Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Faculty Senate, April 10, 2007

The Faculty Senate met on Tuesday, April 10, 2007, at 5:00 p.m. in Beatty Center 115 to continue discussion of the proposals on General Education submitted by the Ad-Hoc Committee on General Education.

The Senate approved the minutes from the March 13 special meeting.

Committee on Nominations and Elections—Proposed Amendment to the FAM

Speaker of the Faculty Bob Mignone recognized Michael Phillips, Chair of the Committee on Nominations and Elections, who briefly discussed a motion his committee had first presented at the March 27 meeting of the Faculty Senate. This proposal would allow for electronic voting for faculty committees; it would also allow election of contested committees to take place over several days. The motion was reviewed by the Committee on By-Laws and the Faculty Administration Manual, which made a few slight alterations in wording to the proposal. The motion reads as follows:

Faculty By-Laws, Art. V, Sect. 3.A.

Insert new language concerning the election of the Committee on Nominations and Elections and any other contested election to a standing College committee.

A. Members of standing College committees are nominated by March 15 by the Committee on Nominations and Elections and are elected by members of the regular College faculty (as defined in Art. I Article I Section 1) by April 1, with the exception of the Committee on Nominations and Elections and any contested standing committees. The latter slates will be presented at the spring faculty meeting for an election that will begin the day after this meeting and conclude on the Friday of that week.

The Senate approved the motion by the 2/3 majority required to make a by-laws change. The motion will now go to the full faculty for ratification.

General Education Proposals

The Senate then returned to a discussion of the General Education Proposals from the Ad-Hoc Committee. Discussion began with Proposal IV of the Proposals for a Required First-Year Experience (FYE), since that is where the Senate left off discussion at the previous special meeting on March 13, 2007.

FYE Proposal IV: That the QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan) Committee continue to develop more detailed plans for a required FYE that will support the faculty’s
goals for general education (p. 15 of the larger proposal)

The speaker recognized Hugh Wilder (Philosophy) who noted that, at the last special meeting, the Senate approved an FYE Committee. The QEP committee is “mostly history,” Mr. Wilder pointed out. He argued that it was appropriate for the FYE Committee (rather than the QEP) to do the work specified in this recommendation. After some additional discussion about the unlikely possibility of the faculty as a whole not ratifying the FYE Committee, Julia Eichelberger, Chair of the Ad-Hoc Committee on General Education, agreed to withdraw the motion entirely.

FYE Proposal V. That a required FYE be designed that will accommodate the needs of transfer students (p. 15 of the larger proposal)

Ms. Eichelberger introduced this proposal by stating that her committee believed it would be desirable to have an FYE experience for transfer students, but they wanted the experience for entering students to be designed first. Jack Parson (Political Science) argued that this motion represents a change in the concept of FYE that we had been working with previously. We’ve commonly thought of the FYE as an experience for first-year students who are just beginning college. Transfer students, he pointed out, are a different category. A course for them ought to be organized as an introduction to the College of Charleston. Ms. Eichelberger replied that the committee agrees that this would be a different experience for transfer students than for entering students. The committee has not planned a specific FYE for transfer students, but simply believes that one should be planned in the future. Hugh Wilder said that the QEP committee that designed the FYE did consider the issue raised by Mr. Parson. The FYE described in the QEP is for students with 30 hours or less of transfer credit. The FYE under consideration in this motion would be for transfer students with more than 30 hours of credit, and would be different. Calvin Blackwell (Economics/Finance) asked for clarification of what the term “entering student” meant in the proposal we had already approved. Mr. Wilder replied that entering students are defined as having no more than 30 hours of credit.

The Senate approved the motion.

Proposals for Goal I: Research and Communication in Multiple Media and Languages

Ms. Eichelberger introduced the next set of motions by pointing out the discussion would now turn to specific goals of general education and how these goals would be met. But first, using a power point presentation, she briefly compared the number of hours students would be required to take under the new proposal to present general education requirements. Under the new proposal, students would be required to take between 56 and 59 hours of general education. Currently, students take 56 hours (although this is slightly variable, depending on foreign language credit).

