

SPECIAL FEATURES/CONTRIBUTIONS SPÉCIALES

The Need for Applied Humanities in Postsecondary Technical/Vocational Education

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ABSTRACT

In the fall of 1981, the Calgary Institute for the Humanities at the University of Calgary undertook a study of the need for the humanities in one and two-year technical/vocational programs in the ten public colleges and two technical institutes in the Province of Alberta. This study was commissioned by the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. The research culminated in a report entitled, "The Humanities in Alberta Postsecondary Technical and Vocational Education." The object of this paper is to review the major findings and recommendations of this Report.

A central thrust of the report in terms of improving the humanities component in technical/vocational programs has to do with the need to teach the humanities in such a way as to relate to the needs and interests of students in these programs. Various implications that evolve from this central emphasis on the need for applied humanities are reviewed in this paper.

RÉSUMÉ

A l'automne 1981, l'Institut pour les Humanités de l'Université de Calgary a entrepris une étude du besoin pour les humanités dans les programmes "vocationaux" de un et deux ans dans les dix collèges publiques et les deux instituts techniques de la province d'Alberta. Cette recherche a donné lieu à un rapport intitulé "The Humanities in Alberta Postsecondary Technical and Vocational Education". Le but de cet article est de revoir les résultats et les recommandations majeures de ce rapport.

L'idée centrale du rapport vise à améliorer l'enseignement des humanités dans les programmes techniques et "vocationaux" pour lui donner une pertinence reliée davantage aux besoins et intérêts des étudiants. Les implications qui découlent du rapport sont également mises en évidence.

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INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1981, the Calgary Institute for the Humanities at the University of Calgary, undertook a study of the need for the humanities in postsecondary technical/vocational education in the Province of Alberta. This study was commissioned by the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. The research culminated in a 568 page report entitled, "The Humanities in Alberta Postsecondary Technical and Vocational Education." The object of this paper is to review the major findings and recommendations of this Report in the light of an underlying theme that runs throughout the Report, namely, the need for applied humanities.¹

Postsecondary institutions offering technical, occupational and professional education in Alberta include universities, institutes of technology, public colleges and a number of vocational centres. This study was limited to the ten public colleges and the two institutes of technology in Alberta. It was further primarily concerned about the need for humanities courses or components in one or two year technical/vocational programs at these institutions.

A major objective of the study was to provide a comprehensive inventory of humanities courses and humanities components offered in technical/vocational programs in the colleges and institutes of technology. The second major objective of the study was to document the general and specific needs for humanities components in technical/vocational programs. The third objective included a detailed analysis of the expressed needs for humanistic components in relation to current curricula with a view to assessing strengths and weaknesses as well as making recommendations for redeployment of current humanities instructional resources so as to produce technical and occupational graduates better able to meet the needs of Alberta's industry and society.

A variety of research methods were used and a number of different sources were tapped in getting the data to accomplish the second and third objectives mentioned above. The primary research method used was the interview method. (a) An attempt was made to interview most administrators of technical/vocational programs. In bigger institutions, it was not possible to interview the lowest level of administration, i.e. program heads. In all, 130 administrators, Deans, Directors, Department or Program Heads were interviewed within Alberta colleges and institutes. (b) A total of 82 humanities instructors or chairmen of humanities departments were also interviewed. Generally, attempts were made to interview several English or Communications instructors and at least one representative from each of the humanities taught at each institution. (c) An attempt was also made to interview at least one or two employers in each city where a college or institute is located. In the bigger centers such as Calgary and Edmonton, a greater number of employers were interviewed. An attempt was made to include a wide variety of employers, such that we would be getting responses concerning the performance of graduates from the various kinds of one and two-year technical/vocational programs in Alberta's postsecondary institutions. Employers were also asked about their views concerning the place of humanities in technical/

vocational programs. A total of 30 employers were interviewed. Letters were sent out to another 55 employers inviting responses to some of the same questions used in the interviews. Fourteen of these responded to the letters sent out.

Questionnaires were also used, but were not relied on as heavily as were the interviews in determining the need for humanities components in technical/vocational programs and in assessing strengths and weaknesses in current offerings. This approach was used to gather data from students and graduates.

What Are The Humanities?

