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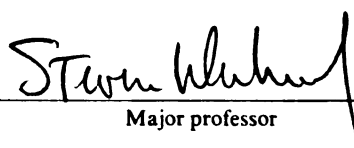
**The Dynamics of Incorporating Electronic Media  
in the Undergraduate Classroom**

presented by

**Thompson Kumbirai Tsodzo**

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

PhD degree in Educational Administration

  
Major professor

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**THE DYNAMICS  
OF INCORPORATING ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN  
THE UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM:  
A CASE STUDY OF TEACHING WITH APPROPRIATE  
TECHNOLOGY IN INNOVATIVE GENERAL EDUCATION**

By

**THOMPSON KUMBIRAI TSODZO**

**A DISSERTATION**

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## ABSTRACT

### THE DYNAMICS OF INCORPORATING ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN THE UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF TEACHING WITH APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY IN INNOVATIVE GENERAL EDUCATION

By

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**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the study is to analyze the development of general education studies at Michigan State University in order to determine the factors that influenced it, the problems that were encountered during the development, and the lessons that can be derived from it by the University of Zimbabwe

To this end, I did a case study of the evolution of the general education program at Michigan State University, with emphasis on the developments between 1942, when the program was formally established, and 1988 when centers for integrative general education studies were established. The introduction of the media-based course, IAH 201, in 1988 became the central point of my study because it highlighted the significance of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom. The development was also unprecedented in higher education in the US. It also enabled me to examine how teachers would cope with compulsory media usage in their daily teaching.

## **PROCEDURE**

For the most part I used the qualitative research method, which allowed me to interact directly with people involved in the development of the MSU general education program. To collect data, I used the following research methods:

- Studying archival materials, which included published books, university policy documents and course syllabuses.
- Interviewing six staff members who have been involved in all aspects of the general education program. They included past and present general education teachers, administrators and media technicians.
- Analyzing some materials that have been used in the teaching of the controversial course, IAH 201. These were two video tapes and a compact disk.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

I was able to make the following general conclusions from my study:

1. That the undergraduate classroom teacher needs to be empowered and supported to make the right decisions regarding the use of electronic media.
2. That in the process of developing an undergraduate curriculum, academics and administrators need to exercise a high degree of collegiality in order to minimize conflict of interests, which retards progress.
3. That although the University of Zimbabwe can deduce useful lessons from the experience of Michigan State university, it cannot successfully adopt the MSU general education program.

These conclusions suggest to me that further research needs to be made in Zimbabwe to determine which media are most appropriate for the country, what training undergraduate teachers need in order to become proficient media users, and how relevant electronic materials can be obtained.

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**DEDICATION**

To my parents:

**VaMangwiro Thomas Mhandu and VaRwauya Monica Bwoni**

**Magamba Ezimbabwe**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At last,

The endless journey is over,

As I cross the parched stream

Where crocodiles once roamed;

And as I dive for the race's final line,

I fall into your welcoming arms,

Miidzoyashe, my next of kin.

This committee awards you

A doctorate of support:

Maita Shava!

And you, my trusting children,

Rudo, Vimbai and Munyaradzi,

Your very names gave me Love, Trust and Comfort.

You believed daddy could do it all,

And said, "Baba vanogona zvese!"

I could not let you down,

So not even Statistics could push me off the course

To this collective final victory.

Daddy proved it can be done;

So will you.

My faithful friends, Weiland, Turner, Plank and Harrow

Your advice fell on open ears,

You gave much more than the call of duty,

And this grateful success is my response.

My wider family, Jeanne, Paul, Tapera, Robert and more,

Fellow travelers throughout the tiresome journey,

With you I thank the ancestors and Mwari,

For gifts past, present and to come.

Tatenda1

*Shona terms used*

SHONA

ENGLISH

Magamba eZimbabwe

Zimbabwean heroes

Maita Shava!

Thank you of the Shava totem1

Baba vanogona zvese.

Dad can do anything.

Mwari

The Creator

Tatenda

Thanks

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## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

This study analyzes the evolution of an innovative general education program at Michigan State University (MSU), tracing how teachers adjusted to the demands of their unstable environment, and culminating in the compulsory use of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom. The landmarks of this evolution are 1857 when general education studies were introduced, 1942 when innovative general education was formally incorporated into the university's undergraduate curriculum, and 1988 when a core media-based course was introduced.