Sub-goal 1: Gathering and using information (p. 17 of the larger proposal)
Ms. Eichelberger pointed out that the sub-goals associated with Goal 1 were developed in consultation with faculty members. The proposals associated with the first sub-goal (“Gathering and using information”) are not attached to student credit hours. The Ad-Hoc Committee, she said, is asking the Senate to approve the defining characteristics of this sub-goal as well as the methods of implementing it. The proposal reads as follows:

I. 1a. The General Education Committee proposes the following as defining characteristics of the first sub-goal.

**Gathering and using information**

Students should be able to
- Determine the nature and extent of information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally
- Acknowledge the use of information sources using an appropriate documentation style.

I. 1b. To fulfill this sub-goal, the Committee proposes that each student should receive research instruction on multiple occasions, as described below.

1. Instruction in these skills will be required in the First-Year Experience and freshman writing course(s).
2. Additional instruction will be encouraged in other General Education courses.
3. Instruction will be provided within the major so that upper-level students will demonstrate a more advanced level of skill in gathering and using information in their discipline.
4. The Library faculty will coordinate efforts to support faculty in the teaching of research skills, and will supplement the instruction that faculty provide within a regular course.

Darryl Phillips (At-Large, Classics) opened the discussion by noting that, procedurally, the Senate will not been given an opportunity to talk about the proposal as a whole, which he sees as a problem. The Ad-Hoc Committee, he said, has done a “phenomenal job” of showing us the importance of re-visiting general education. It is essential that we look back at what we’re doing and why, he argued, and he thanked the Committee for inspiring us to do this. The proposals we’ve already passed make significant contributions: we’ve been forced to articulate a rationale for general education, and we’ve approved a way to make this rationale come across to students. In addition, we’ve approved a First-Year Experience that will engage incoming students with roster faculty. Mr. Phillips added that, as he looks at the rest of the proposal, he doesn’t see terribly much that’s objectionable. The problem is that, if we step back and take a look at the whole, it is not what we want. Individual portions of the proposal satisfy specific departments, and the Ad-Hoc Committee did a great job soliciting departmental input, but our job in the Senate is to ask if the entire proposal is the best thing for the College as a whole. Mr. Phillips said he was concerned that the proposal as a whole is overly
complicated. He cited the flow chart on p. 9 as an example. The proposal, he added, is more complicated than our current general education requirements. He wondered if we would be getting an adequate pay-off for the added complication, and he said that he doesn’t think so. He believes we are creating a bureaucracy that we don’t need. He is also concerned that the proposal allocates resources. Paying faculty members to take part in general education, through stipends, sends the message that general education is not a regular responsibility of all faculty members, that general education is something they can opt out of. These proposed requirements, he continued, set us apart from other institutions, but we could be set apart for other reasons—for strong majors or good student/faculty relations. General education might, in fact, be an area where we want to look like other institutions. Hopes of diversifying, for example, might be difficult to meet because these requirements will add problems in evaluating and accepting transfer credit (i.e. for Trident Tech students). Mr. Phillips concluded by urging Senators to consider “the big picture.”

Mick Norton (Mathematics) agreed with Mr. Phillips that the proposal is complicated. He asked the Speaker whether Senators would have the opportunity to vote on the whole package at some point. Mr. Mignone replied that the faculty by-laws allow faculty members to call a special meeting (by submitting a petition with 50 faculty signatures) in which any Senate action can be up for a veto. Potentially, in such a meeting, the entire curriculum could be put to an up or down vote. Deanna Caveny (At-Large, Mathematics) then asked whether a Senator could move the entire proposal after we’ve discussed it in parts, so that we could have an up or down vote on the entire package in the Senate. George Hopkins (History) pointed out that, in the last general education revision process, there was a specially-called meeting of the faculty. At that time, people who took no part in the process came out and disapproved it. He would hope that a similar thing doesn’t happen again. Mr. Mignone then asked Senators to return to discussing the motion on the floor.

Reid Wiseman (At-Large, Biology) asked whether the goal of the proposal was to create a greater passion for learning in students. If so, he would like to hear how the proposal accomplishes this. Ms. Eichelberger said that the Ad-Hoc Committee members hope the proposal will improve students’ learning, and that it attempts to make conditions for their learning better by making faculty members and administrators more intentional about courses that are offered and what they intend to accomplish. She said that she couldn’t speak to the hearts of students and how those will change.