Before reviewing the findings of this study, it might be well to consider what is meant by the term "humanities." (a) Aim: The humanities traditionally form one group of disciplines which are considered to be an essential component of a liberal, or a general education. In the Preface of a recent book by Woods and Coward (1979) it is maintained that the study of the humanities is intended "to enlarge the understanding, deepen the critical impulse, challenge the imagination, enhance the sensibility, and refine the human spirit." (b) Content: Studies in the humanities have traditionally focussed on such disciplines as languages, literature, philosophy, and history. However, one can also study the philosophical and historical aspects of the sciences, social sciences and even technologies. Thus, the humanities must not be seen as limited to a specific group of academic disciplines, but include all forms of study which explore human reality and experience, guided by literature, history as well as by philosophical analysis and reflection. (c) Methodology: The search for knowledge is, of course rooted in and guided by our contact with empirical reality. While both the humanities and the sciences share this common starting point, the humanities place less emphasis on empirical research and the use of the scientific method. The methodology of the humanities focusses instead on the application of such skills as the ability to reason logically, to communicate clearly and persuasively, the imaginative capacity to perceive both present reality and future possibilities as the product of past experience and the ability to evaluate human experience from a moral perspective.

An appeal to the traditional characterization of the humanities has its dangers, however, especially when one is considering the relation between humanities and technical/vocational education. There is the danger, for example, of thinking of the humanities in terms of typical university transfer courses. But this begs a number of questions and precludes any possibility of developing an innovative approach to the marriage of the humanities and technical/vocational education. It is therefore important to use a more inclusive definition of the humanities which will recognize humanities components implicit in technical/vocational courses, "hybrid" courses which involve a fusion of humanities and other concerns, "applied humanities," etc. All communications or Language Arts courses including Report Writing and Business English are also classified as humanities, even though these might be considered essentially technical and skill-oriented in nature.

It should be noted that this more inclusive definition of the humanities is itself a

fairly contentious issue in Alberta's postsecondary institutions. We will have more to say on this controversy later.

A Review of Current Humanities Requirements and Offerings

If one interprets the term "policies" somewhat loosely to include both written and unwritten policies, there are two kinds of policies concerning the humanities which are in existence in Alberta's colleges and institutes. First of all, nearly all 2-year technical/vocational programs and even most 1-year certificate programs require that students take one or two courses in Communications. Composition, Report Writing, Business Writing or Speech. It must be stressed, however, that the above English requirement is in nearly all cases very practical in orientation. These courses tend to be specifically geared to improving oral and written communication skills in the technology concerned.

The second kind of policy has to do with general education requirements. Two colleges have official and well-defined policies concerning general education. At Mount Royal College all 2-year technical and vocational programs have a literacy requirement (generally English 1110), and a general education requirement which consists of a minimum of four arts and science courses, or 12-14 credits, and comprises up to a maximum of 20 percent of each diploma program. At least one course must be chosen from each of any four of the seven arts and science core areas described in the calendar. Of the seven core areas, four include a significant number of humanities courses or components (Communications, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Behavioral Sciences). All of these courses are offered by the Faculty of Arts, which functions largely as a service department, providing arts electives for career programs (Mount Royal College Office of Educational Liaison, 1981-1982, p.24).

At Grant MacEwan College, the general education requirement has been reduced as of July 1, 1981. Students in 2-year diploma programs are now required to take an English course plus three electives. Most of the electives are chosen from a total of about 100 courses offered by a separate Academic Services Division. Of these, about 62 are humanities courses, or courses with significant humanities components. There is, however, some flexibility as to what counts as an elective, and thus elective courses can be chosen from other technical and vocational programs (Grant MacEwan Community College Registrar's Office, 1981-1982, p.6).

A third college is now in the process of establishing a policy concerning general education. There are three institutions where general education policies established in the past are no longer strictly enforced (Lethbridge Community College, Olds College and S.A.I.T.). The remaining institutions examined have in place no *explicit* policies concerning general education in technical/vocational programs.

There are three fairly distinct approaches to humanities education in Alberta postsecondary technical/vocational institutions:

(a) The first, which I will call the "general education model" is taken at Mount Royal College and Grant MacEwan Community College. I have already described

the policies that exist at these institutions. At each of these colleges, a separate faculty or division exists, primarily to provide technical/vocational students with required and elective general education courses. The courses offered include a wide variety of humanities offerings, "pure humanities courses," interdisciplinary courses, university and non-university transfer courses, courses specially adapted to various technical/vocational programs at the college. Since the general education department exists primarily as a service department, there are usually established procedures to ensure cooperation with departments offering technical/vocational programs. It should be noted that the above model of humanities education also exists to some degree at a few of the other Alberta institutions being reviewed in this paper.

