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ABSTRACT

In 1985, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) called together a group of two-year college leaders with a strong commitment to the humanities to explore issues and formulate a humanities policy statement for the AACJC. This monograph provides the resulting policy statement, as well as papers developed to stimulate interest in and encourage the continued study of the humanities in the two-year college. Following a preface by Dale Parnell describing the objectives and outcomes of the roundtable, Judith S. Eaton provides an introductory overview of the topic of humanities instruction in community colleges. The policy statement, "The Study of the Humanities in Community, Technical, and Junior Colleges," as adopted by the AACJC Board of Directors on April 12, 1986, is presented next. The next paper, "Staking a Claim to the Future: Humanities Studies in our Community Colleges," by Tziporah Kasachkoff and Joshua L. Smith, offers a critique of William Bennett's 1984 report, "To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education." Responses to the Humanities Policy Statement are offered by Arthur M. Cohen and Florence B. Brawer in "The Humanities Revisited," which compares the 1985 recommendations with those of AACJC's 1979 Assembly on Strengthening the Humanities; and by W. J. Megginson in "A Reaction from the Community College Humanities Association." The final paper, "Kirkwood Community College: A Humanities Case Study," by Rhonda Kekke and Terry Moran describes the college's efforts to integrate the study of humanities into its varied curricula. A listing of roundtable participants is included. (LAL)

The Future of Humanities Education at Community, Technical, and Junior Colleges

THE FUTURE OF HUMANITIES EDUCATION AT COMMUNITY, TECHNICAL, AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

EDITED BY DIANE U. EISENBERG
AND JAMES F. GOLLATTSCHECK

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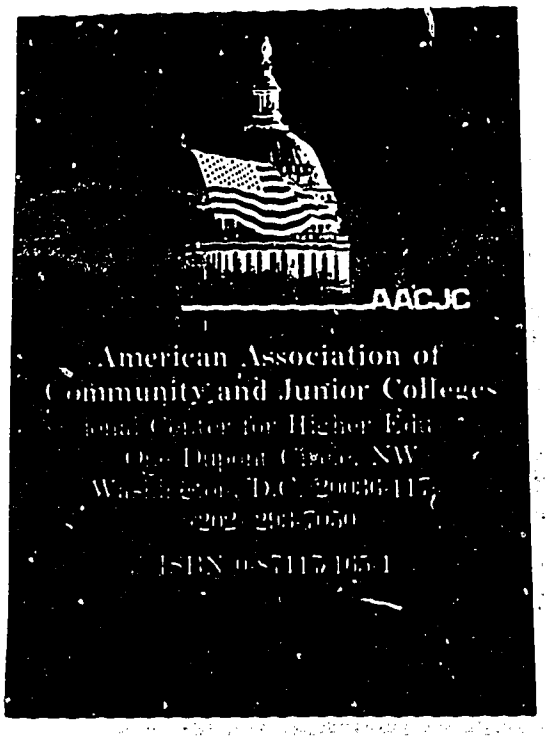

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I. PREFACE

"The study of the humanities is the study of the meaning of life. As such it focuses on learning how to use language to create, communicate, and convince; it interprets human values and helps us to understand the history and continuity of human existence; it teaches us to question and understand the nature of what we can know and the ways in which we can know. Without an understanding of the disciplines of the humanities, our college graduates will never be educated in the fullest, most liberating and humane sense."

Linda B. Spoerl, Chair
Arts and Humanities Division
Highline Community College

PREFACE

DALE PARNELL

On June 23-24, 1985, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges called together a group of education leaders who have demonstrated both their commitment to the humanities and their knowledge of the needs of the nation's two-year colleges. The roundtable participants met to explore the issues raised in William J. Bennett's *To Reclaim a Legacy* and to formulate a humanities policy statement for AACJC. This monograph is a result of their efforts. In addition to the policy statement itself, it is composed of papers prepared for the purpose of stimulating interest in and accepting the challenge of encouraging the continued study of the humanities in our nation's community, technical, and junior colleges.

A most provocative reading of Secretary Bennett's report is offered in the position paper by Tziporah Kasachkoff, professor of philosophy, Borough of Manhattan Community College, and Joshua Smith, chancellor, California Community Colleges, and immediate past chair, AACJC Board of Directors. The paper was distributed in advance to the roundtable participants to serve as an introduction to the issues to be raised and a challenging stimulant to further discussion. It is followed by two later responses to the humanities policy statement: by Arthur Cohen and Florence Brawer of the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, who compare the 1985 recommendations with those made at AACJC's 1979 Assembly on Strengthening the Humanities; and by W.J. Megginson, executive director of the Community College Humanities Association, who reviews CCHA reactions to the policy statement on the basis of discussions held at five regional conferences. Finally, Rhonda Kekke, professor of speech and communication at Kirkwood Community College, and Terry Moran, dean of arts and sciences, present a case study of Kirkwood's highly successful efforts at integrating the study of humanities into the college's varied curricula.

The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges is appreciative of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities which enabled it to accomplish these vital purposes and to help sustain the Association's commitment to the study of the humanities at our nation's community, technical, and junior colleges. We are also indebted to Diane U. Eisenberg, president, Eisenberg Associates, and James F. Gollattscheck, executive vice president, AACJC, for their leadership in conducting the roundtable that resulted in this monograph.

Dale Parnell is president and chief executive officer of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

II. FOREWORD

"To call for the humanities to be part of the foundation of every student's house of learning is not special pleading. It is simply sound educational practice. To provide the means for men and women to become more insightful, understanding, logical, and literate is to help them develop qualities equally valuable for their personal lives as for their working competence. Uniquely enhanced by the study of languages, literature, history, philosophy, ethics, and the arts, these qualities help individuals to understand those with whom they live and develop their self-understanding as well. The humanities remind us there is much more to life than earning a living."

Stanley F. Paulson
Vice President
Association of American Colleges

FOREWORD

JUDITH S. EATON

The dynamic history of community colleges has included two major phases of institutional attention to humanities education. Phase one may be described by our replication of lower-division humanities offerings in four-year institutions or universities. Because of the significant interest in community colleges as agencies of transfer, we were initially successful in housing humanities education as part of our transfer function. We had strong humanities faculty; we were able to develop some reasonably effective articulation arrangements with some four-year schools; we ensured that some humanities education was part of distribution requirements associated with the earning of our degrees. Phase two of humanities education cannot be so neatly described. It is composed, in essence, of our attempts to realize that, as students ceased to obtain degrees and transferred less frequently, humanities education seemed increasingly to be a byproduct of community college efforts. In an effort to diminish the obvious deleterious impact of the demise of the humanities, some among us are seeking to rethink and rearrange the community college commitment to humanities education.

Community colleges have predicated their success on what other institutions were not; we were open access in the face of selective admission; we were low cost in the face of increasing tuition; we were geographically accessible in the face of some secluded or remote campuses. We have also succeeded in pursuing that which other higher education institutions did not seek to undertake. This has included paraprofessional/technology training and developmental/remedial education. The price of these successes in career education, developmental education, access, and growth included neglect of and some indifference toward humanities education. It is a price that

This statement is a modification of comments appearing in the spring 1985 newsletter of the League for the Humanities.

we cannot continue to pay. Our continued success and effectiveness will require that we return at least some of our attention to humanities education and thus to the community college as a collegiate enterprise built upon a defensible academic foundation.

It is a most propitious time to rethink humanities education. During 1984 four documents were produced, which seek to reaffirm, reestablish, and reenforce the collegiate character of colleges and universities. All of these speak to the need for coherent, value-oriented, culturally sensitive education. These are the National Institute of Education-sponsored *Involvement in Learning*, the National Endowment for the Humanities/William Bennett report *To Reclaim a Legacy*, the Association of American Colleges' *Integrity in the College Curriculum*, and the dramatic call for academic leadership from Clark Kerr in the Association of Governing Boards' *Presidents Make a Difference.* We may disagree with some or all of the recommendations in each of these documents. We are aware that community colleges have not been singled out for unique consideration. We may even maintain that *Involvement in Learning* offers nothing new, that the Bennett report is overly dependent on the traditional, and that the Kerr report is somewhat self-serving. Yet, they all provide us with a significant challenge. These reports demand that in addition to the ongoing successful access and vocational thrusts within our institutions, we reexamine and reassert the fundamentals of the academic enterprise and its value structure. This cannot be done without attention to the humanities.

In 1985 we saw reaction to the reports from the higher education community mainly in the form of reassertion of the centrality of quality as a fundamental issue with which individual institutions must deal. Faculty and administrative leaders began an important reconsideration of curricular structure, design, and content based on a revitalized sense of intellectual mission and enriched commitment to educational opportunity in an open society. In addition, financial constraints and stabilization of enrollments resulted in some rethinking of humanities education. In the public policy arena, statements from federal, state, and local leaders reflected a need for fresh comparative analysis of higher education's emphasis on education for jobs and its historic valuing of humanities education. Perhaps too much time is spent on the former at the price of the latter.

What can community colleges do? We might begin by thanking our vocational leaders for the success of occupational education and our entrepreneurial leaders for the phenomenal quantitative growth of our colleges. We then need to encourage emphasis on academic leaders and leadership—those who can and should take their places next to our successful vocational and entrepreneurial leaders. We need intellectual leadership and academic advocacy from faculty, academic deans, and presidents. These leaders need to undertake a fresh definition and assertion of our academic focus. They need to articulate an educational agenda for our institutions. They are challenged to reformulate and to reassert the standards and principles of the community college educational enterprise. Does that educational enterprise have integrity? Does it reflect coherence, a carefully considered value core and a sense of purpose or vision? Do we have an image of the collegiate skills and abilities considered desirable as a result of educational intervention with students?

The role of the humanities is central to any fresh analysis and articulation of our educational undertaking. It is through the humanities that we examine values, that we understand our relationship to things and people about us, and that we have some sense of perspective about life. It is through the humanities that we preserve our dynamic valuing and ongoing reassessment of our society, culture, and past.

The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges Humanities Roundtable is an exciting opportunity for us all. It is a positive step toward reaffirming the centrality of the humanities in community college education.

Judith S. Eaton, chair of the Humanities Roundtable, is past chair of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges Board of Directors. She is president of the Community College of Philadelphia.

III. HUMANITIES POLICY STATEMENT

"The humanities are not collectibles stored in intellectual antique shops; the humanities are the means by which a civilized society is shaped and its masterpieces—free men and women—are developed."

John N. Terrey
Executive Director
Washington State Board for
Community College Education

HUMANITIES POLICY STATEMENT

The Study of the Humanities in Community, Technical, and Junior Colleges

I. What Do We Mean by the Humanities?

The humanities are ways of thinking about what is human—about our diverse histories, imaginations, values, words, and dreams. The humanities analyze, interpret, and refine our experience, its comedies and tragedies, struggles, and achievements. They embrace history and art history, literature and film, philosophy and morality, comparative religion, jurisprudence, political theory, languages and linguistics, anthropology, and some of the inquiries of the social sciences. When we ask who we are, and what our lives ought to mean, we are using the humanities.

In addition to the specific content of this roster of disciplines, the humanities represent an approach to learning—an approach which is characterized by certain beliefs about the value of what is worthy of our interest and study. The study of the humanities ranges from the reading of great texts to the understanding of the contemporary, yet perennial, concerns of the human family. The methods of the humanities encompass the methods of the particular disciplines as well as the methods of broader, interdisciplinary inquiry such as the critical and imaginative use of language, texts, and other artifacts of human experience. Whether in content or method, however, study in the humanities always has as its fundamental objective to reveal that which is significant about human life—past, present, and to the extent possible, the future.

This statement was adopted and approved by the AACJC Board of Directors on April 12, 1986.

II. Why Study the Humanities at Community Colleges?

Learning in the humanities is particularly critical in community, technical, and junior colleges because of the strong interest on the part of students in practical education. It is important that students become economically self-supporting. But it is equally important for them to broaden their horizons so they may participate willingly and wisely in a fuller range of human activity.

The humanities do have inherent worth. The proper study of the humanities, however, is also decidedly practical. For example, the development of advanced technologies requires not only higher-order processes of intelligence, but also a keen appreciation of the impact of technology on the human environment. The humanities concentrate in direct ways on skills of the mind and skills of language, while the ability to reason clearly and communicate well should be a goal of all branches of study. These capabilities, by their very nature, are especially connected to the humanities. The medium of the humanities is essentially language, and their use of language sets in motion reflection and judgment. The humanities assist in developing insights and capacities that are essential for a well-formed public life as well as a fulfilling private one.

The concerns of the humanities extend to many enduring and fundamental questions which confront all human beings in the course of their lives: What is justice? What is courage? What should be loved? What deserves to be defended? What is noble? What is base?

Community college faculty must teach the humanities to their students so that each student is better able to discover a sense of relationships among life, work, and circumstances; to understand self and society through different eyes, places, and times; to reflect on the way personal origins and beliefs affect actions and values; to encounter questions and answers posed in the past; and to raise similar questions about the present and future.

Study of the humanities nurtures the imagination and offers individual and private pleasure. Study of the humanities encourages the best habits of mind. Study of the humanities fosters disciplined approaches to questions that do not have necessarily correct answers. Study of the humanities promotes an enhanced ability to make value judgments—to select the wiser course of action. Study of the humanities inculcates a sense of common culture, encouraging civic purpose

and citizenship practices. Study of the humanities seeks balance between the individual and society while fostering the basis of any civilized society—civility and mutuality.

Beyond responsibility to their students, community colleges have a further obligation to the communities they serve. It follows that they should teach the humanities to *all* students so that social cohesion may be fostered through shared understanding, language, and values. Community college students should study the humanities for a seemingly simple reason—to gain knowledge and ability to think concretely about important social and personal questions and to communicate these thoughts through clear and effective written expression. The practical demands of life—both private and public—are illuminated and made more valuable by the study of the humanities.

III. Recommendations to Community College Leaders

The ferment in higher education, reflected by the many calls for educational reform from all quarters, suggests that now is an opportune time for educational leaders to speak out on behalf of the importance of the humanities to the associate degree offered by community colleges. To that end, the following recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 1. Educational policy concerning the humanities and their place in the community college curriculum should be framed within the context of an overall policy on a liberal or general education program of study.