Erin Beutel (Geology) then tried to move that we consider the proposals as an entire package rather than as individual motions. After some conferring between the speaker and the parliamentarian, George Pothering, about whether Ms. Beutel’s motion could be made as an amendment to the motion that was already on the floor, Calvin Blackwell (Economics/Finance) asked whether we could suspend the rules to discuss the whole package. Mr. Mignone said that a suspension of rules would not be appropriate because we can’t go back to deciding what the rules are going to be when a motion is on the floor. Jack Parson (Political Science) asked whether a motion to approve or disapprove of the whole package would be in order after we complete the process of discussing these
motions individually. Mr. Mignone said that any legitimate motion would have to come a week ahead of time or the rules would have to be suspended. Once motions are passed, he added, we can’t revisit them in the same session of the Senate unless there’s a motion to amend something previously adopted. Ms. Eichelberger then pointed out that the Ad-Hoc Committee felt the structure we’re undertaking now (voting on the motions one at a time) would be the easiest and most rationale way to proceed. Committee members want people to consider the entire package and consider how individual motions fit into the entire package, but they also desire to get as much consensus as possible. Working through items one at a time is a way to try to come to agreement in a sequential way. The committee, she added, has held forums and workshops on the entire proposal. The committee’s decision to proceed one motion at a time does not represent a desire to cut off discussion. Melissa Hughes (Biology) argued that, when we’re discussing an individual motion, we should be able to discuss the big picture as well since such a discussion will be relevant to how we view the individual motion. Mr. Mignone replied that he would consider such discussion relevant (discussion of the “big picture” or the entire package). He pointed out that he has already allowed such discussion to take place.

Brian McGee (guest, Communication) asked for clarification about what motion was actually before the Senate. He wondered if we were considering just the defining characteristics of the sub-goal, or the methods of implementing these characteristics as well. Ms. Eichelberger replied that the Ad-Hoc Committee was offering proposals 1a and 1b together as a single motion. At this point discussion ended.

The Senate voted to approve the proposals associated with sub-goal 1.

**Sub-goal 2: Effective writing and critical reading; oral and visual communication (pp. 18-20 of the larger proposal)**

Ms. Eichelberger introduced the set of proposals associated with sub-goal 2 by noting that they came out of discussions with departments about the particular skills students need. The consensus seemed to be that students need more skills in these various communication areas. The courses in this area that are required under our current general education curriculum are English 101 and 102. The Ad-Hoc Committee is proposing instead four communication-intensive courses, to include:

--First year college composition
--A literature course (that would be either writing or speaking intensive)
--A third approved communication-intensive class in any discipline
--One communication-intensive course or sequence in the major

** Students would also have to take at least one speaking intensive course (which could be one of the courses listed above)

Please see Appendix 1 for a full list of the exact proposals and rationale associated with sub-goal 2.
After some discussion in which Ms. Eichelberger assured Richard Nunan (At-Large, Philosophy) that there were four rather than five communication-intensive courses, Mary Beth Heston (Art History) pointed out that, in order for a literature course to count toward the requirement, that section would have to be approved as writing or speaking intensive by the Communication Across the Curriculum (CAC) committee. Not all literature courses would count, and not even all sections of a particular course might count. She wondered how communication-intensive courses in the major would be approved. Ms. Eichelberger replied that the communication-intensive requirement within the major could be delivered by a sequence of courses, and thus would have more latitude. Each department would present its proposal for meeting the requirement to the CAC committee for approval. Approval in this case would not be section-specific.

Ms. Eichelberger went on to point out that communication-intensive courses would have a small class size and that faculty members would receive a stipend for attending a workshop on teaching these courses. In addition, communication-intensive courses may use a trained student mentor for supplemental instruction. Communication-intensive courses would have to satisfy a rubric developed by a CAC committee that would vet proposals and give support to faculty who are teaching them. Ms. Eichelberger also displayed power point slides showing what other schools are doing with writing and speaking-intensive courses. She argued that the Ad-Hoc Committee’s plan is not as ambitious as some things they’re doing at other schools.

Bob Mignone then informed Senators that he’d spoken to the parliamentarian, and they had concluded that it would be acceptable to entertain a motion to consider the entire general education package. Mr. Mignone strongly urged Senators to wait to make such a motion until after we have discussed the individual parts of the proposal. Otherwise, if we just passed the entire package in an up-or-down vote, all the proposed amendments would be lost.