(b) A second approach to humanities education in technical/vocational programs may be termed a "university transfer model." Here humanities offerings are primarily located in 2-year university transfer programs. This model predominates at Grande Prairie Regional College, Red Deer College, and Medicine Hat College. Mount Royal College also offers university transfer courses but I have already outlined some important and unique aspects of humanities education there, which justify its inclusion in a separate category. Two other colleges, Lakeland College and Keyano College have recently begun a university transfer program and thus the university transfer model may be emerging in these institutions as well.

Humanities or Liberal Arts departments at these colleges tend to operate without direct association with technical/vocational programs. Instructors in the humanities department have made little or no attempt to design courses specifically for technical/vocational programs and were in fact described as reluctant to teach non-university transfer courses in technical/vocational programs. Technical/vocational programs at these colleges include the usual English requirements and about half of all programs require the completion of additional humanities courses, two additional courses being about the average. Most of these courses are taught by faculty specifically hired for the task, or by existing faculty within the technical/vocational departments. Only a few technical/vocational students take humanities offered by the university transfer department.

(c) The third approach to humanities education in technical/vocational programs relies heavily on teaching the humanities indirectly in technical/vocational courses, and might be termed "the implicit humanities model." This model exists at institutions whose primary focus is technical/vocational training, such as the two technical institutes, N.A.I.T. and S.A.I.T., and at Fairview College. Other institutions where this model tends to predominate include Lakeland College, Lethbridge Community College, Keyano College and Olds College.

The curriculum at these institutions does include English courses, but these focus primarily on technical report writing and business letter writing. Courses in human relations or organizational behavior may be included, again because of their practical relevance to good working relations. Many courses which are predominantly technical in nature do contain minor humanities components. For example, The Clinics courses in the Animal Health Technology program at

N.A.I.T. touch briefly on ethical questions concerning the care of animals. The Urban and Regional Planning Technology program features a course on "The Structure of the City," which includes a brief history of the city as well as a discussion of its political impact.

There are two other considerations that need to be kept in mind when describing the present state of humanities education in technical/vocational programs. The first has to do with the length of program involved. It was found that generally 1-year certificate programs have proportionately fewer English and other humanities requirements than 2-year diploma programs. However, many short-term technical/vocational programming including apprenticeship programs offer no form of humanities education.

Technical/vocational programs must secondly be distinguished in terms of the kinds of job-responsibilities which will be required of graduates. Some jobs are more people-related than others. Some fields such as Business Administration, Early Childhood Education, Law Enforcement, Rehabilitation Services, Nursing and Social Services involve frequent and intensive contact with career professional and client. It was found that technical/vocational programs in these fields are characterized by a much greater level of humanities and social science education than is common in other programs.

Many other distinctions could and should be made, because there is a great diversity of technical/vocational programs in Alberta colleges and institutes. However, the above analysis is sufficient to show that there would seem to be a general recognition of the importance of humanities education in technical/vocational programs. Nearly all technical/vocational programs devote a significant amount of time to humanities education. Of the 130 Deans, Directors, Department or Program Heads of technical/vocational programs surveyed either by interviews or questionnaires, 78% supported the idea of a humanities requirement for students in technical/vocational programs. The support for a specific English requirement was even higher – 91%. 77% of the 30 employers who were interviewed also supported the idea of a humanities requirement for technical/vocational programs.

Given this kind of support for humanities education, there is little need to argue for the place of the humanities in technical/vocational education. It is also unnecessary to argue for a major increase in the amount of time devoted to the humanities in technical/vocational programs since nearly all programs in all Alberta institutions do already devote significant blocks of time to the humanities. The primary thrust of this paper is instead on making more effective use of the time and resources already in place.

The Implications of Applied Humanities

One of the most frequently mentioned problems with regard to the teaching of the humanities was the failure of both courses and instructors to relate to the needs and interests of technical/vocational students. Arguments against the place of the humanities in technical/vocational programs also often centered around their

apparent irrelevance. A senior administrator, for example, argued that he would support humanities requirements only if it could be established that they were relevant to future career needs. Student and graduate objections to, or complaints about the humanities centered around their apparent irrelevance. Where attempts are made to relate to student interests and needs, the objections to and criticisms of humanities components in technical/vocational programs seem to disappear. One instructor, for example, reported that the more you apply the humanities and relate them to student needs, "the more enthusiasm you can engender."