The MSU model of teaching general education was ideal for my study because of its complex nature. Described as unique and innovative by prominent scholars like Ernest Boyer (1987), the program has also been characterized by controversy, especially with regard to the use of video as a teaching tool in one of its programs. For a period of over half a century, support for the program has fluctuated considerably between approval and disapproval by the MSU community. However, the program has soldiered on through the rough terrain, surviving many battles, and even appearing to be strengthened by its volatile environment. It is this ability to survive that attracted me to find out what makes the program tick. The main objective of my inquiry was to determine the extent to which a similar program being developed at my university, the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) may benefit from the MSU model.

I chose a historical approach to my study in order to get a real life picture of the development of the general education program from concept to established discipline. This approach enabled me to examine the problems that were encountered and how they were resolved.

I based my study on the premise that the undergraduate classroom teacher plays a pivotal role in the development of new curriculums since it is the teacher who translates educational policies into action on a day to day basis. In the process the teacher both molds and is molded by the subject. The teacher must also strike a practical balance between being a team player with other staff members and satisfying the expectations of the consumers of his or her product. This is not an easy task, but one which requires diplomacy on the teacher's part.

The media I examined are video and computer disc (CD). These media are fast displacing traditional ones like the writing board, the flipchart and the overhead projector. At Michigan State University the usage of these particular media in the undergraduate classroom became a fundamental curriculum component with the introduction of a basic media-based general education course, IAH 201, in 1988. With this move, the question to be answered became: To what extent is the compulsory use of electronic media undermining the role of the teacher in the classroom? In other words, can the teacher really be replaced by these media?

My research findings suggest a situation similar to dancers dancing during an earthquake; where success has to be measured by the degree of the difficulties to be overcome. That is, the artist can only contribute what the environment permits. The lessons that Zimbabwean higher education can derive from this situation fascinated me.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **THE PROBLEM**

#### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I discuss the basic problem regarding the use of electronic media in the teaching of innovative general education in the undergraduate classroom. My study suggests that the problem begins with educators not being clear about the characteristics of the electronic media, as a result of which the media are used and abused by various undergraduate classroom teachers depending on the teachers' training in media usage. Other factors like administrative support and professional collegiality also influence the successful usage of the media by the classroom teacher.

#### **The Nature of the Problem**

The above problem varies from institution to institution depending on teaching and learning environments, and how the electronic media are understood by teachers. The factors which determine the nature of the problem at any one institution include, but are not limited to the following:

- What teachers understand innovative general education to be, and how the media can appropriately be used to teach the subject.
- How teaching the subject impacts the administrative dynamics of an institution of higher learning.

- The classroom teacher and his or her preparedness to teach with electronic media.
- The relevance of any available media to specific pedagogical objectives.

The extent to which these factors are considered in the drawing up of an undergraduate curriculum determines their effective usage by the teacher.

### **A Statement of the Objectives of My Research**

I begin this section with a statement of how I selected my research subject. I then proceed to indicate the theoretical framework underlying creative teaching in the college classroom. The following sub-headings indicate the ripple effect of introducing new teaching tools at an institution of higher education.

- *Authority patterns or the institution's politics:* These are the roles of administration and departmental boards and the extent to which the teacher contributes to them. The teacher must understand these patterns in order to know how to avoid unnecessary conflict of interests.
- *The professional rights and responsibilities of the teacher:* The teacher must be able to balance institutional goals with faculty autonomy. Failure to do so may adversely affect the teacher's career.
- *Public accountability:* The teacher must meet the expectations of students, parents, and the community. They need to have confidence in the teacher. Otherwise they may frustrate his or her plans.
- *Equity and diversity :* The teacher needs to assess the extent to which the media he or she is introducing will be accessible to all the learners. Where the equitable distribution of these media cannot be ensured, introducing them may create more problems than it solves.
- *Political correctness:* For the media to achieve intended goals, they must not be contrary to accepted cultural and political norms.

