         Education Curriculum & Instruction
         Finance, Marketing & Decision Sciences
         Management

In departments that required the completion of a particular
number of college credits, the number of credits was:

75. . .Health Education
       Physical Education
       Accounting
       Economics
       Finance, Marketing & Decision Sciences
       Management
45. . .Education Curriculum & Instruction

NOTE: Home Economics (Apparel Design, Interior Design, and
         Fashion Marketing) requires specifically that
         students complete their GUR's before they can be
         admitted to the program.

Departments that required an audition or portfolio/resume
review were: Art (Studio and Fine Arts), a portfolio reviewed by
department faculty; Home Economics (Apparel Design, Interior
Design), a portfolio reviewed by department faculty and outside
professionals; Home Economics (Fashion Marketing), a resume
review by department faculty and outside professionals; and Music
(Applied Instrument), an audition for a committee of department
faculty.

**Question #2: Does your department collect any baseline
information on students before or during their first course? Is
student progress (other than in the first course) compared to
that baseline information. If so, how?**

Items this survey did not consider baseline information
included: advising, regardless of how extensive or if required by
the department; review of transfer transcripts, which more likely
falls under the realm of advising; tests, writing samples, or any
related device meant only to place students in an appropriate
first course; or passing a series of course requirements, which

more correctly falls under the parameters set out by Question #1.

Briefly, baseline information defined by this survey is information that assesses a student's ability in or knowledge of a particular subject area at a particular point in time (for example, before they are admitted as majors to an academic department). This information would then be referred back to as the student progresses through the major, to keep track of how they may be doing at any given point--most probably at the end of quarters, or at least at the end of each year.

Accordingly, it was determined that three academic departments were using the baseline concept: Art, Home Economics (Interior Design), and Music.

Both Studio and Fine Arts (BFA) candidates in Art must have a portfolio review for admission to the department. Faculty note a candidate's pre-admittance level of expertise, and have past works available for review if they want to see them. Practically speaking, the work of Art majors is under constant scrutiny as it is being produced, by their advisors, instructors, and peers. In the course of having their work critiqued--both as it stands by itself and in comparison to the work they have produced previously--the Art Department utilizes the baseline concept, although they may or may not consider it as such.

Additionally, Studio and BFA candidates must put together a course contract under advisement of Art Department faculty. The contract delineates a student's course of study, where they consider themselves to be as artists at entrance to the major and where they intend to be upon completion of their studies. Again, while maybe not in the usual sense a collection of baseline information, the practice does give a point of reference to a course of study--comparisons are made and expectations outlined.

As with Studio and BFA Art majors, Home Economics majors in Interior Design go through a portfolio review as part of their requirements for admission to the degree program. Subsequently, another portfolio review is done at the end of the first year of study within the program. At that point, if the student has not reached certain standards, they may not be allowed to continue into their final year.

Music majors audition for admission to the degree program, and may be denied admission based on their performance. If admitted, they are placed at a performance level and are expected to meet or surpass subsequently higher levels of competance in a timely fashion.

Question #3: What "capstone" experiences are required of majors? Include required senior overview courses, senior theses, projects or performances, and the like. How are these evaluated?

A number of departments at Western included a capstone experience within their degree requirements. With two exceptions, those capstones fell into the following categories: 1) Overview Courses; 2) Senior Thesis, Project, or Performance; and 3) Internships or Student Teaching.

The first exception was found in Health Education (Nutrition) where, in order to work within their field, students take a state-sponsored accrediting test. Although not administered by the department itself, the department felt this test functioned as a capstone, since it encompassed the breadth of the students' course of study.

The second exception was found in Foreign Languages, where students seeking a teaching endorsement have to pass an oral proficiency exam. This exam is evaluated by the entire faculty in the language area.

Four departments had capstones with two requirements. The first was Art (Studio and BFA), whose majors had to take a capstone course and give a performance. The other three were Communication (Radio/Broadcast), Health Education (BS), and Journalism, whose majors had to take a capstone course and satisfy an internship.

