COGS: Doing what couldn't be done

Some said it couldn't be done.

A few years ago when there were discussions about organizing a graduate student government council - some people said graduate students wouldn't be interested.

But it's done. The Council of Graduate Students was organized during the 1967-68 academic year and today includes 60 of the 73 departments offering graduate programs - or more than 80 per cent of the graduate student body.

In its short history, COGS has helped extend the credit/no credit grading option for graduate courses, obtain bus passes for graduate assistants who work on north campus (graduate assistants cannot park north of the Red Cedar) and increase graduate assistant stipends.

The group is now considering a proposed document on graduate student rights and responsibilities and discussing student participation in academic governance.

And some 50 graduate students are represented on various University committees and governing bodies - from the Academic and Graduate Councils to the computer and opinion poll committees - all selected or elected by COGS.

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University College proposals...

(Congraded from page 1)

more flexible series of alternative patterns of general education."

Ir 6 recommendations are not, however, a "master plan or a blueprint for general education for the next 10 years or even for the next year," the committee reported. "Rather, (the committee) has viewed a general education program as an ongoing process and it has decided to design a set of procedures which might cope with the changing times, the changing nature of student information and the changing resource base, and which might result in an academically significant program of general studies."

As alternatives to meet general education requirements, EPC recommended that a required minimum of 45 credits continue, and that the requirement be met "by a significant diversification" of work in the social sciences, natural sciences and the humanities in courses approved by UCC. Promotions, salary and tenure decisions would be required and "language courses designed to help develop that proficiency" would be included within the 45-hour requirement."

EPC deliberately left setting the number of credits in each field to the discretion of a student and his academic advisor.

EPC also recommended that other colleges and departments share in offering courses to meet the general education requirement, at both upper and lower academic divisions.

TWO FACTORS led to the recommendation (which resembles the 1967 Report of the Committee on Undergraduate Education): (1) "an increasingly heterogeneous student population, both in academic aptitude and experience, and in educational goals and aspirations; and (2) a growing student reaction against rigid requirements and an ever-increasing desire for more flexibility and more student choice."

In addition to the new courses to be developed by other colleges and departments, EPC said, it was recommended that the University College curriculum committee "would consider and perhaps incorporate" student requests for more flexibility and more student choice.

Another EPC recommendation assigned accountability to a Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, a position which does not now exist. (The position of assistant provost for undergraduate education exists, but has gone unfilled for more than a year.) Parker said the recommendation was a "subtle urging" to have the position filled.

TWO OTHER EPC recommendations dealt with the four-year degree-granting status for University College. While the University College Committee was asked to develop a broad general liberal bachelor's degree program that would be open to any student who does not seek a degree with the conventional departmental or professional major," EPC said, "Some proposal would be proposed to provide considerable flexibility to the individual student and would provide for close personal contact between student and advisor."

Most of a student's program would consist of courses outside University College, the recommendation stated.

Parker said that three reasons for suggesting an expanded University College include: A large number of students "with no home base" when the University College was separately accredited from the current University College into a degree-granting college; need for a four-year program for adults; and an option for students who would prefer a degree in general education and who "should not be forced into the constraints of existing degree programs, even those of fairly broad curricula," with increasing enrollments for the "disenfranchised" students."

EPC also recommended that a degree from University College be distinguished from either a B.A. or B.S. Some suggested names were: Bachelor of Integrated Studies, of Liberal Studies, of Legal Arts or of General Studies.

And if the University College undertakes a four-year degree program, EPC said, "work would be transferred to the College of General Studies.

Rationale for a name change, EPC said, was the assumption that "dissolving instead of expanding the College will result in diminished potential" in UC; a schism in the University "by posturing lower against upper division, generalists against specialists;" and the problem of students who, after their two years in UC, are "unacceptable for admission into programs which during their first two years felt no responsibility for them."

EXPANDING THE University College would not answer these problems, Sullivan's proposal asserts, because options would not be broadened, faculty frustrations would not be eliminated, "because the new degree will be perceived as an inferior one;" and the "professional and administrative dislocations, over territorial rights and responsibilities, and limited resources; students who do not now qualify for upper division colleges would be further frustrated by being relegated to a degree program that by definition is established to give them a degree they did not want;" - a second-choice degree.

The proposal suggests further problems: Added costs, repetition and comprised quality of education by dividing efforts and resources that are actually directed toward a common end.