Recommendation 2. Study in the humanities should be a required part of every degree program offered by community colleges.

Recommendation 3. Study in the humanities disciplines should be required beyond existing college requirements for such courses as composition, public speaking, and communications.

In order to assure that the humanities maintain their proper place in the curriculum, it is crucial that the following degree requirements be made public and manifest via the endorsement of the highest

policy and administrative bodies—trustees, presidents, academic deans, and other administrators. Hence:

Recommendation 4. A minimum of six semester hours in the humanities for the degree of associate in applied science.

Recommendation 5. A minimum of nine semester hours in the humanities for the degree of associate in science.

Recommendation 6. A minimum of twelve semester hours in the humanities for the degree of associate in arts.

The manner of teaching college courses, as well as the content of courses, especially courses with specific humanities content, is vital to the educational process. Instruction in the humanities must engage students extensively in activities that take them beyond the mere acquisition of facts and the comprehension of principles and theories. Students must be asked to understand the human circumstances that the materials address and to consider critically alternative points of view. Therefore:

Recommendation 7. Humanities courses should develop students' abilities to participate in reflective discourse, to question, analyze, and understand. To develop these abilities, humanities classes must include extensive reading, writing, speaking, and critical analysis of the perspectives, cultures, and traditions that make up our intellectual heritage.

Community colleges serve a wide and varied population, with the typical student body reflecting diversity in age, sex, ethnicity, and interests. The faculty of these institutions, being most familiar with student needs, should take the lead in building appropriate humanities programs. Therefore:

Recommendation 8. The faculty within each institution should develop a comprehensive plan for helping their students achieve knowledge of and sophistication in the humanities. This plan should include a coherent program of courses in sequence, with clear indication of which courses in the humanities are basic, which courses resuppose others, which courses are best taken concurrently with

others, and which courses constitute appropriate selection for students who will take limited coursework in the humanities.

It is important that good teaching be the basis for faculty promotion and recognition. To encourage and assist good teachers to continue in the profession and to stimulate others to develop good teaching skills, three recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 9. Evidence of good teaching should be used as an explicit criterion for hiring, promotion, tenure, and other forms of professional recognition. This will demand the development of appropriate measures of teaching ability and effectiveness.

Recommendation 10. Faculty development resources should be used to help faculty develop their teaching skills and further their knowledge of their discipline. Fulltime faculty, and in every instance possible, parttime faculty as well, should be encouraged to attend the meetings and conferences and read the publications of those academic organizations which are increasingly turning their attention to the quality of teaching in our colleges.

Recommendation 11. Funds should be made available to college libraries and learning resource centers for the purchase of materials that support research, provide the basis for cultural enrichment, and constitute resources for programs in the humanities.

Humanities studies do not, and should not, end in high school. Neither should they begin and end in college. Courses of humanistic study can and should be integrated so that high schools and colleges can build on the habits of mind and knowledge acquired by students in their early classes and developed in later ones. Therefore, it is recommended that articulation processes be developed to meet these goals:

Recommendation 12. Governing boards, administrators, and faculties of community colleges, high schools, and four-year colleges should work together to plan a unified and coherent humanities curriculum for their students.

It is urgent that these recommendations be circulated widely to college administrators, legislative officials, and college faculty, as well as to the public and private presses.

IV. Background

The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges received an emergency grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to enable community, technical, and junior college leaders to

- examine *To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education* by William J. Bennett, in terms of its relevance and application to community, technical, and junior colleges
- make specific recommendations regarding humanities requirements for associate degrees awarded by community, technical, and junior colleges

To accomplish these purposes, AACJC convened a two-day humanities roundtable on June 23-24, 1985, in Washington, D.C., led by Judith Eaton, chair, AACJC Board of Directors, and president, Community College of Philadelphia. Twenty-three participants, selected for their demonstrated commitment to the humanities in community colleges and broad overview of the college scene, attended the meeting. They met at the AACJC offices to discuss the Bennett report; respond to a position paper prepared for the roundtable by Tziporah Kasachkoff, professor of philosophy, Borough of Manhattan Community College and Joshua Smith, then chair-elect, AACJC Board of Directors, and chancellor, California Community Colleges; and develop a set of recommendations for community colleges nationwide that offer the various associate degrees.

The recommendations presented herein are addressed to community college leaders—presidents, governing boards, administrators, faculty, and curriculum committees. Responsibility for placing the importance of humanities study before the college community and mobilizing activities in its support belongs to each community college president.

IV. POSITION PAPER

"While making a living and pursuing a satisfying career are worthwhile ends, it is far more important to make a good life, and to do so we need not only to understand ourselves and our culture better, but to have the perspective and knowledge the humanities provide on values, goals, capabilities, responsibilities, and the products of human creativity that make life better than it might be without them. Every participant in higher education should have the opportunity to learn how to go about making a life as well as making a living."

Landon Kirchner, Director
Humanities and Social Sciences
Johnson County Community College

POSITION PAPER

Staking a Claim to the Future: Humanities Studies in Our Community Colleges

TZIPORAH KASACHKOFF
AND JOSHUA L. SMITH

In the past four or five years, individuals and organizations associated with what we might call the educational establishment, as well as special committees set up for the purpose of studying education in this country, have proclaimed that increasingly we Americans are on a downward trend towards illiteracy. We do not read or write so well as we used to; we do not think so analytically and critically as we used to; we are not so knowledgeable as we once were. The range of topics we are able to discuss intelligently has shrunk and continues to shrink, and our grasp of the intricacy and detail of those topics we are acquainted with is becoming increasingly weak and unsure.

The measures of this decline have been, for the most part, measures of performance within various structures of the educational system in this country: the Educational Testing Service's Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, which, as a measurement of both verbal and mathematical skills, fell steadily from 1963 until 1984, when they began to level off;* the Graduate Record Examination results, which since 1964 declined steadily for most major subject areas but especially in those subjects associated with verbal skills; test results

* These declines relative to previous years reflect, of course, only the fall of the average score, and it might be argued (indeed, it has been) that the lower average scores reflect only an enlarged and different pool of test takers. This seems a fair enough claim. However, even *after* the pool of test takers became (in 1970) relatively stable, the number of high-scoring test takers continued to drop and the decline was dramatic. In verbal skills, the number of high scoring students (those achieving scores of 700 and above) dropped from approximately 35,000 to 12,000. In math skills, the decline was about half that.

in high school and college classes; and teachers' assessments of the quality, generally, of students' written and oral work in the primary and secondary schools and in our institutions of "higher" learning. We are given reason to believe that the malaise is as widespread as it is serious. There is not much disagreement about this.

However, beyond this there is much disagreement. There is, to begin with, differing opinion as to the causes of our current predicament. Some see the issue of our illiteracy as a weakness in education, but not necessarily or exclusively as a weakness in our schooling. Neil Postman indicts television for its replacement of the written word with the visual image and, in consequence, for the deterioration of our skills in the written use of language. He regards as "the obvious effects" of television such deficits as the shortening of students' attention span, the erosion of students' capacity to handle linguistic and mathematical symbolism, the need for remediation programs throughout our country, and the inability of our young people to defer gratification.[1] Still others see our capacities to be educated truncated by factors that have become endemic to our culture and that predate and extend beyond what the educational establishment can or—in a democracy—should be made to cope with: the rearing of children in single working-parent homes with the inevitable decline in attention given to the development of language skills in the very young.

Still others (mainly those who are connected in some way with the structures of our educational system) see our students' diminished capacities to think analytically and imaginatively about complex issues, and to speak and write in our own language effectively and with style, as a fault of our schools and of our present curriculum. Diane Ravitch makes the case that schools do make a difference and that among the factors which cause them to make a difference are the expectations and the standards operative within the system.[2] Steven Cahn, writing for *The American Educator* in 1981, told his readers that "restoring the house of intellect" requires, among other things, a return to "a willingness to differentiate between work that is of high quality and work that is not."[3]

In 1984 William J. Bennett, then head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, published a report in which he baldly stated that the legacy which our culture represents is being lost to present generations on account of ourselves as educators: "The fault lies

principally with those of us whose business it is to educate.... It is we the educators—not scientists, business people, or the general public—who too often have given up the great task of transmitting a culture to its rightful heirs."[4]

In consequence of and in addition to the differing views on the causes of our increasing loss of literacy, there is little agreement on the remedy. For some the solution lies in the immersion of preschool children in forms of culture so that very early stimuli, both linguistic and intellectual, may set the pattern for later intellectual curiosity and activity. Others stress the need to curtail stimuli of kinds seen to inhibit and truncate our capacities to learn and use sophisticated forms of language and to maintain attention over a stretch of time—stimuli primarily though not exclusively associated with the rapid and short sequencing of video images of either regular television programming or of the more recent video-cum-music variety.

Still others, primarily those who view poor schooling as either an essential or predominant factor in the loss of our intellectual and verbal capacities, see the remedy for that loss in an improved process of schooling. What we need, they say, is better teaching, specifically better teaching in the area broadly and generically referred to as "the humanities" or "general education."

It is to this last suggestion, especially as it relates to community or junior colleges, that we shall address our remarks. Of course the educational process as it occurs in life does not have so restricted a locus. Schooling is but one part of the educational process and joins hands with the family, the society at large, television, religious institutions, the arts, the popular press, popular entertainments, the public library and political institutions as conveyors of culture, as transmitters of the values we deem important, and as shapers of persons.

We need to remember that our students, whether they enter our colleges at 18 years of age or at 40, are already persons. They are people who are already the products of a culture, however fragmented their own perspective on it and however unable they may be to articulate their cultural traditions, trace their contours, or comment on their ethos. We stress this in response to some of the arguments that have appeared concerning the state of higher education in this country and what may be done to correct it. For the claim is made that not only does trouble lie in the erosion of the humanities from our schools' curricula and the remedy lie in their

resurrection, but that the importance of the study of the humanities lies in its being a necessary condition for making us "full persons," for fashioning us as fully fledged human agents—beings who are "human" in the full normative sense of the term.

One humanist, in reviewing positively Bennett's claim that we must offer our students "a common culture rooted in civilization's lasting vision," has put it this way: "The fundamental issue here concerns the nature of our humanity. Everyone can understand...what it is to function at the level of a vegetable or a machine locked within a fixed boundary beyond which no growth, no functioning, occurs. To function in this way is to function without a soul, mindlessly." But to become conversant with the works of our civilizations is to acquire "...the capacity to function responsibly as a human being."[5]

What is wrong with this view is that it charges the college curriculum with doing what only an entire concatenation of social, educational, familial, and cultural structures can do. The making of persons in any honorific sense of the term "person" is not within the purview of either our colleges alone or of the entire school system. The process of achieving personhood, of developing into a normally autonomous, self-reflective being, is a process which antedates and extends beyond formal schooling. This is not to deny that the purpose of education is to bring into being people with activated and developing capacities for autonomous agency. Nor is it to deny that schooling as a form of education modulates this process. It is simply to be wary of charging our colleges with making changes it cannot make and regarding our students as coming to college without moral status and graduating (if we are successful) with the attainment of certain preset grand but terminal objectives.

II. What Can and Should We Charge Our Colleges With and to What Purpose?

William Bennett introduces his report on the humanities in higher education with the claim that few of the American high school graduates who go on to college can be said to receive "an adequate education in the culture and civilization of which they are members." The remedy, he suggests, lies in bringing the study of Western civilization back to its central place in the undergraduate curriculum, a

study which, as he sees it, should center on those academic disciplines defined as "humanistic." For an enumeration of these disciplines he refers to the language of the federal legislation that established the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1965: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism, and theory of the arts; and "those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods." The rationale for studying Western civilization through the prism of these perspectives is that collectively the humanities "tell us how men and women of our own and other civilizations have grappled with life's enduring fundamental questions." And why should we want to know that? Because, he tells us, the humanities enrich learning and life and "contribute to an informed sense of community by enabling us to learn about and become participants in a common culture, shareholders in our civilization.... We should...want all students to know a common culture rooted in civilization's lasting vision, its highest shared ideals and aspirations, and its heritage."[6] A return to the humanities is thus for Mr. Bennett the "reclamation of a legacy."

It is easy to be sympathetic to Mr. Bennett's longing for a sense of community and shared values. The desire to find in our fellow citizens a common cultural background and heritage that makes us truly neighbors—despite our political fragmentation, despite the different ethnic traditions which have informed us and which we value and want to preserve, and despite our different origins of place and of language (and the different cultural assumptions that they embody)—is a desire that, on some level, finds resonance in us all. The question, however, is whether the works and authors which "define the Western mind" indeed constitute a common legacy, a return to which will serve to unify us as a nation. The diversity of the general population of this country as well as the diversity of the particular population of our colleges and especially of our community and junior colleges, should make us particularly sensitive to the possibility that what we are being called to reclaim by Mr. Bennett is not a legacy that is common to us all but rather a legacy that represents the best of "the Western mind"—the best, that is, of what has always been in this country not the common culture but the *dominant* one.

Mr. Bennett's statement that

> The college curriculum must take the non-Western world into account, not out of political expediency or to appease interest groups, but out of respect for its importance in human history. But the core of the American college curriculum should be the civilization of the West. It is simply not possible for students to understand their society without studying its intellectual legacy,[7]

is not accurately a call to reclaim a common heritage at all but to establish it. It is a recommendation that we unify our nation by trying to secure a common fund of knowledge, a repertoire of works and cultural experiences to which we may refer in discourse and argument with one another and to which we may appeal for shared meanings and values. In addition, it is a recommendation that we reaffirm the primacy of Western culture and promote it as the matrix that will bind us together as a nation and soften the cultural dissonance that seems to fragment large segments of American life today. We may, as Americans and as educators, decide to take up this recommendation. We may, as well, believe as Mr. Bennett does that it is the task of our schools, the primary and secondary ones as well as the two- and four-year colleges, to put this recommendation into effect.