Hugh Wilder next asked a question about the last bullet point under the defining characteristics of the sub-goal, which addresses visual images (“• Interpret visual images and employ images to communicate ideas and concepts”). He wondered what, in the implementation part of the goal, addressed this bullet point. Ms. Eichelberger replied that there was not a particular, specific requirement that’s attached to visual images. Most courses that require oral presentations do address visual components, she added. In addition, many college composition courses do this. But right now, teaching students to interpret and employ visual images is not a hard and fast requirement. She hopes this is something the CAC Committee can develop more specific guidelines about later. Mr. Wilder said that Ms. Eichelberger’s response perhaps made him more worried. He wondered what would happen with a CAC Committee approving courses that satisfy this goal. If he were to teach a speaking-intensive philosophy class that does not require students to make power point presentations with visual images, would the CAC Committee approve such a course? Ms. Eichelberger said that she thought it would, because the assumption could be that this point would be met in one of the other required communication-intensive courses. Mr. Wilder then suggested that we either drop the
Carol Ann Davis (English) asked whether each individual approved course would have to meet all of the defining characteristics. Ms. Eichelberger replied, “no”—some of the courses will be writing-intensive, for instance, while some will be speaking-intensive. Mr. Wilder then asked what would be lost if we deleted the last bullet point. Susan Kattwinkel (Theatre) reminded Senators that the items we were discussing are goals—things we’d like to see students take from our curriculum. She urged Senators to recognize that it’s possible (esp. in relation to Goal 5: Ethical and personal concerns) that students won’t come away with everything we hope for. Ms. Eichelberger added that visual images could be explored in courses that meet other goals as well. Terry Bowers (English) said that he was not really worried about the concerns raised by Mr. Wilder because students are fairly adept at using images. Computers, for instance, offer visual images. While acknowledging that we live in a visually-dominated world, and that we need to help students interpret these visual images, Mr. Bowers added that he’s more worried about writing, reading, and critical thinking on the part of students. Yet, he’s willing to keep this defining characteristic in place and doesn’t think it’s a real problem.

Idee Winfield (Sociology/Anthropology) asked whether it would be considered appropriate to change the wording so that “interpreting visual images” would be added to a list of skills in some combination that we’d like to see students develop. Ms. Eichelberger replied that the Ad-Hoc Committee feels that all students should be able to use visual images, but whether this goal translates into these specific courses is not clear. Glenn Lesses (guest, Philosophy) pointed out that the proposal calls for a CAC Committee to use these defining characteristics to vet courses. So it would be useful to have clarification about whether the entire list must be satisfied or only certain items. He said that he was not sure how the proposed committee would operate. Ms. Eichelberger said that the CAC Committee would spend more time elaborating these proposals and would bring them back to the Senate for approval. Her committee wanted to set out parameters, but also to task the CAC Committee with working out specifics—the details of the proposal are enormous, beyond the scope of the Ad-Hoc General Education Committee.

Mark Lazzaro (guest, Biology) said that he was concerned about the proposed structure of the CAC Committee. He wondered why the committee would include the chairs or chairs-designate of the English and Communication Departments. He argued that the CAC Director, appointed by the Provost, would likely be from the English or Communication Department as well. He argued this was too much representation from two departments on campus. Ms. Eichelberger replied that the Ad-Hoc Committee’s rationale for the proposed structure is that those two departments have a lot of experience with writing and speaking intensive courses. Brian McGee (guest, Communication) then asked a procedural question concerning the CAC Committee, which is proposed to be a subcommittee of the General Education Committee. Mr. McGee pointed out that the Senate will not vote on the formation of a General Education Committee until the end of our discussion of the General Education Proposals. He wondered if we should move our discussion of this subcommittee to the end of the discussion as well. Ms. Eichelberger
then reminded Senators that the Ad-Hoc Committee considered the report of the By-laws Committee concerning the proposed structure and description of the new committees as a friendly amendment.