One department gave its majors a capstone option. To graduate from Huxley, students are required do either a senior thesis or project, or an internship.

At this point, it might be prudent to note again that EdC&I majors may have more than one capstone depending on the requirements of the department in which they take their academic degree.

Of the departments with a single capstone, those that required an overview course were:

College of Arts & Sciences

Biology	Health Education	Physics
Communications	Journalism	Psychology
Geography	Physical Education	Speech Pathology
Geology		

College of Business & Economics

Accounting	Finance, Marketing & Decision Sciences
Marketing	

College of Fine & Performing Arts

Art

The departments that required a senior thesis, project, or performance as a capstone were:

College of Arts & Sciences

Geography (Regional Planning)
History
Liberal Studies

College of Fine & Performing Arts

Art (Studio and BFA)
Music (Jazz, Performance, and Composition)

The departments that required an internship or student teaching were:

College of Arts & Sciences

Communications (Radio/Broadcast)
Health Education (BS)
Home Economics (Apparel Design, Interior Design, and Fashion
    Marketing)
Journalism

Woodring College of Education

Education Curriculum & Instruction
Human Services

A number of departments noted that internships were available as an option, including Anthropology, Biology, Communications, Geography, Physical Education, Theater/Dance, Accounting, Management, and Finance, Marketing & Decision Sciences.

Question #4: Does your department use any external advisory individuals or committees, either from the community or from professional associations, to evaluate the quality or content of programs? If so, please describe.

Items not included in this survey were mandatory and/or honorary accrediting bodies, citations of merit, college-generated departmental assessments, one-time only evaluations by outside bodies or individuals, or participation in professional associations connected to the department's field of study. Only

department-generated external advisory individuals with an on-going departmental relationship, or standing committees were included.

No departments had outside individuals in advisory positions, but six departments had standing external advisory committees. Alphabetically, they were: Computer Science; Home Economics (Apparel Design, Interior Design, and Fashion Marketing); Huxley College; Geography; Journalism; and Management.

Computer Science has an advisory committee made up of industry professionals; however, its function is more for public relations than a real academic advising entity. Its direct input into the quality and content of the programs is minimal.

Both the Seattle-based Apparel Design and Fashion Marketing programs in the Home Economics Department have advisory committees, as does the Bellingham-based Interior Design program. Each is comprised of professionals within the field of study; each addresses the quality and content of the programs.

Huxley College has an Environmental Advisory Council comprised of members of the community who have interest in environmental affairs. Members meet with Huxley faculty and the Dean on an irregular basis. The council may make program suggestions, but performs no direct program evaluation.

Geography/Regional Planning has an advisory panel of outside professionals who meet annually for an afternoon conference. It is a general advisory panel with a concern for what is happening in the professional planning field, and in education at both the middle- and high-school levels.

Journalism has an advisory committee of seven outside professionals who meet once a year to evaluate the quality and content of the program. The department also has a quarterly editor-in-residence, an outside professional who spends three days at Western making presentations, conducting seminars, and having informal, yet seriously considered discussions about the program with faculty and students.

On December 20, 1989, Management convened the Operations Management Advisory Board. Put into motion by the department's faculty, it is comprised of nine individuals from local and regional industries. Its mission statement reads: ". . .the Operations Management Advisory Board is to assist and support university and operations management faculty in the development, promotion, and the evaluation of the operations management program and faculty in the College of Business & Economics at Western Washington University."

Question #5:   Does your department have any courses or required student activities where students' performances are evaluated by more than one faculty member or by someone from outside the department (internships, public performances and so forth)?   If so, please describe.

For this question, input by teaching assistants was not counted as input by separate faculty.   Regardless of the fact that they may teach labs or conduct seminars independently, as defined they are acting as assistants to a faculty member, not as colleagues.   In situations where TAs teach courses independently--for instance, as happens in English and Mathematics--they have become the instructors of record and their roles again fall outside the intent of this question.

Five departments had required courses or activities where students are evaluated by more than one faculty member. Alphabetically, they were: Art, Foreign Languages, Management, Music, and Speech Pathology.