However, if this is the stance we take, then we should be clear about what we are doing. We should be clear, that is, about the content of our political agenda and about its nature as a political agenda. There is no getting away from the fact that our schools, as indeed the educational establishment of any society, are—in the widest and nonpejorative sense of the term—"political"; they cannot but be so, for our schools symbolize and announce to the public at large what we as a society stand for.[8] The question, then, that we must ask about Mr. Bennett's proposals is not whether they are political in nature, but whether the announcement to society which Mr. Bennett's curriculum proposals make is the one which we want made.

We would like to stress that to ask this question is not to question the importance of studying Western civilization, nor is it to question the desirability of trying to secure for ourselves as a nation a collective body of shared knowledge and cultural resources. It is, however, to affirm that as citizens in a country of distinctive cultural heterogeneity and as educators of two-year college students, students who represent a multiplicity of cultural backgrounds and outlooks, we

do not accept as a postulate of educational theory and as an unquestionable premise of educational policy that Western cultural traditions, important though we may believe them to be, are necessary conditions of all human knowledge.

Let us turn then to Mr. Bennett's suggestions for correcting, in our colleges, what ails us educationally. His recommendation is that we turn to the humanities, that the study of the humanities along with the study of Western civilization be at the heart of any college curriculum, and that the humanities be taught to our students through the medium of the great resources of Western tradition: the great books and works of art that have come out of Western civilization.

First, we think that what Mr. Bennett is advancing are three suggestions, although his presentation of the matter makes it seem as if were we to agree with him that the study of the humanities is necessary to cure ourselves of the educational plight we find ourselves in, it would go without saying that we would also agree with him that the humanities should be central to our colleges' curricula, and that, in addition, the vehicle for the teaching of the humanities should be resources that reflect Western cultural traditions. But each of these is a separate issue. Our agreement on the importance of the humanities within our colleges need not commit us either to their centrality within the college curriculum or to any particular way of imparting them to our students. Of course, it may be that upon reflection we shall feel inclined to accept *all* of Mr. Bennett's recommendations, but it is best to see that these recommendations need not be accepted and should not be looked upon as necessary correlates of one another.

We shall address, then, as separate issues, the question of why our students should study the humanities, the place the humanities should have within the curricula of our colleges (specifically within our two-year colleges), and the recommendations we might make concerning resources to be used.

III. Why Should Our Students Study the Humanities?

Mr. Bennett recommends the humanities to us as important to study under his description of them as "a body of knowledge and a means of inquiry that convey serious truths, defensible judgments,

and significant ideas" and as "the best that has been said, thought, written, and otherwise expressed about human experience."[9] For "the best" we are directed to the specific academic disciplines listed by the National Endowment for the Humanities as the humanities.

This is not the place to discuss why those and only those disciplines cited by Mr. Bennett are to be regarded as humanistic. But we should note two things: first, the ostensive definition of the humanities which Bennett provides leaves out many areas of learning which, however we may want to characterize them in terms of the humanities/nonhumanities distinction, are important for our students to know; second, many of the subjects we think important for our students to study in college are not enumerated by Bennett as part of the humanities even though they do fulfill Bennett's description of humanistic study. The natural and physical sciences, for example, do not appear on Bennett's list of the humanities although they display the human imagination and creativity that assuredly represent *some* of "the best that has been said, thought, written, and otherwise expressed about human experience." So do mathematics, anthropology, and sociology. They, too, do not qualify for listing as humanities, but they fulfill, no less than does the philosophy of John Stuart Mill, Bennett's description of the humanities: "a body of knowledge and a means of inquiry that convey serious truths, defensible judgments, and significant ideas."

What we have here, then, is a recommendation that we study the humanities, but we are given a rationale for studying them that extends to subject areas rather wide of what Bennett himself considers as still within the purview of humanistic learning.

We believe that this highlights one of the difficulties we have in general in talking about the humanities, and it is a difficulty that we will face in fashioning educational policy for our colleges: the problem of indicating by more than ostensive definition (i.e., in a list of academic disciplines) what qualifies as study in the humanities. (Of course, for the purpose of constructing educational policy an ostensive definition of the humanities such as the one offered by Bennett has the advantage of already being in language that is easily translated into a curriculum and into courses. Its drawback, however, is that, as with all ostensive definitions, it leaves unexplained, and in some cases open to the charge of arbitrariness, our inclusion of

some fields of learning, as within the area of the humanities, and our exclusion of others.)

We are faced, then, with the question of what makes a particular study of human affairs a study in the humanities—what makes, for example, the study of our human predicaments, aspirations, limitations, foibles, and acts of heroism as illuminated in literature clearly a study in the humanities, while an anthropological or psychological look at these very same things may not be.

We shall make some tentative suggestions in the direction of an answer here; we offer these suggestions as a catalyst for further discussion, noting both that the question of what the humanities are is itself a question in the humanities and that this question figures in a history that is long, complicated, and replete with controversy.[10]

First, we shall say a few words about what we take to be a liberal education. This will enable us to place the humanities within the larger framework we are interested in and will be dealing with when we come to put into practical effect any recommendations we may have for our college students.

What Is a Liberal Education?

Generally, talk about a liberal (sometimes called general) education focuses on what it is that that education is supposed to bring about, namely, certain qualities of mind (logical, synthetic, imaginative, quick, precise, etc.); or else it focuses on the sorts of knowledge that it is felt important to have, the different sorts being distinguished by the methodology that is distinctive of each (scientific, philosophical, artistic, mathematical, and so on). The dichotomy set up here characterizes much of the history of the discussion concerning what it is we are aiming at when we choose to provide a liberal education. Sometimes the discussion proceeds in terms of the merit of becoming adept in disparate "modes of inquiry" as opposed to acquiring different "cores of information"; sometimes the debate is in terms of "habits of mind" on the one hand and "funds of knowledge" on the other. But however the lines of the debate are drawn in terms of nomenclature, we think it fair to say that none of the parties to the debate would regard an individual as a liberally educated person who had merely acquired information, regardless of how extensive and how diversified that information was (total

recall of an entire general encyclopedia, say); nor would a person be regarded as liberally educated who had merely acquired an array of mental skills or capacities of mind, regardless of how acute and far-ranging those skills and capacities were. Indeed, it is hard to understand what "merely" in these contexts could signify. For mental capacities can be specified only in terms of achievements that inevitably involve content. And information, if it is to count as knowledge, must be made meaningful through the structuring, organizing, and interpretive capacities of a mind. As Paul H. Hirst notes in his discussion of what a liberal education is, "To be told that it develops critical thinking is of no value until this is explicated in terms of the forms of knowledge which give it meaning: for example, in terms of the solving of problems in Euclidean geometry or of coming to understand the poems of John Donne."[11]

The capacities of mind, then, that true education develops are only intelligible by reference to the content which defines them. But in addition, we might say as well that the content which we seek to understand by means of the development of these capacities—art, music, physical objects, philosophical questions, nature, oneself as distinct from the rest of nature—are themselves intelligible only because they come to us structured and organized by the human mind.[12] The experiencing of art as art and not just as other physical objects, the experiencing of philosophical questions as philosophical questions, the experiencing of ourselves as persons and not just as organisms which are reducible, without remainder, to the rest of living nature, are themselves the expressions of the various ways in which we have found it appropriate to look at the world and structure and organize what we find about us. This is why Hirst, when he talks about our being educated to employ the concepts and the canons of judgment that are distinctive of, say, music or art or science or literature, talks of our being initiated into a "form of life."[13]

What education does is not merely expand for us a list of facts; nor does it enhance our skills to manipulate materials independent of what they are materials of. To be introduced into a discipline of knowledge is to become engaged in and comfortable with the sophisticated use of concepts and terms that are distinctive of particular ways of looking at human experience, and to be able to deal with these ways of relating to the world by means of the criteria of assessment that are apt for and sometimes unique to that field.

We are educated in science, for example, to the extent that we can recognize a scientific assertion for what it is and tell how it differs from an ethical evaluation or an aesthetic judgment; tell the sorts of considerations that are relevant to establishing a scientific truth and to disproving a claim to such truth; and be able to appreciate when a question *is* a scientific one and be aware of the range of answers that would constitute appropriate responses. In addition, as Hirst reminds us, education in a certain discipline consists in our being aware of the major achievements of that field so that we can appreciate the full range of the experiences that have been made, through that field, intelligible to us.

If we view education along the lines suggested above, then a liberal education may be viewed as the introduction of our students into a variety of ways in which humans have found it appropriate, useful, and profitable to organize and structure their experience of the world and understand their own place within it. What we are aiming at is the understanding of experience in many different ways that, through the years, have acquired distinctive expressions, vocabularies, criteria of assessment and modes of reasoning, and that, within academia, have come to be spoken of as "disciplines of knowledge": science, art, music, philosophy, history, mathematics, etc.

Given this characterization of what it is to be liberally educated, it would seem that the justification for liberal studies is carried on its face. But what of the humanities within the college curriculum?

Mr. Bennett recommends that the humanities take pride of place among all those fields of study that figure in a liberal education. He makes the explicit recommendation that the humanities be central to the curricula of our institutions of higher learning. But he also speaks as if the humanities are not only necessary for the characterization of an individual as an "educated person" but sufficient as well.

Whatever the value of studying the humanities (and this is something to which we shall return), we as educators, or even as humanists, should be wary of believing that our students can develop into persons of full intellectual curiosity, of judicious perspective, and of autonomous and respectable judgment about the world and about others without the benefit of seeing the world through the forms of knowledge represented by the sciences (both physical and social), and by an acquaintance with the technologies that have

allowed the scientific achievements of man to be put into practical effect in the world. However important and even indispensable the humanities are in the development of persons of higher education, we would be right to wonder at the quality of an education that included literature but not social science, history but not the physical sciences, poetry but not mathematics.

Our first recommendation, then, concerning Mr. Bennett's proposals for renewing our commitment to the ideals of education, is that

> We should proceed to fashion our educational policy concerning the humanities and their place within the curriculum only within the context of a liberal, (i.e., general) program of education. The humanities, at least as Mr. Bennett has enumerated them, are not exhaustive of a general education and they do not take the place of it.*

IV. The Distinctive Contribution of the Humanities

What are the humanities, and what do they contribute to a liberal education?

We know, or seem at least to have an intuitive grasp of, the range of subjects that constitute humanistic study, but what is the thread that runs through them which provides a rationale for grouping the various humanistic subjects under the same rubric?

It has been suggested that the humanities tell us about ourselves, stretch our imagination, enrich our experience, and increase our distinctively human potential. The humanities have been spoken of as "that form of knowledge in which the knower is revealed," and as knowledge we have "when we are asked to contemplate not only a proposition but the proposer, when we hear the human voice behind what is being said."[14]

*This is, perhaps, not the place to discuss to what extent and in what form our community colleges should institute general education requirements. But since our proposals concerning humanities studies within our colleges involve the assumption of some background of liberal education, let us indicate (without arguing for) what we think appropriate in terms of each associate degree we offer: for the associate in arts degree, a minimum of 40 semester-hour credits in liberal studies; for the associate in science degree, a minimum of 30 semester-hour credits in liberal studies; for the associate in applied science degree, a minimum of 20 semester-hour credits in liberal studies.

But in what way do the humanities do this? In what way, for example, does literature (or culture studies, or history, or philosophy) direct our gaze back to our own experience—our projects, our hopes, our achievements?

Let us suggest—as an opener to discourse with interested colleagues and not as the conclusion of an argument—that humanities studies be viewed as those studies of the achievements, projects, and dispositions of men and women that give us some perspective on ourselves as creatures distinct from other living inhabitants of this world, and that they do so by means of some evaluative stance, a stance taken unlike in the sciences (hard or soft), without apologies. This view of the humanities distinguishes the humanities as the study of humans as persons from both the hard sciences (which study humans as physical objects or as biochemical organisms) and the social sciences (which would reduce the diversity of human activity to a common explanatory denominator—say, economic forces or the workings of the unconscious). Ronald Crane, a distinguished scholar in the humanities, has put this point especially well. In answer to the question "What are the aspects of human experiences that distinguish men most completely from the animals?" he answers that they consist, generally,

> In all those things which, because not all men or all groups of men can, or do, do them, are therefore not amenable to adequate explanation in terms of general laws of natural processes, physical or biological, or in terms of collective social conditions or forces....
>
> Every writer, every artist, every scientist, every statesman, every moral agent knows well that there are limits to what he can do, fixed...by the natural conditions in which he lives, the state of his culture or language, the logic of inquiry or artistic creation, the uniformities of popular culture. These causes, however...operate upon everybody.... They are not sufficient to account for those attributes that separate...the tragedies of Shakespeare from the average of Hollywood melodramas, the American Constitution from most earlier federations, the foreign statesmanship of Winston Churchill from that (say) of Stanley Baldwin.... The direction of the humanistic arts...is the opposite of the direction taken by the sciences of nature

> and society. The sciences are most successful when they seek to move from...diversity and particularity...toward as high a degree of unity and uniformity, simplicity and necessity as their material will permit. The humanities, on the other hand, are most alive when they reverse this process and look for devices of explanation and appreciation that will enable them to preserve... the variety, the uniqueness, the unexpectedness, the complexity, the originality, that distinguishes what men are capable of doing at their best from what they must do, or tend generally to do, as biological organisms or as members of a community.[15]

This, then, is what gives the humanities their especial normative character. In holding up what it is that men and women do as unique individuals, the humanities call upon us to see human achievements as achievements, not as effects of being human, but as the creative fulfillment of it.

Seen in this way, to ask the question what justifies studying the humanities is to ask for a justification of having a particular kind of knowledge of, and taking a particular kind of stance towards, ourselves and others as persons embarked on giving our lives and the world meaning through the projects and activities we engage in. The value of that lies in the importance we attach to making sense of ourselves.

Why Study the Humanities in the Community Colleges?

In recent years, as the study of the humanities has had to vie for its place within the college curriculum with other studies that have clear utilitarian value, it has become fashionable to offer justifications for the humanities that put them on the same logical footing as those studies which have displaced them. And so we find in the literature defenses of the humanities in terms of their good effects: the preparation for responsible citizenship; the benefit to society, and especially to democratic society, of having members schooled and conversant with the values that have inspired our particular way of governing ourselves; the improvement of the quality of our political involvement; and increase in the effectiveness and range of our communication with one another.