Deanna Caveny (Mathematics) suggested that we add “reading and listening” to the second defining characteristic of the sub-goal, but she declined to make an amendment. Melissa Hughes (Biology) spoke next. She argued that it would be hard to imagine that someone would argue against students have stronger communication skills. She herself is fully committed to WAC (Writing Across the Curriculum) and CAC programs. Her concern, she said, is that this proposal will have a fairly small impact on student experience with a disproportionately large impact on faculty workload. She already teaches writing-intensive courses, but to have these courses count under the proposal, she would have to submit a proposal to a committee, perhaps adjust her syllabus, and go to a summer workshop. The proposal, she argued, adds an enormous amount of bureaucracy and work for faculty members. Mike Duvall (guest, English) responded by saying that Ms. Hughes’ students are lucky to get her as a teacher, but that not all students may get professors as committed to writing as she is. If we don’t implement a CAC program, he added, we will be stuck with the status quo. Ms. Hughes replied that voting down this proposal doesn’t mean we can never change the status quo. Scott Peeples (English), responding to Ms. Hughes’ concerns, pointed out that the reason for any requirement is to make sure students get certain things rather than just hoping for the best. In his view, it is not terribly onerous to fulfill the duties Ms. Hughes mentioned, especially if we come closer to meeting our curricular goals as a result.

Erin Beutel (Geology) pointed out that it would be theoretically possible for a student to get less writing instruction under the new proposal than they currently receive. In addition, she asked who would teach the training workshops for instructors of communication-intensive courses. Ms. Eichelberger said that the workshops would most likely be led by faculty members with expertise in this area.

Richard Nunan (At-Large, Philosophy) then reminded Senators that he had a series of amendments he wished to make to the proposal. He asked Hugh Wilder to first present an amendment that was endorsed by the entire Philosophy Department. Mr. Wilder obligingly introduced the following amendment:

Delete I.2c.3c (one-course requirement in literature, p. 19), with the understanding that a variant of 3c will resurface as an amendment to section III.2b (coursework related to ‘artistic, cultural, and intellectual achievements).

Rationale: Works of literature are “artistic, cultural, and intellectual achievements.” It makes sense to include the literature requirement in that sub-goal rather than this one concerning effective writing and reading, and oral and visual communication. Furthermore, many domains besides literature promote effective writing and reading, oral, and visual communication. Singling out literature alone in the effective writing and reading, oral, and visual
communication sub-goal is not well motivated. This shift will be further discussed with the amendments to III.2b.

Terry Bowers (English) spoke against the amendment, saying that he would like to see a required literature course remain as part of the writing-intensive sequence because students do not just do a lot of writing in such courses, but they study language itself—i.e. figurative language, allusion, tropes, imagery, and prose style—in a fairly systematic way. Studying literature and writing together is a natural pairing. As students learn to become better writers, they’re studying writing as such. Writing, he added, has been taught this way for a long time. Also, he argued that the literature course proposed here should be a foundational course taken early in a student’s career, since it would teach skills we want students to attain early on.

Garrett Mitchener (Mathematics) argued that most literature courses will be accompanied by a writing-intensive credit, so most students will take a literature course anyway. He wondered whether it was worth the bureaucratic difficulty to make a specific literature course required. Idee Winfield (Sociology/Anthropology) also spoke in favor of the Philosophy Department amendment, arguing that other courses in other disciplines, not just literature, could accomplish similar things—i.e. a course on language and culture in the Anthropology Department. Scott Peeples (English) said that if Senators vote in favor of the amendment for the reasons Ms. Winfield urged, it would strip away not only a required literature course, but also the type of course Ms. Winfield proposes could count. Our current practice, he said, is that students take English 101 and 102. English 102 is a literature-based class that’s not only writing intensive, but also pitched toward students coming right out of English 101. If we remove this literature requirement, we will basically be cutting our current freshman writing program in half. Mary Beth Heston (Art History) agreed with Mr. Peeples. She said that one of the primary reasons for reviewing our general education curriculum is to make sure its goals are reinforced at other points in the student’s academic career. She would hate to see us lose this course, since it is intended to serve as a step between English 101 and upper-level communication-intensive courses in the major.

Brian McGee then asked about the intent of the Philosophy Department in regard to the later amendment they plan to make concerning a course in literature. One version of the proposed amendment, he pointed out, requires a course in literature or the arts, while a second version requires a specific course in literature. He wondered whether the intent of the Philosophy Department was simply to move a required literature course to a different place in the proposal or to make literature just one choice among many. Mr. Wilder replied that his department’s position is to recommend a requirement of either art or literature under a later goal (Historical, Cultural, and Intellectual Perspectives). If that amendment fails, there would be a subsequent amendment to institute a specific literature requirement. The Philosophy Department’s intent, he added, is not to gut the communication emphasis of this goal. Meg Cormack (Religious Studies) said that she supports the amendment for the reasons mentioned by Ms. Winfield. She would still like to see four required communication-intensive courses, but she doesn’t think one should be specifically in literature.
Susan Kattwinkel (Theatre) then called the question on the amendment. A vote was taken and Mr. Mignone ruled that a super-majority (2/3 of Senators) did not vote to call the question. Therefore, discussion of the amendment continued.