FOR THOSE reasons, the alternatives were suggested:

- Transfer the Departments of Humanities, and American Thought and Language from the University College to arts and letters; the Department of Social Science to social science; the Department of Natural Science to natural science.

- The departments would continue to offer their present general education courses; would develop optional patterns in meeting general education requirements; would be able to develop a major interdisciplinary program with a four-year curriculum leading to a degree; would be permitted to develop elective courses; and faculty would participate in undergraduate programs.

- The departments would have the usual departmental autonomy in hiring, promotions, salary and tenure decisions.

- Present University College departmental staff would continue their advising functions.

- Faculty would hold joint appointments where feasible and desirable.

- An intercollege advising center would be developed.

SULLIVAN SAYS the proposal would reverse the trend toward fragmentation of the University; minimize course duplication; reduce costs and increase efficiency by "sympilifying the administrative organization, minimizing duplication of effort, and maximizing the utilization of talent." It would provide the students of high quality general - liberal courses as 8 expanded opportunities.

For the student, he suggests, the alternative plan would provide the desired flexibility, a range of new electives, the opportunity to earn a "respected degree from a wider range of interdisciplinary approaches" than are now available.

The three colleges absorbing the UC departments, Sullivan's proposal says, would be enhanced through the "fresh pool of manpower to develop new major patterns," gain a new type of elective course, clarify and focus their role in meeting their responsibility toward general - liberal education, and strengthen their advising functions.

The case for expanding to a four-year program

A proposal for a four-year degree-granting program for the University College, developed by Dean Edward A. Carlin, is designed to meet the EPC recommendations (see above), has been endorsed by most University College faculty.

What most of the proposal expands on the EPC recommendation, two differences occur between the two reports. No name change is suggested in the University College proposals (this matter was not within the curriculum committee's purview, according to Dean Edward A. Carlin, and the University College (UC) proposal recommends a bachelor of arts degree because "it has a standard meaning."

The UC's rationale for expansion is similar to that of EPC: "Many of the students who are impatient with prescribed curricula leading to predetermined vocational goals desire to prepare themselves to respond to the challenges of a society in which all aspects of social, economic and political life have become interdependent."

Like EPC, the UC proposal predicts that the program will attract superior "academically oriented" students who, after two years felt no responsibility for their education.

The UC report states that results of a spring survey of more than 1,000 students showed that "deep interest in a program such as that herein proposed was more than sufficient to warrant its establishment."

Concerning the problem of a post-graduate career for a student of an expanded University College, the proposal suggests that many will go on to advanced study and that there is increasing demand among employers for generally educated students.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE's approach is to offer such a program is seen, according to the report, in the qualifications of its administration and faculty (who "have chosen to move beyond the boundaries of their disciplines in order to develop an interdisciplinary approach to scholarship, research and teaching") and in the "highly diversified" of the UC's general education programs.

The program as proposed by the UC's curriculum committee would emphasize a prescribed curriculum and emphasize close contact between the student and his selected faculty advisor. "The advisng function is considered so critical, Carlin said, that counseling time would be a factor in determining the faculty member's workload."

A student would choose a theme and develop his program with his faculty advisor, with half of his program from electives, and one-third to one-half from UC courses, including those now offered.

New upper- and lower-division department courses would be developed and offered in UC, or offered through other colleges or through the interdisciplinary arrangement.

THE PROPOSED program "is not intended to replace or compete with existing programs," the report states, "but to serve as a complement to them."

"That approach of redundancy," Carlin said, "but you have to deal with structures designed to effect your purpose."

While the purposes of existing programs might be considered similar to the aims of the University College proposals, that the student's "initiative and self-direction" may differ, Carlin said. Justin Morrill College, for example, was established as a liberal arts college within the University, but has an international thrust, Carlin said. "The similarity of purpose is reached in different ways."

He would reject the idea of assimilation of UC departments into existing degree-granting colleges (as proposed by the College of Arts and Letters) because, he said, "general education would not survive."
Scientists explore cause of skin cancer

By PHILLIP E. MILLER
Science Editor, News Bureau

A molecular explanation of how sunlight can cause cancer has been proposed in the British scientific journal "Nature." The research team led by James E. Trosko, assistant professor of human development.