Study of the humanities may, indeed, be instrumental to these ends. But, we would argue, if the study of the humanities is not to be trivialized, we must see it as that which allows us not only to achieve the ends they conduce to, but also to assess these ends. The view that our community college students, because they are embarked on programs of vocational study that will provide them with skills that will have almost immediate commercial translation, need not, for that reason, study the humanities, is a view that should disturb us all. For it suggests that while an understanding of our relationship to work and an evaluation of the ends of human activity is worth studying for some of us (the liberal arts students), work and activity devoid of an assessment of their point is good enough for others. This is not a new view. It is a view that was in vogue long before today's incarnation of the community college system with its invitation to the nontraditional student to step on the ladder towards higher education. It is reminiscent of our early bifurcated school system (given sanction by the "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education" issued by NEA in 1917), a system which was divided into social classes, with the liberal arts (i.e., academic) schools intended for white children and the vocational schools intended for this country's black students. James F. Perry, commenting on the 1984 report of the National Commission on Secondary Vocational Education, reminds us that "vocational education was originally planned for those students who were labeled... children of mediocre or inferior ability who lack interest in abstract or academic materials." And, as Perry points out, "The early advocates of vocational education made no suggestion that there is a responsibility to arouse interest in such materials."[16]

There is, of course, nothing illegitimate about our students' concern to acquire the skills that will assure them the means of self-support. Nor is there anything illegitimate in our offering those skills within the context of a college education. However, to regard the vocational training of our community college students as primary and their humanistic education as ornamental is to sabotage the purpose of education: it is to turn out what one writer on the issue has called "*apparatchiks*, successful, efficient functionaries,"[17] and in so doing, treat our students as if their place in this world is not worth their thinking about. When we consider that, at present, more than half the students who attend American colleges begin their higher

education in a two-year institution (and this figure will, in the future, no doubt rise), and that of all the associate degrees awarded, 62 percent are in occupational areas, this attitude is cause for some concern.

Our recommendation, then, is as follows:

> Study in the humanities should be part of every degree program offered by our community colleges, whether the degree is in the sciences, business, allied health, physical therapy, secretarial science, or computer technology. *All* associate degree programs, including the degree of associate in applied science, should have as part of what makes them college programs, exposure to the humanities—the humanities defined here as consisting of those courses that invite reflection on and assessment of those human activities that represent attempts to make sense of our lives: history, literature, philosophy, the study of language and culture, art and music appreciation. (Explicitly excluded are courses in composition, speech, technical writing, foreign languages on the first-year level—which typically are language skill courses that do not involve a study of foreign culture—performing arts, painting, sculpture, and the social, physical, and biological sciences.) Courses that qualify for inclusion in humanities studies must be those whose content focuses on the description, examination, analysis, and critical evaluation of human achievements, projects, and activities, and must provide the basis for discussion of these from the normative point of view.
>
> The humanities courses that should be part of every community college degree program should be part of it as a requirement for that degree. Their very status as requirements will announce to the college community that what is taught in these courses is worthwhile and to be taken seriously.

It is only in this way that we can, in a cultural milieu that is anxious for quick results, instill in our students the view that regarding the humanities as of no use to a culture betokens a very misleading and impoverished notion of use.

> All students should be exposed to at least two different areas in the humanities, say, philosophy and history, or literature and culture.

Our reason for suggesting a minimum of two courses in the humanities, chosen from different disciplines, as part of the educational experience of *every* community college student who seeks an associate degree, is not only to assure that all our students have the opportunity to view (and if the humanities are taught well, to experience) the ways in which we have learned to portray our activities, frailties, projects and hopes back to ourselves (through the way we present ourselves in literature, say, or the way we have chosen to recount our activities through history), but also to engender an appreciation on the part of our students of the various ways in which we have found it profitable to do this.

> All candidates for the degree of associate in applied science should take at least two different humanities courses; all candidates for the degrees of associate in science and associate in arts should take at least six courses in the humanities, four of which reflect the approach of disciplines (philosophy, history, area or ethnic studies, music and art appreciation and history, religious studies, literature, etc.).

Of course, once we start talking about a requirement of six courses, it becomes imperative to fashion a coherent program out of the six. It will not do to have our students reach into a grab bag of courses and pull out, at random, 18 semester hours' worth of humanities study. Too often, as a result of lack of guidance from faculty, there is no sequential sense to the courses which our students take, and no development, in terms of ideas or of difficulty, from one course to another. What we need is some comprehensive plan for humanities education. Otherwise, we will continue to have what many of us are witnessing now in our own institutions: the abandonment of all prerequisites, a lack of coherence in the particular concatenation of courses which a student picks to fill his or her program, and no sense on the part of our students that knowledge is developmental and that what is learned in one course may be useful, even integral, to what is learned in another.

> The faculty of all the various disciplines of humanistic study within each institution should meet as a group to decide on the best plan for helping our students to achieve knowledge of and

sophistication in the humanities. This will involve the well-thought-out construction of a comprehensive program of courses, a program in which the courses we offer are offered in sequence, with indication of which courses in the humanities are basic, which courses presuppose others, and which are best taken concurrently with others.

V. Resources for Humanities Studies

Mr. Bennett believes that studying the humanities within our colleges assures particular resources (particular books, essays, plays, documents, tracts, etc.) a central place within the college curriculum. For, he believes, there are some works with which familiarity should be the hallmark of any educated student. The particular works Bennett has in mind derive from his view that the core of a humanities education is the study of Western civilization. Indeed, as a precursor to a partial list of works and authors which he recommends as fundamental to an undergraduate education, Bennett says, "The works and authors I mention virtually define the development of the Western mind."[18]

There are two things to note here: first, Mr. Bennett's view of "the Western mind" is a rather restricted one. The West Mr. Bennett is thinking of is not the geographical West. There are, in fact, whole portions of the Western world whose literature, history, and art go completely unnoticed in Mr. Bennett's list of preferred resources in the humanities. There is no mention, for example, of the vast array of literature that has come out of Brazil, Chile, and Ecuador, of the music of the Caribbean, of the artwork of Mexico, and of the architecture of the Incas. All of these Western works do not figure for Mr. Bennett as products of the Western mind because they did not come out of ancient Greece or Rome. Nor do they represent the traditions of Western Europe. When Mr. Bennett refers us to the classics for the study of the humanities, what he has in mind, then, is not the best of Western thought but the best of some Western thought, the boundaries of the "some" being fairly well circumscribed.

The second thing to note is that Mr. Bennett's announcement that "the greatest advances in the humanities have already been done"[19] is well reflected in the works he cites as fundamental to learning in

the humanities. There is not one living author, composer, or artist on his list, and only two who have lived in the twentieth century. This is especially unfortunate given Mr. Bennett's claim that it is important to study the works he cites because to do so is to be "in the company of great souls." One might be led, on this account, to exclude from the roster of those souls whose company we might seek the likes of Alice Walker, Flannery O'Connor, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Garcia Lorca, and Tennessee Williams.

One might be led to think that the past encloses all that is valuable in human creativity in the arts, in philosophy, and in history; that present efforts cannot measure up; that our only chance for future greatness lies in imitating and replaying our greatness in the past. The mistake made here was called to our attention, in 1944, by Sidney Hook (in a critique made of the Great Books curriculum of St. John's University):

> Great books by all means; but why not also great pictures and symphonies, great plays and cinemas, great social changes and mass movements, as well as the great Armageddons of our own time? We can learn at least as much from the heroic tragedy of Warsaw as from the last stand at Thermopylae.... Those who fulminate against the degeneration of modern education because some schools pay attention to the bridges, waterways, and sanitation systems of our large cities, together with other great feats of engineering, regard it as perfectly proper to study and glow about the marvels of Roman aqueducts, plumbing, and roads.... Absorption in study of the greatness of the past which does not quicken our sense for greatness in the present is a preparation for a life of intellectual snobbery.... In education as in life we must learn to look to ourselves as ancestors, not merely descendents.[20]

What Mr. Bennett fails to see is that the humanities help us not only to preserve culture and continue legacies, but also to create culture and establish traditions.

The mistake which Mr. Bennett makes when he places particular works at the heart of the college curriculum and identifies the humanities with these works, is to miss the point of humanistic learning. A humanities education consists not merely in the mastery of

great works but in the consideration of what makes a paradigm of greatness (in art, philosophy, literature, history, etc.) the paradigm it is.

Thus, though there is much value in having our students look to primary materials as resources for their studies in the humanities (with the aid, where necessary, of good translations and expert commentary), what we ought to do is work with an expanded notion of what is appropriate as a primary source. Classics are to be found not only in ancient Greece and Rome. They lie in other sources close to home, in the various cultures that inform the multiple traditions of the different peoples of this country, as well as in the cultures that are yet foreign to us all.

VI. Obstacles to Teaching and Learning the Humanities at the Community College and Some Suggestions for Dealing With Them

One of the problems about proposing that our community college students be required to study the humanities is that so many of our community college students (in common with a great many of this nation's four-year college students, we might add) do not have the skills necessary to deal with the materials that are indispensable to humanistic learning. Simply put, most of our students come to the community college unable to read at the level required for comprehending, say, literature, philosophy, and history (not to mention other subjects) and unable to write in language that is sufficiently sophisticated to express their own and others' ideas adequately. The remedy for this problem has been the offering of classes which give special assistance to those who fail at admission to pass minimum proficiency examinations.

This system, at best, is successful with a very small proportion of students. The problems with it vary from community college to community college. But we believe the following recommendations might offer some direction for improvement.

Community college education in this country does not take place in an educational vacuum. We inherit our students from the high schools and we pass on our continuing students to the four-year colleges. But all the attention, in terms of standards, coordination of

program, curricular planning, and counseling, is directed toward the four-year colleges to which less than ten percent of the community college student body eventually goes and virtually none to the high schools from which almost every community college student comes. Ironically, although no explicit attention is given to coordinating the graduation standards of high schools with the admission standards of community colleges, there is no doubt that there is an "invisible hand" here: standards are contagious, and so is their decline. If we want to see an improvement in our community college students' reading and writing abilities, we will have to start the process *before* they are community college students.

We have four recommendations here:

(1) Community colleges and high schools should join forces in setting minimum proficiency standards in reading and writing that will be realistic for both. It will not do to have a gap as wide as the one we have now between what is acceptable for a diploma from high school and what is acceptable for meeting the admission standards for regular (i.e., nonremedial) community college work.

Although we agree with Mr. Bennett that "the humanities must be put back into the high school curriculum, but this is unlikely to happen unless they are first restored in colleges," we do not have Mr. Bennett's confidence that "if colleges take the lead in reinstating humanities course requirements, the high schools will surely respond."[21] There is always greater inertia in the direction of improvement than in the direction of decline. So while the decline in the number of humanities courses offered in our colleges may be predictably followed by a decline in the number of humanities courses offered in our local high school, we cannot expect with any security that our improvements in humanities studies on the community college level will be matched by our "feeder" high schools.

(2) The respective school boards, governing bodies, and faculty of both community colleges and the local high schools should work together to plan a unified and coherent humanities curriculum for their students. Humanities studies should not end in high school; but neither should they begin in the two-year

college. A four-year program beginning in the high schools and continuing through the community colleges is one possibility here.

Furthermore, an upgraded level of reading comprehension and writing proficiency depends only in part on the skills which students bring with them to college. For whatever the skills at admission, it is the maintenance of those skills that falls to us as community college educators.

Because reading and writing skills are tools without which no college work can be done and because these are tools that require for their improvement constant use and refinement, it is unrealistic and unfair to expect the English departments of our community colleges to shoulder the full responsibility for the literacy of the student body of the college. It falls to *all* of us as faculty of community colleges—within and outside the humanities as well as within and outside liberal arts—to require of our students that they learn to express their own and others' ideas clearly and effectively.

(3) Community colleges should embark on a program of writing instruction across the disciplines; a program that requires students to write often, to prepare written assignments, to produce term papers (perhaps even multiple drafts of one); a program that will require of faculty written comments on students' papers and help in revision. As important as reading and writing are to the humanities, the inculcation of these skills is not the job of the humanities faculty alone.

If, however, we are to have our faculty help our students improve their reading comprehension and writing skills, our faculty themselves will need help.

(4) Faculty development funds should be made available for the purpose of underwriting workshops led by English faculty and/or consultants on "writing across the curriculum" so that faculty members in the various disciplines can learn how, within their own classrooms and consistent with the objectives of their own disciplines, they can help their students improve their reading skills and learn to write more effectively and with style.

VII. Humanities and Vocationalism

At present, the value of studying the humanities, as reflected in the educational policy implicit in the curricula of our two-year colleges, comes out way behind other concerns which are currently perceived as of value within our educational institutions, specifically the fulfillment of social and vocational objectives.

The community colleges in this country are in a unique position here. For their mission, as it is often perceived, is to be responsive to the community in ways that are more direct and more far-reaching than are the responses of their four-year sister institutions. Furthermore, since the population which community colleges serve is somewhat different from the population served by our four-year colleges—in age, educational background, diversity of ethnic background, life experiences, career expectations, career choice, and pre-college academic preparation—the particular needs, demands, and interests of the community colleges' "community" shape the two-year colleges' agendas differently from those of the four-year institutions.

We believe that the educational policy of our two-year colleges *must* be structured with these differences in view, and that we should resist quite vigorously the notion that the modulation of educational policy in response to the particular student body we serve is something for which we must, as educators, apologize. After all, higher education has always served social and vocational ends. When American colleges were, at the beginning of this century, the bastions of upper-class white males, the serving of social and vocational ends by our higher institutions of learning posed no problem, for social, vocational, and educational goals were parallel. An elite social class was trained by means of a liberal education to enter the vocations that assured them social status, namely, the clergy and political/community leadership positions. Under this system there was no tension between what was regarded as necessary for the development of an educated person and the schooling of pupils for responsible citizenship, individuals who, as a result of their college education, would be able to make their way in the world.