Garrett Mitchener (Mathematics) pointed out that communication-intensive courses would have to be coded for whether they’re writing-intensive, speaking-intensive, literature, or first-year composition. He argued that this would be a complicated process. Ms. Eichelberger replied that current computer systems allow for courses to have multiple designators.

Jerry Boetje (Computer Science) said that he was becoming very uneasy with a set of to-be-shown-later amendments. He said that he doesn’t know what in total the Philosophy Department is trying to change this requirement into. Terry Bowers (English) then argued that the problem with the amendment is that it moves the literature course to another category, which would shift the course’s emphasis to content: literary periods, genres, etc. The intent of putting the course in its present position is to emphasize reading and writing. In addition, Mr. Bowers argued that Larry Carlson, Chair of the English Department, who conducts dozens and dozens of transcript evaluations for transfer students, had asked him to report that the course configuration as originally proposed by the Ad-Hoc Committee coincides with how the course is taught at other schools. Using literature to teach writing, he added, is a norm that’s tried and true.

Jack Parson (Political Science) and Marty Perlmutter (Philosophy) both spoke in favor of the amendment, arguing that literature is, in fact an artistic, cultural, and intellectual achievement. Therefore it belongs under that sub-goal (which comes later in the proposal). Chris Warnick (English) spoke against the amendment and in favor of the original motion, arguing that the Ad-Hoc Committee’s proposal emphasizes Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) over four years. There is a great deal of research to support this approach, and he believes the WAC approach is better accomplished in the original motion than in the amendment. Carol Ann Davis (English) said that, as a poet, she was gratified to hear that literature is an artistic, cultural, and intellectual achievement. Yet, she spoke against the amendment, arguing that literature is uniquely suited to teaching writing because students study form itself, without being distracted by other content.

Paul Young (Mathematics) spoke in favor of the amendment, arguing that literature is not mentioned at all in the defining characteristics of this sub-goal, so it seems odd to have a recommendation for a course in literature. In addition, he wondered why the requirements for a course in literature were so clearly specified in the Ad-Hoc Committee’s proposal. He suggested that specifying the requirements of such a course (number of texts, etc.) should be under the purview of the CAC Committee that this proposal calls for.

Brian McGee spoke against the amendment, arguing that literature has been associated with rhetorical instruction since the early Middle Ages. He added that we’ve done it this
way for a long time for quite good reasons. Leaving the literature requirement under the communication-intensive portion of the proposal, he argued, would be the elegant choice. Scott Peeples then asked whether the writing-intensive nature of this literature course would move along with it, if we transfer the course to meet a different goal. He expressed concern that we would lose an important writing-intensive course if we move it to a different section of the proposal. He understands that the Philosophy Department’s intent is not to gut the writing-intensive requirement, but he fears this would be the effect. Idee Winfield said that, in her view, if we move the course, we will not gut this requirement, we will broaden the possibilities for what counts as writing-intensive. Hugh Wilder reiterated that it was not the intent of his department to separate literature from a writing-intensive component. Mr. Peeples pointed out the course retaining its writing-intensive aspect is not currently part of the later amendment the Philosophy Department hopes to make. Mr. Wilder replied that the later amendment would get the issue on the table.

Melissa Hughes (Biology) said that she appreciates the long history that literature has played in teaching writing. But WAC programs recognize that language is used differently in the different disciplines. Therefore, she doesn’t understand why this should be a specifically literature class. Gary Harrison (Mathematics) said that, if we retain the literature requirement, we’d have two courses—freshman composition and a writing-intensive literature class—that focus specifically on composition. If we remove the requirement, we would have other courses whose primary goal is not writing but to teach some disciplinary content. We’d lose one course whose goal is primarily writing.

Reid Wiseman (At-Large, Biology) asked if it would be possible to devise a course in biology where students read literature—say, Darwin and other scientists—to satisfy this requirement. Ms. Eichelberger replied that there would indeed be such a possibility. Any department could propose a course to meet these requirements. Paul Young (Mathematics) said that his earlier questions had not yet been answered. Why, he asked, is literature not mentioned in the defining characteristics of this sub-goal? Why is this section specifying what a literature course should contain when this should be the job of the CAC Committee? Ms. Eichelberger replied that she would expect the CAC Committee to modify this initial description of a literature course put together by the Ad-Hoc Committee. She added that using literature to focus on language and communications skills is quite standard. Literature can be a means to achieve the goals of the defining characteristics.