BFA majors in Art have to make junior and senior presentations of their work in a gallery-styled exhibition.   The exhibition is evaluated by up to four Art Department faculty members.

Foreign Language students seeking a teaching endorsement must pass an oral proficiency exam.   This exam is evaluated by all faculty within the language area.

When Management majors take MGMT 312, a required core course, they often have their video taped presentations jointly viewed and evaluated by two or more faculty members.

Music majors in Applied Instruction, depending on class standing, degree area, and policy of the area coordinator, have annual or quarterly jury exams at which they perform for a panel of faculty instructors.   These instructors give the performance a letter grade, which is incorporated into the overall grade the student receives for that quarter.

Speech Pathology majors have their clinical experiences evaluated by more than one faculty member.

A smattering of team-taught courses are offered through various departments at Western, sometimes within single departments, sometimes with multiple departments coordinating their efforts.   One example of this is Musical Theater Production, a course offered jointly by Theater/Dance and Music, where students are evaluated by faculty members from both departments.

Seven departments have required courses or activities where students were evaluated by outside people. Alphabetically, they were: Communications (Radio/Broadcast); Education Curriculum & Instruction; Health Education (BS); Home Economics (Apparel Design, Interior Design, and Fashion Marketing); Human Services; Journalism; and Recreation.

In all but EdC&I, the above requirement was a contracted internship whose final evaluation, although ultimately determined by the faculty coordinator, had the assessment of the field supervisor factored into it.

The EdC&I requirement is the 16-week student teaching program, which is in essence also an internship, but with some modifications. The Education Curriculum & Instruction Department operates its student teaching program on the team model of supervision. The premise is that at any one time there will be two to five Western interns in any one public school, and rather than only one classroom teacher being responsible for each intern, all teachers with interns cooperate in assessing the entire compliment of interns at the school during the quarter. Often, too, the school principal observes and evaluates the interns. In turn, all of these people work with the University Intern Supervisor (a Western faculty member), cooperating to create as full an evaluation of the student teacher as possible. As with other internships, final evaluation rests with the faculty coordinator, but assessment from field supervisors in an important factor in that decision.

Three departments have further requirements which have input by outside individuals: 1) EdC&I majors have at least two practicum seminars in which field supervisors evaluate their performance in the practicum's area of focus; 2) Health Education majors must take HLED 447, a course with a component requiring the student to perform 20 hours of community service, and whose final grade has the agency supervisor's assessment factored into it; 3) Recreation majors must take a course with a required mini-internship component, and whose final grade also has the agency supervisor's assessment factored into it.

Question #6: What writing intensive courses (courses which require substantial production of written English) are offered in your department? What writing intensive experiences are required of majors or minors? How is student performance evaluated? How many of these courses does the typical student take?

The follow-up questionnaire defined "substantial production of written English" as courses containing at least two of the following four criteria: 1) mid-term and/or final written essay exam; 2) one lengthy (10+ pages) term paper or report; 3) multiple short (1-10 page) papers or reports; 4) opportunities

11

for students to revise papers written under either item 2 or item 3.

Evaluation of courses with a significant writing component was based usually on the first three criteria listed above (exams, short and long papers). Generally, criterion four, the opportunity to revise papers, was reserved for courses designated to the university as writing intensive. Indeed, revision seemed to be the major difference between designated writing intensive courses and courses with a significant writing component.

The number of courses with a significant writing component that a typical student takes listed by college, department, or subdivision is as follows:

ACCT:	4-6	HEC :	6-10
ANTH:	4-10	HSP :	27
ART :	6-7	HUX :	2-4
BIOL:	6	JOUR:	17
CHEM:	3	LBLR:	6+
COMM:	6	MGMT:	8
CSCI:	1	MATH:	1
ECON:	7	MUS :	2-3
EDAF:	see Human Services (HSP)	PHIL:	10+
EDCI:	3-11	PE :	3-4
ENG :	12	PHYS:	10
FLNG:	2-8 (in language of study)	PLSC:	9
FMDS:	6	PSY :	6
GEOG:	9-15	REC :	5+
GEOL:	4	SOC :	2-3
HLED:	7	SPA :	10
HIST:	13+	TH/D:	8-12

Most departments had at least one course offering specified as writing intensive in the Timetable of Classes. All departments offered writing intensive courses; if they weren't listed, it was a printing oversight. Economics, however, indicated that they would no longer be offering a writing intensive course as of Fall 1990.