The Director of a very successful humanities program for engineering students at the Colorado School of Mines (Philipose, 1982) gives this apt advice. "The more career oriented an institution, the greater the need for brokerage between the humanities and career interests." This captures the heart of the central thrust of this paper. What is needed is a new conception of the humanities which allows for the possibility of applied humanities, where the humanities are related to real life and to technical/vocational concerns. What then are the implications of accepting this notion of applied humanities for technical/vocational programs?

(a) How much humanities education is justifiable?

An acceptance of the principle of relating the humanities to technical/vocational needs and interests will first of all affect the amount of humanities content that can be included in one and two-year technical/vocational programs. No college or institute can teach everything. The colleges and institutes of Alberta have clearly defined their priorities in terms of career preparation based on sound technical/vocational education. These priorities must be understood and accepted. However, the humanities may still have an important part to play within this accepted focus on the development of technical/vocational skills. Their role will, however, be a subordinate role, and only so much will be included as will enhance the primary technical/vocational concerns of these institutions.

It needs to be stressed that although humanities education will be viewed as subordinate to technical/vocational interests, this does not at all imply that a humanities component is not important for technical/vocational education. A limited amount of humanities education is very important for the development of the student as a person, but also and especially in terms of his future job performance. Here we see another implication of the acceptance of the idea of applied humanities. The justification for a humanities education will differ in emphasis from the traditional justification. Within technical/vocational education, the justification for including humanities must be made in terms of their importance for preparing individuals for the job market. This is the only kind of argument that will "sell" in the technical/vocational context. We need to be realistic. This does not at all mean that humanities cannot also be justified in terms of creating well rounded individuals, but this kind of justification must be given a secondary importance within the context of technical/vocational education.

Given that a limited amount of humanities education in technical/vocational programs is very important; policies must be set in place, which ensure that

adequate attention is being paid to the humanities. As has already been mentioned, some institutions already have policies in place, while others are drafting policies; some policies are being re-evaluated and revised; and other policies have fallen into disuse. This policy debate is time consuming, and engenders insecurity and unease and only serves to undermine the effectiveness of humanities instruction already in existence. It further needs to be stressed that while most technical/vocational programs at most institutions devote a significant amount of time to humanities education, there are some which pay almost no attention to this area. The establishment of a general humanities policy would help to raise the minimum educational requirement in the humanities to a standard level, a level which would be of benefit to technical/vocational education in Alberta.

The most appropriate level for the establishment of such a policy is at provincial level and it is therefore recommended that the Alberta Department of Advanced Education and Manpower initiate a policy requiring that general education courses constitute a minimum of 25% of total course requirements in technical/vocational programs; and that a significant portion of such general education courses consist of courses in the humanities or humanities components of other courses (Coward and Thiessen, 1983, pp. 54f). Such policies have been adopted elsewhere to good effect.² It needs to be stressed that this requirement should not be understood simply in terms of courses, but that it takes into account humanities components which are implicit or integrated into technical/vocational courses.

(b) Essential humanities for technical/vocational programs.

Since there is only a limited amount of time for humanities education in the technical/vocational programs, it is important to establish priorities in the humanities. The operative principle is that we should only include those humanities that are in some way related to the concerns and needs of those in the technical/vocational field. The suggested priorities in the humanities that are described in this section are largely based on the comments made by employers interviewed, as well as the reports of program and department heads on the comments made by Advisory Committees which have been established at most institutions to advise program and department heads as to curriculum needs. From these comments four areas of humanities studies seemed to emerge as essential to technical/vocational programs. These are described in terms of certain types of courses which are likely to encourage the development of certain abilities and skills judged to be of value in later job performances.

- (i) Communications Skills: Composition, Report Writing, Reading, Oral Communication, Literature.
- (ii) Human Relations: Psychology, Sociology, Organizational Behavior, Ability to understand self and others.
- (iii) Reasoning Skills: Logic, Ability to organize information, Analytical and critical skills, Problem-solving, Decision-making, Creative Thinking.
- (iv) Values Education: Personal ethics, Professional ethics, Political values, Work ethics, Life goals, Social awareness and responsibility.

Since these four humanities areas are viewed as essential for technical/vocational education, they should become part of the core curriculum of technical/vocational programs, having the same status as other essential technical courses. It should be noted that this idea of a required core curriculum in the humanities is at variance with the elective approach to humanities in technical/vocational programs which is prevalent at several Alberta institutions.