Richard Nunan pointed out that the literature course described in this section of the proposal could conceivably be taken in the second semester of a student’s senior year. So, no assurance exists that this course will be taken early. Mick Norton (Mathematics) then called the question on the amendment. The Senate voted to call the question.

A vote was then taken on the Philosophy Department’s amendment. The amendment failed.

At this point, the meeting adjourned. Discussion on the main motion will continue on
April 12, at the next special meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Farrell
Faculty Secretary
Appendix 2.

Sub-goal 2 Proposals: Effective writing and critical reading; oral and visual communication

I.2a. The General Education Committee proposes the following as the defining characteristics of the second sub-goal.

Effective writing and critical reading; oral and visual communication

a. Students should be able to
   • Understand, analyze, and interpret intellectually challenging written texts and oral and visual presentations
   • Use writing and speaking to increase their own understanding of a topic and to communicate their point of view persuasively
   • Strengthen written and spoken work through the process of drafting, revising, and editing
   • Create formal papers and public presentations that are appropriate for the situation and audience
   • Produce well-organized papers and public presentations that convey substantive information and that conform to the conventions of edited American English
   • Interpret visual images and employ images to communicate ideas and concepts

b. Students should complete rigorous writing and speaking assignments and receive significant feedback on their work in first-year courses and in other courses throughout their college career.

I.2b. The Committee proposes the formation of a faculty committee, known as the Communication Across the Curriculum Committee, to oversee this aspect of general education. This committee will be a subcommittee of the General Education Committee (see “Committee Proposal”).

1. Composition of the committee: 5 voting faculty. 3 are also members of the General Education committee; 2 are the chairs (or chairs’ designees) of the departments of English and Communication.

2. A Director (or co-directors) of Communication Across the Curriculum, appointed by the Provost, will serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of the committee. The director or directors must possess appropriate expertise in communication instruction and must be teaching writing-intensive or speaking-intensive courses.

3. Duties of the committee:
   a. Evaluate requests to designate a course or sequence as writing intensive (WI) or speaking intensive (SI).
   b. Initiate, review and recommend changes to CAC policies and programs.
   c. Work with the Assessment Committee and Office of Assessment to assess CAC program.
   d. Support and advise the Director of CAC in training faculty who teach writing-intensive (WI) and speaking-intensive (SI) courses, in guiding student mentors assigned to WI and SI courses, and in other areas of CAC administration.

4. The Committee will forward all recommendations for course designations and for changes to the CAC program to the General Education committee and to the Faculty Senate.
1.2c The Committee proposes that each student be required to complete 4 communication-intensive courses or instructional sequences, as described below, to meet this sub-goal.

1. The CAC committee will use the defining characteristics of “effective writing and critical reading; oral and visual communication” (proposal 1.2a) to evaluate course proposals for writing-intensive (WI) and speaking-intensive (SI) courses. Since these criteria are still very general, the CAC committee will also develop more detailed criteria for WI and SI courses, according to the following suggested guidelines. These criteria must be approved by the General Education Committee and by the Faculty Senate.

   a. Assignments in WI or SI courses shall require students to demonstrate understanding of the course content and/or academic research; all such assignments have the dual goals of improving the students’ communication skills and of advancing the other learning objectives of the course.

   b. Students must generate a significant quantity of written communication or oral/visual communication. The amount of writing or speaking will be determined and published by the CAC committee.

   c. A WI- or SI-designated course must include several opportunities for individualized feedback by the instructor and revision by the student. Some of the writing or speaking may be informal in nature, but at least half of the assignments should be presented formally, in accordance with the conventions of an academic discipline, and/or in a format suitable for an academic or professional audience.

   d. A significant portion of the course grade (to be determined by the CAC committee) must be based on the quality of the student’s work in either writing or speaking.

2. Once these criteria have been established, courses may be approved as WI or SI if their department demonstrates that they meet the criteria. Departments will submit proposals for individual courses to the CAC committee, furnishing course descriptions and other evidence that this course meets the criteria.