Trosko became interested in the effects of light on human cells in the early 1960's while he worked at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and collaborated with James E. Cleaver of the University of California Medical Center. Trosko believed that lasting damage to DNA, the genetic material of cells, might be a cause of cancer. Many people know that heavy exposure to sunlight is risky because it increases the chance for skin cancer. And it has been known for nearly a century that people with a certain hereditary disorder, called xeroderma pigmentosum, are very sensitive to sunlight and often suffer from cancer early in life.

Trosko and Cleaver felt that a close examination of such cancer-prone cells might offer a clue to the mechanism of skin cancer. **

NOW, IN VIEW OF Cleaver's and Trosko's findings, the xeroderma pigmentosum disease appears to involve a lack of enzyme. Such an enzyme, when present, evidently helps repair damage caused by ultraviolet light and thus prevents cancer. Ultraviolet light is present in ordinary sunlight. In 1969, with a grant from the Atomic Energy Commission, the Cleaver-Trosko team began a comparative study of the effects of ultraviolet light on human xeroderma pigmentosum (the cells with disorder) and normal skin cells.

"Damage to both kinds of cells was about equal," said Trosko. "But the xeroderma pigmentosum cell damage was permanent, whereas the damage of the normal cells was repaired by the cells themselves."

Cleaver and Trosko found that the damaged places on the DNA of the normal cells were removed. But damaged places of the cells with the disorder were not removed.

The damage was similar to a weld of two teeth of a zipper. Such a bonding would jam a zipper just as the DNA would cause a jam in the command operation of the things that cells do. If such a jam occurred where DNA helps to regulate cell division, then abnormal cell division could result.

CONVINCED THAT such experiments on human cell mutations and repair might yield a molecular explanation for the skin cancer, Trosko launched another study, again with AEC support.

This time, he and two other researchers in MSU's human development department - graduate students David H. Kuznar and Miriam Iacou - exposed amniotic cells to normal sunlight. Amniotic cells are from the sac - like structure within which a fetus grows and develops. Their investigations revealed that sunlight -- induced damage to the amniotic cells was similar to damage caused by pure ultraviolet light. This finding linked the natural sunlight experiments with artificial ultraviolet light experiments. "We found," said Trosko, "that normal exposure to sunlight can induce significant amounts of DNA damage in human cells. Normally, such as with the amniotic cells, the damage is repaired perfectly."

IN THEIR "Nature" paper published last month, the medical school trio pointed out that their experimental results are evidence to help explain some forms of cancer. They believe that such cancers may be caused by DNA mutations which are not repaired.

"If such mutations can cause cancer in human beings," said Trosko, "and if the mutations are the result of the lack of repair of ultraviolet-induced damage, as in skin cells, then these findings demonstrate that there is a molecular basis for such an hypothesis."

International year noted

Common student, paraded in the name upon all civilized countries, form, beyond the restrictions of diverse and often hostile nationalities, a great community which no war properly de noe conqueror enemies.

-- Gustave Flaubert, "Madame Bovary," 1857

Today, 100 years later, MSU pursues this ideal through continued development of its international dimensions.

The role of foreign scholars here is particularly emphasized. There are now some 175 foreign scholars, and each year more than 250 MSU faculty members are foreign scholars, pursuing their academic interests in other countries. With 1970 proclaimed as International Education Year, the University has developed a series of programs for international exchange scholars.

This Thursday's session features executive vice president Jack Breslin discussing "Issues in Public Financing for a State University." It is at 7:30 p.m. in the Big 10 Room.
Commission shaping its recommendations

One of its major tasks — condensing voluminous testimony into a set of recommendations — lies directly ahead of the Presidential Commission on Admissions and Student Body Composition.

The commission is scheduled to meet this month to consider draft reports and suggestions from its five subcommittees. The job of drafting a report, however, has already begun, reports its Polley, commission director.

The report is expected to be completed during winter term, Polley said.

At ITS general meeting in November, the commission will consider draft reports from the subcommittees. Summaries of those preliminary reports follow.

THE MISSION OF MSU

Willard Warrington, subcommittee chairman and director of Evaluation Services, emphasized that MSU should try to coordinate its activities and policies with those of other state universities and other institutions. He suggested creation of a vice presidential level office devoted to improving institutional relationships.

He also listed these points concerning the role of the faculty:

— The relevance of general education must be improved, aimed toward higher quality instruction and more integrative curricula.

— Greater flexibility in academic programs is needed, with more options for students, more focus off-campus experiences, and better advising systems.

— Continued commitment is required in specialized training where MSU has demonstrated unique competencies and in areas where unmet needs lie.