Given the variety of institutions and technical/vocational programs being dealt with in this paper, I would suggest that a great degree of flexibility must be allowed in translating the above four humanities areas into actual course requirements. It seems to me, however, that preference should be given to humanities courses which are *especially adapted* to the needs of the technical/vocational program in which they are required. Another preferred approach is to integrate humanities concerns into regular technology courses. It has already been mentioned that the 25% general education requirement for technical/vocational programs should recognize this integrative or implicit approach to humanities as an accepted means of fulfilling this requirement. I also believe that much more should be done by way of having humanities specialists prepare short modules which can be incorporated into technical courses when most appropriate.

(c) The teaching of the humanities.

The most obvious implication of an emphasis on applied humanities has to do with how the humanities should be taught when they are part of a technical/vocational program. The basic thrust of this paper is that the humanities must be taught so as to relate to the needs and interests of technical/vocational students. A fundamental principle of good teaching is that we must start where students are at. To teach humanities as an esoteric discipline which somehow is supposed to have intrinsic value will do little good. If anything, it will only foster negative reactions, a point which came up again and again in the research. Good pedagogy demands accommodation to technical/vocational needs and interests.

Humanities can, and in my opinion always should, be taught so as to help students see that "ideas do have consequences."³ The interrelationship between ideas and consequences should be emphasized by using examples drawn from the particular technical field being studied. Issues and concerns unique to a particular field should provide the basis for class discussions. For example, a course in moral philosophy or ethics in a Nursing Program should illustrate concepts and moral principles by referring to situations that arise in the field of nursing practice. Such a course could cover the same concepts and principles, and be just as rigorous as any traditional philosophy course at a university, but it would be perceived to be, and it would indeed be very relevant and useful to nursing students. A history instructor at Mount Royal College has developed a course entitled "History of Childhood" for students in the Early Childhood Education and Development Program. Other examples of courses specially adapted to various technical/vocational programs could be provided. It is this kind of humanities instruction which is the key to the success of humanities components in technical/vocational programs.

What this entails further is that the traditional university transfer course will not serve technical/vocational needs. This is primarily because it fails to effect a brokerage between the humanities and career interests. A chairman of a Liberal and Applied Arts Division was therefore justified in lamenting the fact that humanities instructors were "locked into traditional boxes," and offered only university transfer courses to technical/vocational students. Another senior administrator correctly observed that we need to think of more creative ways to introduce the humanities into technical/vocational programs. "A key problem is the delivery of the package," he noted. When efforts are made to adapt humanities courses to the needs and interests of technical/vocational students, there was found to be support and even enthusiasm for these courses.

(d) Teachers of the humanities.

The need for applied humanities also has implications for the training and professional development of humanities instructors who teach students in technical/vocational programs. Few humanities instructors have had training in the application of the humanities to technical/vocational needs since most of these instructors were educated at universities where the humanities are taught in a traditional discipline-oriented manner. Thus many humanities instructors at our colleges and institutes simply do not know how to adapt the humanities to technical/vocational courses. Others would seem to be unwilling to do so. There were reports of isolationism and elitism on the part of humanities faculty, especially in those institutions with university transfer programs. Only 23% of all humanities instructors surveyed, reported that they had in the last 2 years initiated any courses which were specially adapted for technical/vocational programs.

There is also a need for humanities faculty to become more familiar with the technical and vocational areas they are serving. They should be spending a good deal of time reading, taking courses, and even attending conferences related to specific technical/vocational fields. A psychology instructor at one of the colleges reported that he had attended conferences in Law Enforcement and Nursing and that he found these conferences more beneficial than conferences that were more narrowly concerned with his own discipline. It would seem, however, that Alberta humanities instructors have generally not engaged in professional development which would assist them in integrating the humanities with technical/vocational programming.

This problem gives rise to several recommendations. There is a need for a special in-service training program at each college or institute for humanities instructors, a program which is geared specifically to adapting education in the humanities to technical/vocational programs. Humanities instructors should also be encouraged to take courses in the technical/vocational areas which they are servicing. Funds must also be made available to humanities faculty for professional development, but with the stipulation that one-half of these funds be used to attend conferences which seek to integrate studies in the humanities with technical/vocational concerns. It is also recommended that the Alberta Department of Advanced Education and Manpower sponsor a series of weekend seminars or a

two-week summer seminar dealing with the general topic of adapting humanities teaching to technical/vocational programs (Coward and Thiessen, 1983, p. 147).