3. The four required communication-intensive courses must include the following.

   a. During the student’s first year, one composition course (a writing-intensive course devoted to academic writing).

   b. At least one speaking-intensive course, which may also be a literature course (described in c, below) or a course in the student’s major.

   c. One course in literature, a rich and creative form of verbal communication. Courses satisfying this requirement must also be either writing-intensive or speaking-intensive. Courses must also explore a significant quantity of literary works (at least five full-length prose works or three volumes of verse), must analyze ways these texts employ language imaginatively and artistically to create multiple levels of meaning, and must explore the ways some of these texts have been interpreted by literary critics. Departments wishing to have courses approved for satisfying this requirement will submit proposals to the CAC committee, furnishing course descriptions and other evidence that the course fulfills these criteria for a literature course as well as the criteria for a communication-intensive course.
d. A third approved communication-intensive class in any discipline.

e. A fourth approved communication-intensive class or instructional sequence within the major. If departments choose, this course or sequence may be the same as the one in which students receive instruction in gathering and using information in the major (described in Proposal I.1).

f. An “instructional sequence” within a major may be composed of multiple courses that provide sufficient communication instruction to the student who takes them all. A set of linked courses (such as a Learning Community or a minor) may also be classified as communication-intensive if the combined courses provide enough instruction to satisfy the criteria.

g. Communication instruction within the major should include both writing and speaking instruction, although a department may emphasize one mode more than another.

4. Students will select two to four examples of work completed in these required courses to be uploaded within their online record (as described in “Online Record Proposal”). These work samples may be used for institutional assessment, and students may choose to display them when applying for employment or graduate school admission.

5. Writing- or speaking-intensive classes will have no more than 20 students, and departments offering such courses shall not be penalized for any adverse impact on their department’s Delaware Study target number. If a communication-intensive sequence is designed by a major department, the caps of 20 are not required for all courses in the sequence.

6. A course’s designation as WI or SI is dependent on the faculty member who teaches it as well as on its curriculum. For a section of a course to be so designated, its instructor must undergo formal training in communication instruction. If a previously-approved WI or SI course is later taught by another faculty member who has not received this training, that faculty member’s sections of the course will not satisfy a communication-intensive requirement.

7. Formal training in communication instruction for approved courses will be offered at a time convenient to faculty members (either during a summer institute or at some other convenient time), and faculty completing this training will receive a stipend for their time.

8. The College will provide additional support for faculty who teach WI and SI courses, such as pedagogical workshops during the academic year and, when appropriate, student mentors trained to provide supplemental instruction in particular courses.

Rationale: This new requirement recognizes that students need a higher level of research and communication skills than they can acquire through the current writing requirement (English 101 and 102 in the first year). The Ad Hoc Committee has heard this need expressed repeatedly by individual departments, by faculty participating in the 2005 Faculty Forum, and at many other meetings across campus. There is a clear consensus that many College of Charleston students still need further instruction in research, writing and speaking by the time they enroll in upper-level courses.

The present requirement of English 101 and 102, which focuses mainly on writing and not speaking, and which “front-loads” communication instruction in the first year, cannot equip
students with all the communication skills that they will need throughout college. Confining such instruction to a single department makes the problem worse, since students may construe writing and speaking as minimal, quantifiable skills (an ability to proofread written work, a willingness to speak in public) that they should “get out of the way” and never develop further. However, writing and speaking are complex intellectual tasks that require students to deploy many different skills at once. The more complex the course material becomes, the more challenging, and the more dependent on disciplinary conventions, the communication becomes. Interpreting aural and visual information also becomes more challenging as a student attempts to navigate more complex information and concepts.

Students will learn and retain more of a course’s content through doing more and better writing and speaking on this material; moreover, students who do more of this writing and speaking over their whole college career will have more lasting, or “transferable,” abilities and intellectual perspectives after they finish here. Strong communication skills are a hallmark of a liberal arts and sciences education, and they make our graduates more effective in absolutely any field.

While some departments are already delivering excellent research and communication instruction to their majors and in their General Education courses, other faculty are less familiar with teaching these skills and may not yet be able to deliver this labor-intensive instruction alongside other teaching demands. Therefore we recognize that the following requirements can only be implemented over a period of time and that they will be more expensive to staff. We recommend forming a CAC committee as soon as possible to develop a strategic plan for developing and approving communication-intensive courses.