— A strong research commitment must continue, with deliberate attention to areas of "greatest human need."

— MSU must assume a share of the responsibility to provide equal access to higher education in Michigan.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Charles A. Blackman, chairman of the subcommittee on graduate and professional education, said that his group saw one of the greatest needs as strengthening its contributions to life-long learning opportunities.

Blackman also noted several steps needed to redirect MSU's thinking toward life-long education: Converting part of a dormitory into a center for adult education; designing a liberal arts program to meet the aspirations of many departments, to encourage and develop a model of education that stressed knowledge, instead of skills.

The faculty council, in turn, decided to ask the faculty steering committee to consider what tact should be followed and to submit its recommendations to the Jan. 12 meeting of the council. The Dec. 2 meeting has been canceled.

According to faculty bylaws, the proposals will have to be reconsidered by the Academic Senate, since the trustee rejection nullified the Senate's June 2 approval of the proposed bylaw amendments.

Provost John Cantow, who chaired the Academic Senate, expressed concern at resubmitting the proposal on the faculty compensation committee to the trustees at this time "is sure to be another confrontation between the faculty and the Board. I would like to make sure that such a confrontation is as constructive as possible."

Charles Kilginngham, University professor of labor and industrial relations, said in "most unfortunate" that he was unable to attend the Board meeting to resubmit the proposal. He said he believed the faculty committee Separtment to the trustees. The compensation and budget committees of the Academic Senate, Faculty Committee on Compensation, Faculty Committee on Affairs, Faculty Compensation and Academic Budgets.

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A WINTER TERM, 1970, "omnibus survey" of the MSU Urban Research Unit included a question on the extent to which faculty, students and administrators favored collective bargaining rights for graduate assistants.

Seventy-six percent of the graduate students surveyed favored the concept either to a great, some or slight extent; only 24 percent did not favor it at all.

Those results, plus discussions among the COGS membership and within the executive committee, may lead to allocation of COGS money to "investigate thoroughly" the possibility of collective bargaining, according to Dave Wright, graduate student in English and COGS vice president for university affairs.

With authorization from the executive committee, Wright is studying situations at other universities where graduate students or graduate assistants have unionized.

Some of the concerns already cited, which could be factors leading to such a move, include:

— Graduate students in some departments allegedly being required to handle the workload of graduate assistants, without compensation, with the departments claiming the work as part of their graduate programs.

— University insistence on the question of whether a graduate assistant's stipend is tax-free.

— The allegation that most stipends are below subsistence incomes, that maximums in the stipend range (as published through the provost's office) are not usually awarded, and that salary costs are at a minimum level.

— Lack of working stipulations.

— No guarantee of financial assistance for more than one year.

— The allegations that many assistants have trouble obtaining summer employment.

渴望 for more health care benefits.

— Desire for more graduate student voice in academic governance.

COGS President Peter Flynn, a graduate student in education, also noted that graduate students are as concerned with benefits, salary and tenure as other employees, and said that the faculty prerogative section of the CogS participation report was "garbage." 

SOME CONCERN has been expressed in CogS over effects of the newly passed student participation report on the proposed document on graduate rights and responsibilities. That document includes a section on graduate student participation in University governance and deals with the graduate student's role within his department in such areas as program planning.

The document is being discussed by both CogS and the Graduate Council.

Flynn, who is involved in both discussions, said that both have revealed a division between faculty and students who want a very explicit document, and those who want a general document.

Flynn said that graduate student concerns include:

— The document may be overbroad or may impede the workings of the colleges and departments. A proposed judicial system would involve more than 600 graduate students, so a more manageable system might be needed; if, in planning, faculty, graduate and student goals are to be equal, CogS feels there ought to be a more consistent tone in the document.

COGS' STATED OBJECTIVES are to "promote the academic, social and economic aims of graduate students" at MSU and to "establish effective communication among graduate students and create channels of communication with the other parts of the University." 

Up to now, each department ratifying the organization's constitution sends a positive and devoted report.

With the now being - revised constitution, CogS may alter its ratification process by requiring an all-University referendum of graduate students.

Even if a department is not required to ratify, graduate students who are represented by CogS, so benefits obtained by CogS apply to all MSU graduate students, is important.

Finally, Flynn said that a fall passage of an all-University graduate student referendum, all graduate students will pay a 50-cent tax to provide CogS with its first operating funds.

BEVERLY TWITCHELL