Even today higher education serves, in its professional schools, unabashed, explicit vocational needs. Medical schools, schools of journalism and dentistry, schools of law, and even graduate schools of

arts and sciences are preparations for earning a living. But these preparations for careers succeed a four-year college education and for that reason do not come into competition with it. The problem we face in community colleges is one of time: we try in two short years to prepare our students for the careers they choose and at the same time to give them the education which a college degree (rather than, say, an institute certificate) represents.

The question we must ask ourselves is whether, given the ever-increasing professionalism of the careers that we in the community colleges prepare our students for (expressed in the health fields, for example, by the steady escalation in the number of units of technical material demanded of students by the relevant accrediting agency for program certification), we are asking too much of ourselves and too much of our students. How, for example, in a two-year program—typically one of 60 credits—is it possible for our students to get the education that is the hallmark of a college degree and at the same time qualify for a vocation that requires completion, within those two years, of 70 to 72 credits? Something has to give, and what we have been witnessing is the yielding of the integrity of the college degree. We try to train our students to qualify for employment, but if we continue to allow them to be graduated from our institutions, having fulfilled the requirements for job training and nothing more, we are guilty of reneging on our promise of a "higher" education. Indeed, it does not seem possible for us to fulfill this promise within the constraints of all that we are trying to do.

We would suggest, therefore, that

> While we affirm our commitment to the vocational preparation of our community college students, we should limit these programs to those that can be managed consistently with our academic charge of graduating students who are educated as well as trained. If something has to give in the tension created between the demand for, say, 70 hours of vocational training and the demand for liberal learning, we should not, as educators in a college, continue on the course we have been on. Whatever vocational preparation we offer, there must be accommodation to the bedrock of college learning: liberal/humanities courses which should be required of *all* students regardless of their chosen future careers. If a vocational program demands of our

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by the number of students enrolled), classes are overcrowded, especially in the introductory and required courses. It is not uncommon, for example, to find English and history classes that have upwards of 40 students in a section. Keep in mind that these are classes in which students are expected to do quite a good deal of writing and receive from their instructors written or oral assessment of their work; that in addition to one such class of 35 to 40 students, the fulltime community college humanities instructor is teaching four *other* such classes (sometimes five, sometimes three—community college faculty teaching loads vary from college to college, ranging from 12 hours per semester in some institutions to 18 hours per semester in others); and that there are, at the community colleges, no graduate assistants to aid the instructor in doing the work associated with teaching and evaluating approximately 120 students per semester. There are many reasons for poor teaching and poor learning in the humanities, but we do not think it possible to talk about this problem without our noting the inescapable fact that community college humanities faculty are, as a result of heavy teaching loads and overcrowded classes, generally overburdened. It is clear that serious college teaching in the humanities is not best served under these conditions.

Our recommendation here is that

> We affirm both the 12-hour teaching load and an average enrollment of 25 students per class section as the minimum standard for effective teaching in the humanities. Although ideally one would want no class section to have more than 25 students, in particular cases, financial exigency as well as other practical considerations may call for some flexibility. (Introductory courses, for example, may be very heavily enrolled, while upper-division courses are undersubscribed.) It is important, however, that there be an absolute limit to the number of students that any one faculty member is responsible for in any given semester. This number should not exceed 100.

The economics of faculty/student ratios has, however, another deleterious effect on teaching, one that Mr. Bennett mentions with respect to the four-year college: the disproportionate number of adjunct, parttime faculty to fulltime staff. Some community colleges

have parttime instructors who outnumber fulltime faculty by a ratio of two to one. Some others, primarily in the east, report a parttime faculty staff of close to 70 percent. Nationally, the average figures (as of 1983) are as follows: 43 percent of the teaching faculty at community colleges are fulltime; the rest, 57 percent, are employed as parttime instructional staff.

Our recommendations here are as follows:

(1) Parttime positions should be consolidated as much as possible into fulltime faculty positions, to be filled by people who are committed to teaching fulltime and to furthering the educational interests of the institution in which they teach. No more than 25 percent of a college's faculty should be parttime staff.

(2) As Mr. Bennett suggests, evidence of good teaching should be used as one of the explicit criteria for hiring, promotion, and tenure. This will demand the development of respectable measures of teaching ability and effectiveness and should require more than the student evaluation forms now in use for such purposes in many of our institutions. (Possibilities here include peer observation of classroom performance and peer evaluation of course syllabi and examinations.)

(3) Faculty development resources should be used to help faculty develop their teaching skills (say, through attendance at conferences and seminars devoted to discussing teaching performance and ways to improve it).

(4) Faculty should be encouraged to attend the meetings and conferences and read the publications of those academic organizations which are, increasingly, turning their attention to the quality of teaching within their own specific humanities discipline (the American Philosophical Association's Committee on the Teaching of Philosophy, for example, or the American Historical Association's Committee on Teaching).

(5) Library funds should be made available for the purchase of books and of subscriptions to periodicals that research and report on good teaching in the humanities. (Some such publications are *Teaching Philosophy, Metaphilosophy, Informal Logic Newsletter, Teaching History, Community College*

Humanities Review, Teaching English in the Two-Year College, History Teacher, and *Liberal Education.*)

The State of the Humanities Within the Two-Year College

The state of the humanities in this country varies from region to region and from community college to community college within the same region. There is enormous variation not only in how much humanities studies is deemed important for the purposes of achieving the various degrees that are offered by our community colleges, but in what counts as humanistic learning.

A survey of community colleges conducted in 1983 by the Community Colleges Humanities Association Committee on the Status and Future of the Humanities reveals the following:

- The number of semester units required in humanities studies for the various associate degrees varies from zero to 20 units with no clear pattern regionally.
- Only 35 percent of the programs leading to the degree of associate in applied science require any courses in the humanities.
- Some institutions allow their humanities requirements to be fulfilled by either humanities or social science courses.
- Many of the community colleges which allow humanities requirements to be satisfied by courses in the fine arts area allow participation or studio courses (i.e., courses in dance, painting, theater, etc.) to count as fulfilling the requirements.
- Many community colleges allow any speech course, not just oral interpretation, to count as humanities.
- Many community colleges allow a course in foreign languages to count as humanities study regardless of the level at which it is taken. Few two-year colleges restrict the satisfaction of their humanities requirement to courses in foreign languages that are given at the intermediate or advanced level and so involve the teaching not only of language skills but also of cultural history.

As for the courses which, traditionally, have been part of the humanities offerings of our colleges, we have the following information: cultural geography, religious studies, and ethnic area studies are found in fewer than one-third of our community colleges; cultural

anthropology, art history and appreciation, interdisciplinary humanities courses, and philosophy are offered only in one- to two-thirds of our institutions. In fact, except for political science, history, and literature, many two-year associate-degree-granting institutions have abandoned humanities studies entirely.[22]

Various organizations have directed their efforts at turning the tide. The Community College Humanities Association (CCHA), for example, in an effort to help raise the standards of humanities education, has recently recommended to its governing board that any course designated as satisfying a humanities requirement for an associate degree at a community college include in that course

- a critical, evaluative writing component
- content which would provide the basis for discussion of value assumptions
- material that will aid in the development of the ability to make intelligent choices by the analysis of concepts as they apply to specific situations (e.g., case studies, movements in history)
- consideration of alternative responses to material presented by, say, an author, an artist, a philosopher
- reading and discussion of views presented in major texts

The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) has reiterated the need to maintain standards of excellence within our community and junior colleges in one after another of its publications. Finally, the Center for the Study of Community Colleges and ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges have put out publications that keep us aware of how the humanities are faring in our schools across the country and on what we might do to improve curricula, particular courses, and teaching within the humanities.

But the efforts and public exhortations of our national commissions, special committees, humanist associations, and community college associations notwithstanding, there seems to be on the part of those who run our community colleges (both administrators and faculty) a lack of enthusiasm for and excitement about humanities education within our schools.

As Donald Porter stated to members of the CCHA,[23] we as educators have much to be concerned about. Few community colleges have introduced innovative humanities courses or programs into their

curricula during the past five years, and only a handful of two-year colleges have applied to funding institutions for monies to fund curriculum development or faculty enrichment programs.

Mr. Bennett claims that "the decline in learning in the humanities was caused in part by a failure of nerve and faith on the part of many college faculties and administrators, and persists because of a vacuum in educational leadership."[24] We believe that the decline in humanities studies is attributable to a far more complex set of factors. But whatever the cause of the decline, its reversal is up to us. We must approach the problem of declining interest in the humanities and try our best to rectify it, not merely as sectarians (as, say, historians, philosophers, linguists, and area-studies specialists) whose job it is to impart discipline-specific expertise. Rather, we must face this issue as specialists also in the field of community college teaching and work on matters that are of common concern to us as educators and administrators of the education of students:

- the coherence of the college studies we offer with our students' high school experience
- the devising of curricula that are made up of intelligent, sequential, and developmental programs of courses
- the improvement of teaching methods and conditions
- the sensible selection of materials
- the maintenance of reading and writing skills throughout our different college departments
- the judicious planning of vocational programs so that they contribute to, rather than interfere with, our students' education
- the maintenance of our own skills and expertise, both in our own specific disciplines and as teachers of our disciplines

Helping our students to develop into mature, reflective, imaginative, and knowledgeable persons may not involve the reclamation of any common legacy; it will, however, be an investment in a common future.

NOTES

[1]"Childhood's End: The Tragedy of the Television Age," *The American Educator* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1981).

[2]"The Debate About Standards: Where Do We Go From Here?" *The American Educator* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1981).

[3]"Restoring the House of Intellect," *The American Educator* 5, no. 3 (Fall 1981): 38.

[4]*To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education* (Washington, D.C.: National Endowment for the Humanities, 1984): 1.

[5]James F. Perry, "Involvement in a Legacy: A Challenge and an Opportunity for America's Community Colleges," *Community College Humanities Review* 6 (Winter 1984-85): 76-77.

[6]*To Reclaim a Legacy*, 4.

[7] Ibid., 30.

[8]See John Kleinig, *Philosophical Issues in Education* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982).

[9]*To Reclaim a Legacy*, 3, 8.

[10]For an informative discussion of the history of the debate about what constitutes the humanities, see Richard Crane, *The Role of the Humanities* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1978).

[11]"Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge," reprinted in *The Philosophy of Education*, edited by R.S. Peters (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[12]It is worth noting, as John Kleinig has pointed out, that the categories in terms of which we structure our knowledge of the world are themselves born of social interests. This reminds us that "the body of knowledge which is transmitted to us as part of our acculturation is neither theoretically neutral nor incontestably given." See Kleinig, 154.

[13]"Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge." See also P.L. Berger and T. Luckman, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966).

[14]Charles Frankel, as quoted in *The Humanities in American Life: Report of the Commission on the Humanities* (Berkeley: University of California, 1980): 2.

[15]*The Role of the Humanities.*

[16]"Involvement in a Legacy: A Challenge and an Opportunity for America's Community Colleges," 82.

[17]Arthur Grugan, "Humanistic Ideals and the Professions," *Community College Humanities Review* 6 (Winter 1984-85): 44.

[18]*To Reclaim a Legacy*, 10.

[19]Pat Aufderheide, *The Village Voice*, 6 November 1984.

[20]*Education for Modern Man*. 2nd ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963): 126, 133.

[21]*To Reclaim a Legacy*, 21, 22.

[22]Arthur Cohen and Florence Brawer, *The American Community College* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982).

[23]Letter to members of CCHA, February 1984.

[24]*To Reclaim a Legacy*, 2.

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V. RESPONSES TO THE HUMANITIES POLICY STATEMENT

"If we in community colleges give our students technical skills but fail to balance those skills with the prismatic insights of the humanities, we limit our students' lives to functioning without fascination. Whether the humanities assume a central role in an associate in arts degree program, or whether they find a more modest but meaningful place in the educational experience of a vocational student, the humanities must be an essential part of community college education."

Rhonda Kekke
Professor of Speech and Communication
Kirkwood Community College

RESPONSES TO THE HUMANITIES POLICY STATEMENT

The Humanities Revisited

ARTHUR M. COHEN AND
FLORENCE B. BRAWER

In November 1979 the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges convened the National Assembly on Strengthening the Humanities. This assembly provided a forum for in-depth discussions, issued policy statements, and offered recommendations for improving the plight of the humanities. Its deliberations were based on the findings of several studies that had been conducted by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges.

Now, several years after the assembly and following the humanities roundtable with which this monograph is concerned, an update on the humanities in community colleges is in order. Have faculty characteristics and goals changed in response to the continuing shrinkage in liberal arts enrollments? Have any of the recommendations made at the 1979 assembly or the 1985 roundtable been implemented? What is the prognosis for strengthening the humanities?

This article reports findings from center surveys of humanities instructors conducted in 1975, 1977, and 1983; reviews and updates the recommendations made at the 1979 assembly; and places the recommendations made by the 1985 roundtable in the context of today's community colleges.

Faculty Characteristics

While the percentage of males and females teaching humanities in community colleges nationwide remained constant for 1975 and 1983 (67 percent male, 33 percent female), certain demographic characteristics changed. As a group, the faculty became older. Faculty over 40

years of age represented 51 percent of the sample in 1975 and 65 percent in 1983. The reason for this major shift is that little faculty turnover occurred over the years: despite some incentives for early retirement, faculty members were remaining in their jobs and few new instructors were hired. If these same instructors had been replaced by new personnel on a one-to-one basis, the age difference between the 1975 and 1983 groups would be zero. Continuing the trend, the percentage of faculty who had taught for 11 or more years at the same college rose from 17 percent in 1975 to 54 percent in 1983. And while affirmative action has had some effect in increasing the number of ethnic minorities among the humanities faculty, in most demographic respects the faculty has remained the same. As a group, the instructors are simply getting older.