Two departments, History and Liberal Studies, had a required senior theses with a writing component of particular note. In History, the senior thesis is 30-40 pages in length, plus bibilography and notes. The product is to reflect "an understanding of the historian's craft and the ability to act as an historian." Correct methodology and source use are of particular concern.

Liberal Studies majors must take LBLR 499, a tutorial-styled class with an end project of an essay in the style of the professional literature of the discipline, between 25-30 pages in

length, and appropriately annotated with bibliography. It is a
process course, with all revision and research done under the
supervision of the instructor. Traditionally, other Liberal
Studies faculty read drafts of the paper and offer criticism and
input.

Speech Pathology had a required report of particular note.
Students in Speech Pathology 459 and 460 must write a 30-40 page
summary report of all their clinical experiences, a pulling
together of the weekly reports they do throughout the quarter.

**Question #7:   Does your department require students to pass the
Junior Writing Exam prior to taking a writing intensive course?
Are there any other writing requirements?**

Computer Science, Liberal Studies and Speech Pathology
required, with no qualifications, passage of the Junior Writing
Exam in order to take a writing intensive course.

Two departments had specific instances where students must
pass the Junior Writing Exam: EdC&I required that students trying
to waive their WPCT or SAT scores must pass the JWE; Mathematics
required passage of the JWE for admittance to one nonrequired
writing intensive course.

All other departments only required that the student take
the Junior Writing Exam. Many departments said they took note of
whether a student passed or failed the JWE, and would advise
students to seek help if they had failed it--by taking another
writing class, or by going to the Writing Center. Even in these
departments, however, no student failing the exam would be
refused admittance to a course designated as writing intensive.

The Technology Department is made up of six disciplines, plus offers a Technology Education degree. Each discipline operates quite separately from the others. Administratively, the department almost functions like a college, with each discipline having widely varying requirements for admission and graduation. Indeed, gathering the information necessary from the Technology Department meant interviewing each area discipline supervisor. Thus, for reasons of clarity and readability, it seemed appropriate to present Technology's answers in a section of its own.

The seven areas of study within the Technology Department are:

> Electronic Engineering
> Industrial Design
> Industrial Technology
> Industrial Technology Education
> Manufacturing Engineering
> Plastics Engineering
> Visual Communication

Question #1: Requirements for admission to major.

Two disciplines within the Technology Department had specific admission requirements to their degrees: Industrial Design, and Visual Communication.

Admission to Industrial Design depends on a portfolio review done by two faculty members.

Visual Communication also requires a portfolio review, conducted by the faculty plus three to five outside professionals who are specialists in the student's area of interest (i.e., video, graphic arts). In addition, Visual Communication requires that students receive a GPA of 2.75 or better in TECH 240, 260 and 340, plus submit a letter of intent stating why they want to major in Visual Communication and what areas of study they want to concentrate on.

Question #2: Does the department collect baseline information?

None of the Technology Department disciplines collects baseline information.

Question #3: What capstone experiences are there?

All the disciplines except Industrial Technology have at least one required capstone experience. Electronic Engineering and Manufacturing Engineering use project capstones; Industrial Design uses a portfolio capstone; Plastics Engineering uses a series of courses as a capstone; and Industrial Technology Education has the student teaching capstone as required by the Education Curriulum & Instruction Department. Visual Communication uses two capstone, a project and a portfolio.

For Electronic Engineering students, TECH 474 is the culminating course in the year-long senior project series that begins in the fall with TECH 471, a one-credit project-definition course. The project requires either an exhibit or, in the case of a research project, an oral presentation. There is also a required technical report that runs between 10-15 pages.