A few recommendations also stem from the fact that the integrative approach to including humanities in technical/vocational courses has been accepted as another legitimate way to educate in the humanities. However, if technical/vocational instructors are themselves expected to incorporate humanities components into their courses, then it is surely reasonable to expect these instructors to have had adequate education in the humanities. One respondent, for example, pointed out the incongruity of requiring trades instructors in high schools to have a degree which would include some humanities background, but not requiring this at the college level. I would therefore recommend that where technical/vocational instructors themselves are expected to integrate humanities components into technical/vocational courses, that such instructors be required to have a B.A. or B.Ed. degree; and where this is lacking, that they be required to upgrade their education to this level. Special in-service training programs should also be established at each college or institute for technical/vocational instructors who are expected to integrate studies in the humanities into technical/vocational courses.

(e) Structural implications of applied humanities.

Although recognition is given to the possibility of technical/vocational instructors themselves introducing humanities components into their courses, this approach alone will not do justice to the need for humanities instruction at any college or institute. There will always be a need for a core staff of full-time humanities instructors at each institution who are specialists in their fields and who are dedicated to teaching humanities courses and preparing humanities modules specifically for technical/vocational programs. It was found that in some cases, inadequacy of instruction stemmed from the apparent lack of a core staff of humanities instructors or the tendency to hire part-time instructors for humanities, or even to assign humanities courses to unqualified instructors as a way of filling up their workload requirements. It is therefore important for each institution to hire a sufficient core of full-time humanities instructors to provide service courses for technical/vocational programs.

At many of the Alberta institutions, the question of institutional structure for the humanities is evoking considerable debate. Should there be a separate humanities department or should humanities instructors be integrated into technical/vocational departments? The writer opts for the first alternative because there is a need for some degree of autonomy for humanities faculty so as to ensure that the goals and values of humanities education are indeed maintained. A separate humanities department also ensures the hiring of adequately qualified faculty, the encouragement of professional development, the maintenance of good morale and high and uniform standards, etc.

It is of fundamental importance, however, that the humanities faculty be made to relate to the technical/vocational programs they are serving. Mention has already been made of tendencies towards elitism and isolationism on the part of some humanities departments. I would therefore suggest, as one way to overcome

these problems that all humanities faculty be cross-appointed with both the humanities department and the technical/vocational department they are serving. I would further suggest that equal consideration should be given to both the humanities chairman's and the technical/vocational chairman's recommendation concerning merit increment and/or promotion for humanities faculty.

It has already been suggested that the goals and patterns of university transfer courses differ sharply from what has been described as desirable for technical/vocational programs. The basic problem would seem to be that university transfer courses seem to resist adaptation to the specific needs of technical/vocational students. Thus, at institutions where university transfer teaching is undertaken, such courses should not normally be made to service technical/vocational needs, unless of course they are specially adapted to these needs. It is also inadvisable to mix students from diverse technical/vocational programs in the same humanities course, again because of the diversity of needs.

5. CONCLUSION

All of the above will no doubt be interpreted by some as a betrayal of the very essence of the humanities. The humanities "purist" might maintain that any adaptation of humanities courses to the pragmatic concerns of technical/vocational programs is contradictory to the traditional conception of the study of humanities as having an intrinsic value and as something that should be pursued for its own sake. If this is indeed the traditional conception of the humanities, then it might be high time for a change. And, there are some who are calling for a change. A recent study of liberal education, for example, notes a trend towards a new adaptive relationship between the liberal arts and the professions, and concludes with the suggestion that we need to allow more room for diversity in liberal arts offerings to professional programs in colleges and universities (Clifton and Wyer, 1980, pp. 33 ff, 58).

However, the basic response to the humanities purist is that he has a misconception of the humanities. The ideas about man and nature that are at the heart of the humanities can be shown to have practical consequences, and good teaching in the humanities has always been careful to show this. The teachings of the humanities are tested in the "laboratory" of life and the good humanities instructor always has made this testing place an essential element in the courses which he or she teaches. Even Plato, we should remind traditional humanists, asked his philosopher-king to spend a good deal of time trying to relate the ideas he was contemplating to the ordinary world in which ordinary mortals lived.

NOTES

1. This paper is a revised draft of an address given at the annual conference of the Alberta Association of College Faculty (AACF), May 31, 1984. The full report of which it is a precis, was co-authored by Dr. Harold G. Coward and was released in 1983. The report will be published in revised form by the University of Calgary Press in 1985.

2. The provinces of Ontario and Quebec both have had policies concerning general education requirements in technical/vocational programs in place for many years.
3. See an important book by this title by Weaver (1948-1984).

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