How does this older, more experienced faculty address its work? For one thing, instructors are more professionally oriented than they were in 1975. Respondents to the 1983 survey were more likely than their earlier counterparts to have published an article, attended a conference on teaching, or taught courses jointly with faculty members in other disciplines. And although the percentage of instructors applying to an outside agency for a grant did not change between 1975 and 1983, the recent sample was considerably more successful in receiving grant money. The 1985 instructors seemed to be more involved in the profession, more sophisticated in their grantsmanship efforts. Another sign of this increased involvement was the growth in the percentage of instructors who held the doctorate (16 percent in 1975, 23 percent in 1983).

The instructors seem more satisfied with their professional lives than they were in 1975, as evidenced by an increase in the group who categorized "Doing what I am doing now" as "very attractive" (41 percent in 1975 to 53 percent in 1983). Satisfaction with (or simple resignation to) the realities of the job market are also indicated by the sizable numbers of instructors remaining in the teaching profession and their apparent complacency with their present situations. Perhaps they realize that there are few opportunities for them in other positions or at other academic institutions.

Assistance and Teaching Practices

Perhaps because of generally increased fiscal problems, faculty in 1983 had less assistance available to them in terms of clerical or

professional help, test-scoring facilities, and media production. And when such help was available, they tended to make slightly less use of it. Only in the case of media production did more of the 1983 instructors (49 percent) use this service than did instructors in the 1977 sample (41 percent).

In the years intervening between 1977 and 1983, instructors became more demanding of their students, using out-of-class term papers, quick-score objective tests, essay exams, field reports, oral recitations, and workbook completion in determining 25 percent or more of the student's grade. Although these increases were slight, and caution must be exercised in interpreting small increments, the 1983 cohort of instructors seemed the most demanding and strict in their requirements for students. This again may reflect the "older faculty" syndrome, or it may point to shifts from the laissez-faire model of the sixties. Earlier student calls for "relevance" and "Take whatever I want; you can't tell me" attitudes appeared a thing of the past.

In 1983, 19 percent of the instructors were 56 years of age or older. Put another way, one-fifth of the faculty will probably retire in the next few years. While the last ten years saw little faculty turnover, administrators planning for the decade ahead need to consider institutional responses to vacancies caused by the growing number of retiring instructors. Similarly, they should provide special activities for a cohort of people who are growing older.

Assembly Recommendations

At the 1979 assembly several recommendations were made for improving the humanities in two-year colleges. What do these recommendations say for today and the near future? What new activities and ideas seem worth considering?

We still believe that the humanities, with other disciplines in the liberal arts, must be maintained as part of the educational offerings in all community colleges, and that the humanities can most effectively be strengthened through interventions with the college staff. Since differential funding patterns tend to debilitate many programs (e.g., fewer state dollars provided to the college for humanities than for allied health programs), new funding programs should be devised to balance the fiscal patterns. Despite greater emphasis in the past

several years on transfer programs, changes have not typically occurred in this area.

Short segments of specialized material would be useful for many students—for example, modules on business ethics for automotive repair students, medical ethics for nurses, history and cultural backgrounds of various groups for police personnel. Yet, because most instructors are paid on the basis of classroom contact hours and because instructional funds are allocated by departments, it is difficult for instructors to build course modules for students enrolled in another course. We maintain that both workload formulas and intramural fiscal allocations be developed to encourage instructors to teach short segments of the humanities in otherwise technical courses. Some reciprocal arrangements have been made since 1979 in a few colleges; we recommend more concerted efforts along these lines.

Since colleges are devoting more attention to transfer activities, articulation efforts have become more prominent among community college educators. We believe that it is more important than ever for the colleges to develop links between secondary school and college humanities instructors to better facilitate articulation between those levels of education. Similarly, more activities should be promoted between community college instructors and their counterparts in the university in order to organize better curriculum sequences.

Again, because of tightened budgets, most colleges have reduced their allocations for sabbatical leaves, fellowships, and faculty assistance. We urge that these incentives be increased: aging faculty members who are bound to their institutions should be given opportunities for personal and professional growth. These should include inservice training, released time for curricula and course development, and other special staff development opportunities.

Other recommendations previously made involved the establishment of interdisciplinary courses, development of advisory boards, and liberal arts/technical course alliances. These have occurred in some colleges and in some districts, but much more effort is needed along these lines.

Since the 1979 assembly, we have been recommending the development of a Work Experience Liberal Arts Program (WELAP), which would integrate humanities courses in occupational programs for

students planning to enter small businesses, work in insurance offices, or meet the public in sundry other activities. The humanities—and the liberal arts—are for everyone. Because the community college is democracy's college as well as the last chance for many, all students must be exposed to these disciplines. The need is greater today than it was in 1979.

These recommendations emanating from center studies were broadened at the assembly. The group made a more extensive list, totaling 38 recommendations addressed to community college boards, administrators, and faculty, and to the AACJC, professional associations, graduate schools, state agencies, and federal agencies. Many of these recommendations were of a general nature, such as: "Each community college should review, restate, or reaffirm its mission to express a commitment to the teaching of the humanities," "Administrative leadership should take a personal interest in leading the revitalization of the humanities throughout their institution," and "Humanities faculty should define, with administrators and other faculty, the specific purpose and role of the humanities in their college." Others, however, were more specific, such as the recommendation directing that the AACJC encourage formation of a council on the humanities.

Humanities Roundtable Recommendations

The recommendations stemming from the 1985 humanities roundtable followed the lines of the 1979 report with one important difference: they offered the specifics of a minimum number of hours of required humanities study for students who would receive the associate in arts, associate in science, or associate in applied science degree. The roundtable was most forceful in emphasizing that study in the humanities should be a required part of every degree program.

The roundtable also recommended that study in the humanities disciplines be carefully scrutinized within each college to ensure that it is indeed study in the humanities, not in some other area that might for convenience' sake be labeled the humanities. The group particularly mentioned that courses in composition, public speaking, and communications should not be accepted within the definition. They also took the position that extensive reading, writing, speaking, and critical analysis should be part of the student's experience. And the

group recommended that the humanities curriculum include courses in sequence and be differentiated according to courses that are introductory or basic, prerequisite to others, or which stand alone.

The roundtable emphasized the importance of the faculty by saying that evidence of good teaching should be gathered as a criterion for employment, promotion, and professional recognition, and that faculty development resources should be used to help instructors maintain their currency in the humanities disciplines.

In general, the members of the roundtable were optimistic: the years between 1979 and 1985 had seen a turnaround in the community colleges. Student enrollment and placement in degree programs consisting of sequenced curricula had risen. There was a renewed emphasis on transfer studies and less catering to students wishing to "drop in" and take courses without concern for completing a program. Placement testing had become prominent as had the administration of diagnostic tests. All these measures directed toward managing student entry into and flow through the colleges have had a salutary effect on the humanities, which historically have depended heavily on students' ability to read.

Roundtable Specifics

We see a range of reactions to the 12 recommendations made by the AACJC roundtable. It is entirely possible that some recommendations already in common practice will remain valid for some time to come, while others lose their values. Those enjoying minimal use now may gain favor in the future. In any case, these are the national patterns we see now as reflected in the recommendations.

Recommendation 1. *Educational policy concerning the humanities and their place in the community college curriculum should be framed within the context of an overall policy on a liberal or general education program of study.*

This seems to be a nationwide movement. The humanities are definitely part of liberal arts, general education, and transfer programs. While courses that fall under the purview of community education may be seen as existing outside those programs, most humanities courses are offered within the context of a specific program.

Recommendation 2. *Study in the humanities should be a required part of every degree program offered by community colleges.*

Much attention has been paid to the associate degree in the past several years, and with this focus the humanities have received special attention. Many colleges are modifying their associate degree curricula, and the revised programs invariably consider the humanities.

Recommendation 3. *Study in the humanities disciplines should be required beyond existing college requirements for such courses as composition, public speaking, and communications.*

Here we run into both definitional and political problems. According to the National Endowment for the Humanities, composition, public speaking, and communication are not considered part of the humanities. They are important parts of a student's education, but they should not substitute for courses introducing all matriculants to the ideas controlling the human condition. However, the faculty teaching history, literature, and the arts usually manage to have those courses included in the requirements for the degree.

Recommendation 4. *A minimum of six semester hours in the humanities for the degree of associate in applied science.*

Recommendation 5. *A minimum of nine semester hours in the humanities for the degree of associate in science.*

Recommendation 6. *A minimum of twelve semester hours in the humanities for the degree of associate in arts.*

These seem reasonable as minimums and they have been adopted in many colleges. As the educators rethink the associate degrees, most of them recognize the importance of the humanities for institutional credibility.

Recommendation 7. *Humanities courses should develop students' abilities to participate in reflective discourse, to question, analyze, and understand. To develop these abilities, humanities classes must include extensive reading, writing, speaking, and critical analysis of the perspectives, cultures, and traditions that make up our intellectual heritage.*

While this recommendation is more direct than many of the others, it seems not as well realized in current practices as it might be. Quick-score tests rather than essays are still the mode in most classrooms, and although there has been a push in many colleges toward writing across the curriculum, the effect has been modest. Furthermore, two few instructors have succeeded in encouraging reading by students who typically do not read on their own. Much more effort could

and should be exerted along these lines, but we do not see a swelling of activity here.

Recommendation 8. *The faculty within each institution should develop a comprehensive plan for helping their students acquire knowledge of and sophistication in the humanities. This plan should include a coherent program of courses in sequence, with clear indication of which courses in the humanities are basic, which courses presuppose others, which courses are best taken concurrently with others, and which courses constitute appropriate selection for students who will take limited coursework in the humanities.*

Our studies have shown that few humanities classes specify prerequisites. If they are indicated, they generally have to do with reading levels rather than context acquisition. This recommendation faces an uphill struggle. One bright spot is in the development of one-credit required courses that have been tailored for the occupational programs in some colleges.

Recommendation 9. *Evidence of good teaching should be used as an explicit criterion for hiring, promotion, tenure, and other forms of professional recognition. This will demand the development of appropriate measures of teaching ability and effectiveness.*

This recommendation has not been implemented as yet, nor does it seem to be on the horizon. While measures of teaching effectiveness (e.g., as evidenced by student learning) could well be established, collective bargaining agreements and lack of general interest will prevent their exercise.

Recommendation 10. *Faculty development resources should be used to help faculty develop their teaching skills and further their knowledge of their discipline. Fulltime faculty, and in every instance possible, parttime faculty as well, should be encouraged to attend the meetings and conferences and read the publications of those academic organizations which are increasingly turning their attention to the quality of teaching in our colleges.*

Some efforts have been made. Internal grants for disciplinary study are offered in a few colleges while others promote faculty study centers. Here again, however, collective bargaining clauses and minimal interest will probably mitigate implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation 11. *Funds should be made available to college libraries and learning resource centers for the purchase of materials*

that support research, provide the basis for cultural enrichment, and constitute resources for programs in the humanities.

Since most funds allocated for libraries and learning resource centers fall under a general budget, special allocations for humanities-related activities will probably not be made.

Recommendation 12. *Governing boards, administrators, and faculties of community colleges, high schools, and four-year colleges should work together to plan a unified and coherent humanities curriculum for their students.*

This recommendation does reflect some current activities, especially due to the interest in transfer education. Two-plus-two programs, more precise articulation efforts, and curriculum planning with colleagues from high schools and four-year colleges ensure the growing implementation of this final recommendation.

Summary

This, then, is our comparison of humanities faculty over the years, review and updating of recommendations made in 1979, and prognosis for the implementation of the 1985 roundtable recommendations. Although we definitely do not believe that all 12 recommendations will find themselves in practice, we do believe—and heartily suggest—that the staff in every community college should consider them. The American community college will then have taken a giant step toward reestablishing the humanities in its curriculum.

Arthur M. Cohen is president and Florence B. Brawer is research director of the Center for the Study of Community Colleges in Los Angeles.

RESPONSES TO THE HUMANITIES POLICY STATEMENT

A Reaction From the Community College Humanities Association

W. J. MEGGINSON

William Bennett's *To Reclaim a Legacy* has spawned many comments and critics. The clamor has tended to obscure, however, one area of substantial agreement—the need for a greater focus on the humanities in higher education. Bennett has stated it clearly: "The humanities should have a place in the education of all...some substantial quality education in the humanities should be an integral part of everyone's collegiate education."

In convening a roundtable group to draft a policy statement on the humanities, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges has embarked farther on the road of specific curricular recommendations than it has in the past. Although the statement invokes credit hours but not specific courses, in both text and implication it furthers the cause of the humanities; consequently, the Community College Humanities Association supports it in general terms. As the council for humanities for the AACJC, and the only professional association specifically created for advancing the humanities at two-year colleges, the CCHA has a special interest in the humanities policy statement, which would increase the number and range of humanities courses pursued by students and improve the professional life of humanities faculty.

Although the humanities policy statement originated with the AACJC, CCHA people were involved with it. AACJC's application to the National Endowment for the Humanities for an emergency grant specified that CCHA representatives be included in the roundtable group. Several other participants were also CCHA members

although serving other constituencies. In addition, the AACJC grant proposal specified that CCHA would discuss the statement at is five regional conferences, a task most welcomed by CCHA. In 1985 the conferences were held between October 4 and November 16; discussions ran from 20 minutes in general business meetings to over an hour in full sessions specifically devoted to the statement. On April 27, 1986, the CCHA board of directors endorsed the AACJC Humanities Policy Statement. The following comments are personal rather than official, and are an attempt to express diverse opinions of CCHA members at the conferences.

Faculty discussion, somewhat predictably, ran the gamut from high praise for the AACJC initiative to a more cynical concern for how it could be used against faculty in hostile environments. Enthusiasm for the statement's strong support of the humanities prevailed, however. Four of the five CCHA divisions passed resolutions of general support; the other division deferred action until the final version of the statement would be ready in 1986.

Strong concern was voiced over the fact that only four community college faculty were among the 23 roundtable participants. On the one hand, this seems to me a legitimate concern and one that, ideally, should have been addressed ahead of time. On the other hand, the group had to include people from, or suitable to, several organizations and/or constituencies. I do not believe there was a deliberate effort to exclude faculty—rather the designers did not deliberately seek out a larger faculty involvement. The composition, then, tended to be largely administrators. We should note, however, that these are administrators who are supportive of the humanities and not, ex officio, a hostile band.