Industrial Design requires a portfolio presentation not only at the end of the Senior year, but at the end of Junior year as well, at which time at student, even if admitted to the discipline, can be denied admission to senior-level courses.

Manufacturing Engineering majors must take TECH 422 and 424, the department's project courses. These projects can be generated on or off campus. When done on campus, they are evaluated by two faculty members; when done off campus, they are set up as mini-internships and evaluated by the industrial partner and one faculty member.

Plastics Engineering has a series of capstone courses (TECH 433, 434, and 438) which culminate a student's education in discreet areas of concentration, such as moulding, advanced composites, etc. Plastics Engineering uses a variety of mechanisms in its evaluation procedures. Faculty give written or verbal critiques, peers may do both as well, or both may work together. More than one faculty member may evaluate a student's work, but this is not always the case. Evaluation procedures are evolutionary and intentionally on-going, so that students do not play to an evaluation process rather than concentrating on their education.

Visual Communications has two capstone experiences. One is TECH 447, a writing-intensive course that is set up as a job/career planning course. The main project is the setting up of a business plan. If a student anticipates going into freelance work, then he or she is required to address the issues involved in that process. The result is a written document, roughly 15-20 pages in length, that has gone through a number of revisions. Other projects required in TECH 447 are: 1) practice in writing business forms; 2) summaries of presentations by

practicing professionals; 3) the preparation of the student's professional resume and cover letter.

The second Visual Communication capstone is TECH 448, a team-taught course with two focuses: portfolio preparation, and completion of the senior project.

As mentioned, Industrial Technology has the student teaching experience as its capstone. (See Question #3 in the General Survey Results section above for specifics regarding the EdC&I student teaching experience.)

Question #4: Does your department use external advisory individuals or committees to evaluate quality and content of program?

Four of the disciplines had what the Technology Department called Industrial Advising Committees. They were: Electronic Engineering, Industrial Technology, Plastics Engineering, Manufacturing Engineering.

The Accrediting Board for Engineering & Technology (ABET) requires these committees, but the setting up, drafting of membership, implementation and utilzation of these boards is up to the individual disciplines and their faculties.

The number of times the Industrial Advising Committees meet differs from one discipline to another. In Plastics Engineering, it is up to four times a year; in Electronic Engineering it is up to twice a year; in Manufacturing Engineering it is once a year; and in Industrial Technology it is once every two years.

The other two Technology Department disciplines have had committees in the past. Industrial Design's committee, in fact, still has its membership; for lack of issues, it just has not met in recent years. Visual Communication is in a transition period and is waiting only for its faculty make-up to solidify before setting up a new Industrial Advising Committee.

Question #5: Does your department evaluate students with outside personnel or more than one faculty member?

Two Technology Department disciplines, Electronic Engineering and Visual Communication, have courses that are evaluted by more than one faculty. Plastics Engineering sometimes has such courses, depending on the quarter. Two disciplines, Industrial Design and Manufacturing Engineering, have optional evaluation by outside professionals. Industrial Technology Education majors are evaluated by outside professionals during their student teaching.

The senior project in Electronic Engineering is evaluated by all of its faculty. Visual Communications has a required team-taught course (TECH 447). The senior portfolio produced by Industrial Design students is often critiqued by an outside professional, but it is an informal arrangement. Manufacturing Engineering students have the option of producing their final projects off campus and having an outside evaluation, but it is not required and is done infrequently.

Question #6: What writing intensive experiences are required in your department?

The definition of a significant writing component can be found in Question #6 in the General Survey Results section above. The number of such courses a typical Technology student takes is:

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Electronic Engineering. . . . . . .10+
Industrial Design . . . . . . . . .2
Industrial Technology . . . . . . .1-2
Industrial Technology Education . .3
Manufacturing Engineering . . . . .9+
Plastics Engineering. . . . . . . .6+
Visual Communication. . . . . . . .5
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Question #7: Junior Writing Exam required?

Two disciplines require passage of the Junior Writing Exam for entrance to writing intensive courses. They are Industrial Technology Education and Manufacturing Engineering.
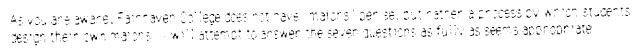
17

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memo
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TO: Bob Thorndike, Assessment Coordinator

FROM: Marie Eaton, Dean, Fairhaven College

DATE: February 17, 1990

RE: Survey of requirements

As you are aware, Fairhaven College does not have "majors" per se, but rather a process by which students design their own majors. I will attempt to answer the seven questions as fully as seems appropriate.

1. To be admitted to the "Concentration Seminar," which is the first step in the development of the concentration, students must have completed most of the lower level of the Core and FAIR 204 — the transition conference. In this conference the student meets with two faculty members and a student who is already working on a concentration. This group reviews the first draft of a plan which includes current areas of strength and planned areas of study. Approval is required from this group prior to registration for the concentration seminar.

As part of the Concentration Seminar, the student prepares the documentation for the concentration, including a rationale, written proposal, scope and sequence of courses, a plan for a senior project. A committee is selected which must approve the plan.

2. There are no data which are collected and analyzed in a systematic manner. However, because students must write and file self evaluations each quarter, there is a wealth of historical developmental data here which begs to be evaluated, probably using some sort of holistic scoring or system like the Perry based MID scheme. This quarter, a written essay was collected from each student in the "Canons for Conflict" class. (Many are first and second quarter students.) An essay will be collected at the end of the class as well. These essays will be evaluated to help us determine the kind of developmental growth that may have been facilitated by the class.

3. There are two major "capstone" experiences, the senior project (FAIR 401) and the advanced seminar (FAIR 405). The projects vary widely depending on the nature of the concentration, but they are intended to be a synthesizing activity. As part of the advanced seminar, the students prepare a summary and evaluation paper which must be approved both by the instructor of the class and for those students who have developed concentrations, by the student's committee as well. This paper requires synthesis of the main themes developed in a concentration or major, a discussion of how well the major or concentration developed these themes, a critique which includes the strengths and weaknesses of the major or concentration and an evaluation of the student's own work.

4. Although Fairhaven does have a community based advisory board, this group does not serve in a program evaluation function. However, there have been numerous external reviews of Fairhaven and its programs. The most recent was conducted in 1987 by Faith Gabelnick from Western Michigan University. The results of these reviews have helped guide program changes.

5.   a. Two faculty and a peer participate in the transition conference and all concentration proposals

are reviewed and approved by at least three faculty members (often including faculty from other units at WWU) and the instruction of the seminar.

    b. The summary and evaluation paper and the senior project are reviewed and approved by at least three faculty members and the instructor of the seminar.

    c. The writing competency requires that a portfolio of the student's writing be evaluated by at least two faculty members.

    d. Internships are frequent and typically have an outside evaluator who participates in the final evaluation of the student's work, usually through a written summary. This summary is filed with the student's portfolio.

    e. The senior project often has outside evaluation which includes members of the community and/or peers.

6.   a. All students must pass FAIR 203 (the writing competency) by submitting a portfolio of writing to be evaluated by two or more faculty.

    b. Both FAIR 303 (the concentration seminar) and FAIR 403 (the advanced seminar) require significant writing with revision. All students must take 403 and any student selecting the concentration option must take 303.

    c. Many other Fairhaven courses include significant writing as part of the requirements. The typical Fairhaven student takes at least one writing intensive course in addition to those required in the Core and about 25% take two or more. All of these classes require students to prepare drafts, workshop with other students or the faculty and revise accordingly.

    d. The two foundations courses in the required Core (FAIR 101 for freshfolks and FAIR 301 for transfers) focus on the development of writing skills and college level writing.

    e. Students who experience difficulty in writing in these Core classes are encouraged (and sometimes required) to take an additional college writing class.