The most positive statements about the AACJC draft policy concern its general endorsement of the humanities and more specifically the call for every two-year degree program to include at least six hours of humanities courses (more for the A.S. and A.A. degrees). In essence, the draft policy recognizes the centrality of the humanities to the notion of higher education. Four years ago CCHA drafted a statement which was adopted by the AACJC Board of Directors on April 5, 1982. That statement identified the one common element of the highly diverse two-year schools in the country as "their commitment to education in the liberal arts, of which humanities are at the center."

Humanities faculty as well as national commissions recognize two major trends in American higher education: the increased emphasis on majors which will result in employment (e.g., business, computers); and a corollary emphasis on technical studies, which have tended to crowd out humanities courses. Too many faculty hear the comment "I'd really like to major in [a humanities discipline] but I have to plan to get a job." Obviously the two demands are not as antithetical as this brief, but typical, quotation suggests. Four years ago the CCHA/AACJC statement said, "It is important that students become economically self-supporting. But it is equally important for them to broaden their horizons so they may participate willingly and wisely in a fuller range of human activity."

Their enthusiasm for more humanities studies notwithstanding, most CCHA people expressed concern for the draft policy statement's recommendation that programs be extended to encompass these courses. They felt such a recommendation to be impolitic at best and a "red flag" to technical/occupational/vocational faculty, guaranteeing polarization. Few expected the recommendation to be implemented. Finally, program extension ignores other options. The National Council for Occupational Education and some professional education groups (affecting most immediately four-year colleges but with eventual spillover effect) are themselves recommending that their programs be redefined to include more of the humanities; the NCOE at the same time suggests a cap in total hours.

Several humanities faculty have attempted to get their own campuses to reconsider the humanities component within the entire curriculum, including occupational programs. Unfortunately, occupational faculty, not always involved in these deliberations from the beginning, tended to view these initiatives as threatening assaults. The message became clear: make these discussions a collaborative effort, not a battlefield. Indeed, CCHA and the National Council for Occupational Education have taken the lead by establishing an ad hoc committee. Both boards have approved the creation of a joint task force to articulate their commitment to humanities within all two-year programs.

One project for the joint task force may well be an articulation of the specific benefits of humanities for an occupational program. An earlier draft of the AACJC statement was rather weak in this regard, but has been strengthened by incorporating parts of the 1982

statement which expresses it more sharply: "The humanities do have inherent worth. The proper study of the humanities also is decidedly practical.... The development of advanced technologies requires not only higher order processes of intelligence, but also a keen appreciation of the impact of technology on the human environment.... They concentrate in direct ways on skills of language and skills of the mind." Increasingly, corporation executives and the NCOE have expressed their concerns that employees (e.g., A.A.S. graduates) possess these skills as well as technical capacities. The 1982 statement continues: "While the ability to communicate well and reason clearly should be a goal of all branches of study, these capacities are especially connected to the humanities, by their very nature. The medium of the humanities is language, by and large, and their use of language sets in motion reflection and judgment. In sum, the humanities assist in developing insights and capacities—warrantable beliefs supporting trained intelligence—that are essential for a well-formed public life as well as a fulfilling private one."

Faculty on individual campuses may well want to develop a similar, tightly argued rationale for the minimum standards suggested by the new AACJC statement. Otherwise, these standards may appear to be self-serving and intrusive into other faculties' bailiwicks. Humanities faculty often have not been good advocates of our own fields. As true believers, we have often presumed the cosmic validity of our fields of study without articulating clearly to others why these fields are important and why they belong in all core curricula. We will have to improve dramatically our expertise as spokespeople for our convictions to have the impact we believe the humanities deserve.

After affirming the humanities role in two-year programs, the policy sets guidelines. This whole matter of specific hours stated in the AACJC draft policy has raised concern among CCHA members. On the one hand a vocal segment has felt that the proposed six, nine, and twelve hours are too few and that AACJC should ask for more. On the other hand some faculty have already encountered administrative officials who recommended reducing their campus requirements to these figures, arguing that AACJC has not set these as norms. In fact, they are *minimums*, as the revised draft emphasizes. Generally, faculty who have argued for more hours do not foresee such an increase on their own campuses. My own judgment, based on an informed supposition rather than research, is that almost

any college offering the A.A. degree already requires more than twelve hours, while many A.A.S. and A.S. degrees do not meet the proposed six and nine standards and would require changes.

Following the issue of minimum hours, the question immediately arises, Which courses will satisfy these hours? Generally, the AACJC policy has carefully and wisely avoided any specification, leaving that decision to individual institutions. The policy does not exclude communications, composition, and public speaking courses. Reflecting the diversity of current requirements, CCHA members have proposed either a tight list of specific and traditional humanities courses (e.g., literature, history, and philosophy) or more integrative humanities courses which cross disciplinary lines. More imaginatively, others have suggested the development of new courses. Several appear to combine effectively the humanities, at the same time weaving them into a pattern especially suitable for vocational/technical students: the city as an urban environment, which can incorporate the arts, history, politics, literature, but also architecture, public finance, minority concerns, transportation problems, and other issues within a humanities context; work as a topic of study, which could combine relevant authors from literature, sociology, and ethics; and regional cultures, covering on a broader scale the same issues as a city-based course. Even more ambitiously, some CCHA members have argued for "humanities across the curriculum," paralleling the "writing across the curriculum" approach. These proponents want humanities concepts incorporated into vocational courses.

The variety of possibilities portends extensive discussions and committee meetings as individual institutions review the AACJC guidelines, reconsider their own course offerings and requirements, and mesh the inevitable conflicting demands and expectations such as process generates. Despite the policy's focus on principles, it is obvious that implementation of any curricula changes involves ramifications of class size, faculty retention, fulltime equivalencies, state funding, and other imminently practical concerns.

Some faculty have expressed suspicions or fears that the policy-generated curriculum revision could be used against them. However, it seems reassuring that the document specifically calls for "the faculty within each institution" to "decide on a comprehensive plan." A more sensitive issue could be "evidence of good teaching . . . used as an explicit criteria for hiring, promotion, tenure, and recognition."

While the statement also calls for "appropriate measures of teaching ability and effectiveness," these are sore points at many institutions and affect negotiated contracts.

Faculty should also note, and take advantage of, potential benefits provided by the policy statement. Recommendation 10 calls for institutions to commit "faculty development resources," including support for attending professional conferences and reading publications "of those academic organizations which are increasingly turning their attention to the quality of teaching." Recommendation 11 says that "funds should be made available to the library and learning resource centers" for appropriate materials which, among other things, will "expand cultural enrichment, and in general...supply comprehensive resources for programs in the humanities." These two clauses may become powerful guidelines for assessing and expanding the institution's financial commitment to the humanities. In some cases these needs, now spelled out by the AACJC, may be grounds for grant funding.

What can CCHA do to facilitate the process? We will hold sessions at our San Francisco national conference (November 20–22, 1986) dealing with attendant issues as well as the AACJC statement. Additionally, we plan to offer a variety of speakers and consultants who can help faculty groups sort through the issues. We will make available information on model humanities programs developed elsewhere. CCHA will be working with both NCOE and AACJC to support this effort.

The AACJC proposal offers an excellent opportunity for these groups—formal associations and concerned faculty—to turn greater attention to the humanities. Reacting to the policy, institutions and faculty will have a significant opportunity to reaffirm the role of humanities at two-year colleges. This policy may well become a measure by which to judge ourselves. Given a collective commitment, colleges can overcome the inertia and internal obstacles that accompany curricula revision. We can address more fully the AACJC commitment to "the idea that the practical demands of life—both private and public—are illuminated and made more valuable by the study of the humanities" (1982 statement).

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VI. THE HUMANITIES IN ACTION

"The humanities are too important to leave solely to research universities and four-year colleges. The humanities contain and impart historical memory, literary imagination, philosophical reasoning, and advanced literacy. These qualities are useful for community college students—in careers, for political decisions, and during private moments of reflection."

Gaines Post
Dean of Faculty
Claremont-McKenna College

THE HUMANITIES IN ACTION

Kirkwood Community College: A Humanities Case Study

RHONDA KEKKE AND
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When a group of 15 faculty and administrators reviewed the state of the humanities at Kirkwood Community College in 1979, the picture was far from bright. Fewer and fewer students were taking humanities courses; students' selection of humanities offerings was sadly imbalanced; humanities faculty lacked a sense of cohesiveness and common purpose; the visibility of humanities on campus seemed to be fading even as the college itself was experiencing dramatic growth. Many students received associate of arts degrees without ever studying literature; others, without a basic understanding of history; most, without the slightest sense of what the term "humanities" embraced.

Yet in 1984, William Bennett's *To Reclaim a Legacy*, a report based on the National Endowment for the Humanities' Study Group on the State of Learning in the Humanities in Higher Education, cited Kirkwood Community College as a "bright spot" in the humanities, proof "that the drift toward curricular disintegration can be reversed, that colleges and universities—and not just the elite ones—can become true communities of learning."[1] The same Kirkwood group which just [illegible] years ago had identified its problems now received a deluge of requests for solutions. Most of the requests were from community colleges; and most sought information about the static products of the Kirkwood program: courses, core structure, grants—in general, "What are you doing?" Only a few requests included the equally important question "How did you do it?" Neither stion must be neglected.

As community college leaders review and respond to the 1986 AACJC Humanities Policy Statement, they will discover that becoming a community of learning is accomplished not merely by adding course requirements, but through a process of working together to assess and to strengthen the role of humanities in their programs. The question of how is no less important than the question of what—both products and processes are essential to curricular change, and both will be discussed here.

Philosophical Foundations

Albert Schweitzer once said, "Without a philosophy of education, no education is possible." Yet almost 15 years after the inception of the college, Kirkwood's core requirements had never been systematically reviewed, and faculty had never articulated a shared philosophy which could bring coherence to the program. Individually, of course, each of the 15 people on Kirkwood's humanities committee could eloquently defend the role of the humanities in the community college. Collectively, they could agree on the need for a viable and coherent humanities program. But there was no common sense of direction, no yardstick by which to gauge either program or progress.

It could be argued that only individuals have philosophies; groups, at their best, can only discuss philosophies. But by discussing the substance, assumptions, and instructional methods which should be part of education in the humanities, the humanities committee arrived at six shared goals which have become the foundation of Kirkwood's program.

Directed toward students, because ultimately educators must turn philosophy about education into instruction, the goals are these:

1. To come into contact with one's ethical, philosophical, religious, intellectual, and aesthetic heritage, and to understand the connection of that heritage with the present.
2. To develop an appreciative responsiveness to the arts.
3. To develop sensitivity to other people through recognizing common human experiences.
4. To become independent, critical thinkers.

5. To understand how humanists in various disciplines look at life situations and ask questions about them.
6. To develop the intellectual and aesthetic self-respect necessary to understanding human responsibility in shapingone's world.

The six goals are simply stated, but their importance in planning the Kirkwood program cannot be underestimated. First, the goals became a standard for helping evaluate which of 60 courses in Kirkwood's distributive requirement should become part of a new, greatly streamlined core program. Second, the statements became the course goals for a new interdisciplinary course, Encounters in Humanities. Finally, the intellectual penetration which characterized the humanities committee's discussions of philosophy enriched individuals even as it transformed them, through conflict, from aggregation to cohesiveness as a group.

Encounters in Humanities

The only interdisciplinary course in Kirkwood's humanities program, Encounters in Humanities is a direct outgrowth of the discussions of philosophy which occurred in 1979-80. The primary purpose of Encounters in Humanities is to foster a humanistic habit of mind, and it is the only humanities core course that emphasizes method over content.

Ernst Cassirer has posited that the fundamental feature of human existence is "the fact that man is not lost within the welter of his internal impressions, that he learns to control this sea of impressions by giving it ordered form."[2] Cassirer's words could well describe Encounters in Humanities, as students learn to associate certain forms—creative elements—with particular genres, and to understand how those forms express the vision of artists and writers.

Encounters in Humanities develops the capacity for critical inquiry through a focus on five questions applied throughout the quarter as students analyze, interpret, and criticize artifacts from a number of different genres. A typical selection of genres might include poetry, painting, architecture, drama, rhetoric, music, philosophy, mathematics, and history—each of which requires its own elements and creative forms of expression, and all of which create humanistic statements.

The Encounters in Humanities inquiry method poses these questions:

- What are the elements of the artifact?
- What is the unifying element or theme?
- Who is the creator (and what is the creator's context)?
- What was the intended purpose of the artifact?
- What is the effect of the artifact on you?

The five general questions acquire more focused and richer meanings as students develop increasing familiarity with the elements or forms characteristic of each genre. And as students move from Encounters in Humanities into other, content-centered core courses, the method continues to receive reinforcement. The course thus contributes to programmatic coherence.

The heart of Encounters in Humanities is dialogue. Through the questions, students place themselves in conversation with the creators of the texts and artifacts they study. Daily writing assignments compel students to engage in an inner dialogue, and classroom discussion provokes dialogue with other readers. Classroom instruction is supplemented by field trips to college and community performances and exhibits, opening a door to the humanities which will not slam shut with the completion of formal studies.

Though not a required course, Encounters in Humanities has increased students' awareness of what the term "humanities" embraces. Because it is team planned, it has drawn humanities faculty together, and has served as a cornerstone in the development of Kirkwood's humanities program. Economics instructor Don Bartholomew reports that his academic advisees like the inquiry method because "it gives structure to the study of humanities, a framework that students like because it helps them think and express themselves." Instructor Kathryn McKay describes the greatest joy of teaching the course as "seeing students get excited about difficult works from our culture's past—and even more, seeing them realize that the works relate to our own times." When books and art introduce new perspectives on the plight of the worker, on individuals' responses to authority, on people's right to privacy, students are not merely learning about books and arts, but about the very fabric of their own lives.