7. See question 6.

Appendix A

Copies of original memos sent to Department Chairs

To: All WWU Department Chairs

From: Robert M. Thorndike, Assessment Coordinator

Date: 1 December 1989

Subject: Survey of various department requirements and courses

At its meeting in May the Higher Education Coordinating Board
accepted a recommendation from the Provosts of the four-year
institutions that no single standardized assessment procedure, test or
otherwise, be required of all institutions at this time. Instead, Each
institution was directed to develop its own procedures for collecting
six basic types of assessment information. The six areas of concern
to the Board were:

   1. Entry characteristics of students.

   2. Accomplishments of students in their majors.

   3. A review of academic programs.

   4. A measure of students' accomplishments at some midpoint in their
   academic career. (This is a substitute for the standardized test
   at the end of the sophomore year that the Board had originally
   contemplated.)

   5. A survey of the attitudes and satisfaction levels of alumni.

   6. A survey of employer perceptions and satisfaction.

Most student entry characteristics are already a matter of record.
We may wish to supplement this information, but it will not directly
affect the day-to-day conduct of the academic program if we do.
Likewise, the surveys of alumni and employer attitudes need not
concern the faculty directly (although you will probably be consulted
more than you want to be about these projects).

The reviews of academic programs and assessments of accomplishments
in the major are matters of direct faculty concern and should
influence our long-term and strategic planning. It is in these areas
that I would like your help at this time.

A first step in deciding what to do about these issues is to develop
a complete catalog of current practices and requirements in every
major offered at Western. To that end, we need the answers to the
several questions on the following page about each major offered in
your department. Please consider these questions as they relate to
each undergraduate major (for example, a BA and a BS in Physics
would be different majors, as would degrees with different titles).
Some time in the next few weeks an assistant will call you to arrange
a convenient time when he can interview you by telephone on these
topics. After the interview, he will prepare a summary for your
review and approval.

Questions and issues to be addressed in the interview

1. What requirements must students meet for admission to the major?
Include minimum GPA and any courses or other experiences.

2. Does your department collect any baseline information on students
before or during their first course? Is student progress (other than
in the first course) compared to that basline information? If so,
how?

3. What "capstone" experiences are required of majors? Include
required senior overview courses, senior theses, projects or
performances, and the like? How are these evaluated?

4. Does your department use any external advisory individuals or
committees, either from the community or from professional
associations. to evaluate the quality or content of programs? If so,
please describe.

5. Does your department have any courses or required student
activities where students' performances are evaluated by more than
one faculty member or by someone from outside the department
(interships, public performances and so forth)? If so, please
describe.

6. What writing intensive courses (courses which require substantial
production of written English) are offered in your department? What
writing intensive experiences are required of majors or minors? How
is student performance evaluated? How many of these courses does
the typical student take?

7. Does your department require students to pass the junior writing
exam prior to taking a writing intensive course? Are there any other
writing requirements?

If you have any questions or comments about this survey, please give
me a call at x-3575.

If you wish, please feel free to write out your responses to these
questions and send them to me.

Thanks in advance for your help.

WESTERN WASHINGTON ▬▬▬ UNIVERSITY **MEMO**

To   All Department Chairs

From   Gary McKinney, assistant to Dr. Thorndike

Date   Feb. 6, 1990

Subject Follow-up to Survey of Department Requirements

Thank you for your cooperation on the recent survey. We hate to bother you
again, but we do have one follow-up question whose response would help us
enormously. You may simply enter the numerical answer in the space provided
below and send this memo back to the Testing Center, Old Main 120.

Approximately how many courses does a typical student in your department take
that contain a significant writing component? [Significant for purposes of
this survey is defined as having at least two of the following four criteria:
(1) mid-term and/or final written essay exams; (2) one lengthy (10+ pages) term
paper or report; (3) multiple short (1-10 page) papers or reports; (4) oppor-
tunities for students to revise papers written under either item 2 or item 3.]

Number:_____

NOTE: If the above number varies greatly between concentrations within the
major, a short explanation or delineation may be included below.

Thanks again for your patience and cooperation.