The Associate of Arts Core Program

Although Encounters in Humanities played a significant role in the revitalization of Kirkwood's humanities program, a new associate of arts core program will have a much wider impact on students' education. The new core program, implemented in 1983, strengthened core requirements in three ways: by increasing the number of general education credit hours required for graduation; by restructuring the core categories to ensure a better balance of humanities disciplines; and by decreasing the number of courses in each area and including as "core" only the most rigorous offerings.

The total number of quarter-hour credits required for graduation with the associate of arts degree is 90. Of these, 60 credits must be taken from a restricted list of core courses, which fall into the following core areas:

Humanities:	12 quarter hours, including both literature and arts and ideas
History-Cultures:	8 quarter hours
Communication:	12 quarter hours (2 writing courses; 1 speech course)
Social Sciences:	12 quarter hours
Mathematics-Sciences:	12 quarter hours, including both math and science
Distributive:	4 quarter hours, any core area

The history-cultures core area replaced a 12-hour "floating" requirement which had rarely been met with humanities courses. This change in the core structure both increased the prominence of history and foreign languages and, by reducing the number of disciplines within the humanities core area, ensured that students could no longer "escape" such essential studies as literature or the arts and ideas of Western civilization.

Although the humanities committee spearheaded the movement toward a more rigorous core program, major program changes should never be the exclusive brainchildren of a small subset of faculty. At Kirkwood, faculty and administrators across all areas of core were committed to keeping the liberal arts healthy as a balanced part of

a comprehensive community college, and the core program is the product of advocates from many disciplines. In fact, articulation went beyond the college: Kirkwood's internal revision of degree requirements coincided with statewide articulation discussions with representatives of Iowa's regents' institutions. The new requirements therefore provide Kirkwood graduates with junior standing upon their transfer to the University of Iowa, the University of Northern Iowa, and Iowa State University.

With the new core structure in place, and with the help of a three-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Kirkwood is now strengthening its core program through faculty development. Like most community colleges, Kirkwood has considered itself a teaching institution. Most faculty teach a 215-day year, which includes summer assignments; teaching loads are generally four four-credit courses each quarter, with little time between quarters. With such heavy teaching loads, it is burdensome for faculty to undertake additional university study and fulfill their needs as scholars and educators. Kirkwood's NEH grant allows time for individual study and provides summer colloquia for groups of faculty. A strong core structure, though important, is only the skeleton of a strong program; it is the faculty who must give the program sinew and spirit. Faculty development is therefore a necessary part and product of any meaningful curricular and programmatic regeneration.

Kirkwood's humanities committee made a deliberate decision to address first those curricular requirements which were its primary responsibility, and therefore focused most of its attention on the associate of arts degree. Associate of science degree requirements have remained unchanged; eight credit hours in humanities are required. Associate of applied science programs, though they include strong requirements in skills courses taught by humanities faculty, do not include specific course requirements in humanities content courses.

Ironically, the impetus for the Kirkwood project was a conference devoted to strengthening the humanities in vocational education; yet the associate of applied science degree has become the last frontier towards achieving a formal, institutional humanities requirement. AACJC's 1986 policy statement insists that students in vocational programs must not be shortchanged in understanding their literary, artistic, political, and cultural heritage. For Kirkwood, as

for most community colleges, it is time to act. Collectively, America's community, technical, and junior colleges educate between four and five million students every year. The nation can ill afford the preordaining of over half of that number to a skills-only education.

Dynamics of Change

In *To Reclaim a Legacy* William Bennett cited Frederick Rudolph's admonition, "The curriculum cannot be reformed without the enthusiastic support of the faculty," and continued, "institutions such as...Kirkwood Community College were able to implement strong curricula because their administrators and faculty worked together toward a common goal, not in opposition to one another or to protect departmental turf."[3] AACJC's policy statement states that "the faculty...being most familiar with student needs, should take the lead in building appropriate humanities programs." Changes in Kirkwood's programs resulted from a cooperative faculty and administrative effort, using a planning process marked by four important features: (1) collaborative planning and decisionmaking, (2) group-centered leadership, (3) widespread faculty participation, and (4) selective use of external resources.

Collaborative Planning and Decisionmaking

The planning process which began in 1979 followed several years of dissatisfaction with the humanities program and two abortive attempts to remedy the problem. Kirkwood's administration realized that meaningful change would require the faculty's commitment to change; administrative initiative, even with external funding, would not be enough. So although the initial objective, to secure a consultancy grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, was set by the division's administration, the planning for the grant was collaborative, with administration and faculty working together to identify problems and to consider the characteristics and role a consultant should bring to the tasks ahead.

A telephone conversation with William Alexander, of the University of Michigan, convinced several Kirkwood leaders that he could act as an informed facilitator, without imposing his solutions on what were, ultimately, institutional problems. Dr. Alexander's style in

group meetings was consistent with the consensual planning model under which the humanities committee was to operate.

The Kirkwood planning model followed five steps:

1. Development of a list of available alternatives
2. Individual ranking or rating of those alternatives prior to group discussion
3. Discussion and group meetings, with consensus as the goal, avoiding voting or other short cuts to agreement in favor of thorough and open exploration of ideas
4. Adoption of the best possible alternative or combination of alternatives
5. Compilation of careful written records throughout the process, so that excellent ideas do not become lost in a din of discussion

During the first year of planning, the humanities committee used the above model to arrive at the six goals which became the philosophical foundation for the program. Since that time, they have adapted the model to the development of a new core structure, to the selection of teachers for Encounters in Humanities courses, and throughout the many stages of development which have led to three NEH grant proposals and major program changes.

Consensual decisionmaking is neither fast nor easy. It is not ideally suited to a group as large as Kirkwood's (usually at least 15 people attend humanities meetings). But when a large group is not making headway, the model can be retained as the committee divides into smaller task groups. The acceptance of decisions at the implementation stage is due in large part to the extensive development and commitment which were born of the struggle for consensus in the planning process.

Group discussions in humanities committee meetings were (and are) often heated, but tempered by the group's agreement on purpose. Roles taken by various individuals were critical in moving from conflict toward consensus. Kirkwood's administrators clearly enjoyed working on curriculum questions, finding an opportunity to use their academic backgrounds in meetings they did not have to chair. Further, they served the process by reaffirming the college's commitment to support the considerable changes which would emerge from the work. The humanities committee faculty, coming from a variety

of disciplines, brought to meetings not only a diversity of positions and insights on humanities and on teaching, but spirit, flexibility, and a willingness to bend individual wills towards a common purpose. The library director and members of her staff were associated with the planning process and have increasingly helped to bring the humanities project to fruition. Accustomed to working alone, the humanities committee have together overcome the kind of individualism that James Banner once described as "not only a glory but a burden."[4]

Group-Centered Leadership

Kirkwood's humanities committee is a leader-rich group. Certainly, *any* group of faculty and administrators is a group of leaders—people whose very jobs require them to lead; and people so accustomed to leading that it may be difficult, in a group, to function in any other way. Thus, it is quite likely that several different people will act as leaders during the course of a group's progress, if not within a single meeting. The locus of leadership at humanities meetings was often determined not by designation but by an interaction of such factors as the immediate situation, the subject under discussion, and the expectations, desires, and personalities of the group members. This shared responsibility and tacit interdependence may help to explain the strong sense of mutual ownership which now permeates the Kirkwood program.

In a group of leaders, perhaps the most appropriate function for the designated leader is to be, as William Schutz put it, a "completer," observing unfulfilled but necessary functions and tasks, and seeing to their completion.[5] Someone must supply the missing links between meetings, and must sustain (or create) sufficient order to make progress evident. At Kirkwood this function was filled by the humanities committee chair—not a content expert in the humanities, but a teacher with a grounding in group processes and a sincere dedication to the group's purpose.

Franklin Haiman suggested that "the most effective way to direct the behavior of human beings is simply to help them direct themselves."[6] Such group-centered leadership works best when groups are self-selected and highly motivated. Even in such a group, an overly laissez-faire approach to leadership would be inadvisable; but

Thomas Gordon's description of group-centeredness suggests several guidelines which have typified humanities committee leadership:

- Allow the group to diagnose its own needs, to set its own direction and activities.
- Be sufficiently interested in the work of the group to prepare for its meetings well in excess of "normal" levels.
- Be comfortable with conflict.
- Be willing to bypass official procedures and to forego personal preferences in the interest of group progress and cohesiveness.
- Maintain accurate and organized records of the group's work.
- Assume no special status; being relatively free of the need to be perceived as "leader" allows for maximum shared leadership.[7]

Because major changes in the program of a community college must be not only of the highest quality but also widely accepted and understood, a leader's greatest aim must be to foster broad ownership, not merely institutional adoption, of a strong program.

Widespread Faculty Participation

The first invitation to participate in a discussion of the state of the humanities at Kirkwood was sent to all faculty in the arts and sciences division. The humanities committee encouraged participation from faculty outside the humanities disciplines and from interested people outside the arts and sciences division.

The initial humanities committee during the consultancy year was composed of faculty from each of the three arts and sciences departments. The social science department contributed two historians, an economist, and a foreign language instructor. A mathematics instructor served from the math/science department. The remaining committee members came from the communication arts department, and included speech, composition, and literature faculty. Three administrators—the dean of arts and sciences and the assistant deans from social sciences and communication arts—regularly worked with the committee.

The task of building collegewide support for the humanities began during the early phases of the project. Consultant William Alexander

visited with college administrators outside the arts and sciences division to explain tasks and to solicit views. Similar visits were held with several faculty in a variety of vocational and technical programs. These visits helped to turn initial verbal support by those individuals into active participation during other phases of program development.

Two off-campus retreats helped the humanities committee reach closure on several unresolved questions and allowed broader participation in making key decisions. Participants in the retreats included not only humanities committee members but five college administrators (former President Bill Stewart among them), an instructor from the architectural drafting program, an agriculture instructor, a health occupations instructor, three science instructors, and the NEH consultant. Not only did the retreats accomplish their primary purposes—setting directions for future work; selecting the approach, substance guidelines, and teachers for Encounters in Humanities; developing a collegewide land-use forum; and making critical program decisions—they solidified support for the humanities project throughout the administrative hierarchy and across the departmental and divisional lines of the college.

The importance of faculty participation beyond the humanities disciplines cannot be underestimated. Wide involvement enriches discussions, deepens the entire faculty's understanding of the humanities, and develops support for expanding the role of the humanities in the curriculum. At Kirkwood this involvement was exhibited in divisional debates on the revised core and continues to play an important role in faculty-student advising.

External Resources

While the humanities committee was adamant about building a humanities program that met Kirkwood's unique set of needs, it recognized and sought out a vast array of helpful external resources. Kirkwood used NEH grants, consultants, visits to other colleges, and trips to annual meetings of the Community College Humanities Association to stimulate thinking and sustain its effort.

Kirkwood turned to the NEH, first for a consultancy grant, and later for pilot and coherence grants. The NEH staff in Washington

provided valuable assistance, as did the consultants and evaluators associated with the planning and implementation of each grant. The development of the proposals in itself served to maintain energy and to force a continual reexamination of needs. Just as grant application guidelines and deadlines focused energies and kept the committee from drifting away from its purpose, so did periodic consultant and evaluator visits prompt the completion of parts of the project while subjecting the project to external scrutiny.

When the humanities committee turned its attention to developing an interdisciplinary course, members traveled (either physically or through correspondence) to a number of colleges and community colleges that had successful interdisciplinary courses. Visits to other colleges were conducted by teams of two or more committee members who sought answers to a set of questions established by the entire committee. Individual committee members were assigned responsibility for reporting on other colleges that were contacted only through correspondence. Prior to decisions on the Encounters in Humanities course, then, the group had collected several interdisciplinary models and completed a list of shared readings.

One visit proved particularly important and led to subseqeunt on-campus faculty development. The team that visited Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, came away impressed with Macalester's "Life of the Mind" seminars for freshmen; the seminar's structure was adapted for Kirkwood's Encounters in Humanities course. Karl Sandberg, then the director of "Life of the Mind," made two visits to Kirkwood to conduct workshops for Kirkwood faculty, who have continued the content-centered style of the workshops in a series of colloquia and faculty forums.

The humanities committee also participated actively in the central division of the Community College Humanities Association. The college supported annual group attendance at CCHA meetings, where faculty made presentations and collected new ideas for the program. The CCHA was founded in 1979, just as Kirkwood began its work. Its growth and development have meant much to Kirkwood and to other community college humanities programs. Now, with the adoption of AACJC's policy recommendation in the humanities, even greater dialogue among two-year institutions should be fostered and encouraged.

Conclusion

The Kirkwood humanities committee is still active and continues to possess the characteristics that have made it a vital force. The plan of activities outlined in the current NEH coherence grant provides the committee with a heavy agenda for the next two years. Identification of needs beyond that period has already begun. Strengthening the humanities at Kirkwood is viewed as an unending task. The past few years have yielded the process and many of the human resources needed to tackle future challenges.

The logo adopted by the Kirkwood humanities committee as a symbol of the program is a footprint. Conceived and designed by art instructor Doug Hall, the footprint represents the conviction that study in the humanities is fundamental to all education, that it is not just an ethereal afterthought appropriate only for the intellectually enlightened or the financially privileged. Accompanying the logo is a quotation from poet Matsuo Basho: "Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the men of old; seek what they sought." Kirkwood's work is presented in that spirit of continuing inquiry—not as answers, but as an encouragement to other community colleges to seek answers of their own.

NOTES

[1]"To Reclaim a Legacy," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 28 November 1984.

[2]*The Logic of the Humanities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961): 22.

[3]"To Reclaim a Legacy," 21.

[4]"Challenges Before the Humanities," *Review and Proceedings of CCHA* 1 (February 1980): 63.

[5]"The Leader as Completer," in *Small Group Communication*, 2nd ed., edited by Robert Cathard and Larry Samovar (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Co., 1975): 400.

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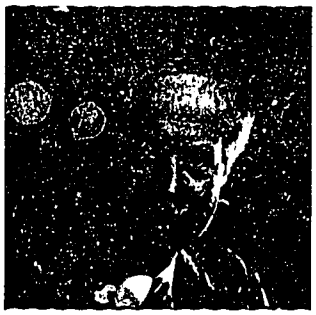

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