The above issues suggest that introducing electronic media in the college classroom is a thing that needs careful planning and versatility. The college classroom teacher must be highly sensitive to the dynamics of his or her institution in order to minimize conflict of interests. Anything short of this is most likely to be counter productive.

### **My Own Prior Exposure to Electronic Media for Teaching**

In this section I outline my own prior experience on the issue of teaching with electronic media. I acquired the experience in the following situations:

1. While I was a graduate assistant in Film and Theater at Ohio University (1986-1988)
2. While I was administering the Distance Education program at the university of Zimbabwe (1993-1994)
3. While I was working for the Instructional Media Center at Michigan State University (1995-1999)

This experience enabled me to understand both the logistics and the effectiveness of media usage in the classroom.

### **The Innovative Teaching of General Education**

In this section I explain how teachers' use of electronic media is determined by the following:

- Fascination with new forms of electronic media rather than their usefulness
- The desire to be in step with the latest developments in technology.
- Availability of the media hardware and software.

My research suggests that many teachers use electronic media for reasons that are not directly related to improving student learning. It also suggests that some teachers cannot clearly differentiate between media for public service and information on one hand, and media as an educational tool, on the other hand.

### **Teachers' Views**

In this section I explain how general education faculty and teaching assistants view their own situation regarding the use of electronic media in their classrooms. The main views expressed in this regard are:

- That teachers should initiate any decisions regarding the use of any teaching tools.
- That teaching assistants need thorough training in media usage before being put in charge of classes.
- That electronic media, like any other teaching tools, are an extension of, rather than a substitute for, the classroom teacher.

Considering the pivotal role played by the teacher in the dissemination of knowledge, these views become very central to the subject of this research.

### **Electronic Media and the Teaching of Arts and Humanities**

In this section I examine which media are most suitable for the teaching of arts and humanities, as I try to answer the following questions:

- How essential is the use of electronic media in the teaching of arts and humanities?
- Which electronic media do teachers use most, and why?



## **Introduction**

The main objective of my study was to establish how undergraduate teachers make use of electronic media in their classrooms in an environment that is undergoing major transformation. To be able to explain my findings adequately, I had to place the whole subject in its proper context, which is undergraduate general education at a specific institution of higher education. To this end I opened my study with an examination of what general education itself is, and why it is taught. I needed to come up with a specific definition of the subject which would give me my terms of reference for my analysis and conclusions. Such a definition was essential in view of the many, and sometimes conflicting, definitions of general education that have been given by different researchers.

Some of the researchers whose works I reviewed define general education as any study that expands knowledge beyond specific disciplines like arts or science. This expansion of knowledge is usually based in an established discipline like Social Studies, and involves such practices as field trips and experiential learning. Other researchers I studied associate general education with the acquisition of specific life skills like reading and writing. These are skills in which the learner's ability can be tested and graded from a set of scores. A third group of the researchers makes general education such a philosophical subject that it becomes difficult to imagine how a new undergraduate classroom teacher can handle it. New teachers usually need specific topics to teach.

In institutions of higher education there is also disagreement among educators on whether general education should be treated as a separate discipline or merely regarded as an extension of more established ones like the Humanities, Agriculture or Anthropology.

The disagreement stems from what is perceived to be the purpose of general education. While some view it in terms of pedagogy, others view it in terms of life in general. There are even some educational researchers like Higginbottom and Romano (1995) who suggest that it serves no purpose to try and find a specific definition for general education because it means different things to different educators at different institutions. It must, therefore, be left to each individual teacher to make his or her own definition of the subject he or she teaches.

This lack of clarity on the subject is an acute problem, especially for the new undergraduate classroom teacher wanting to introduce electronic media at an institution where these are not already an accepted teaching tool. What makes the problem acute is that undergraduate students are mature enough to ask the teacher difficult questions about how they are being taught. Because of this, the teacher does not only need to know his or her subject thoroughly in order to teach it well, but he or she must also inspire confidence in the students. Students lose confidence in any teacher who doesn't seem to know what he or she is trying to teach them; and once they have lost the confidence, their rate of absorption gets substantially reduced. Higher education abounds with cases of students who have literally thrown out teachers they believed to be wasting their time.

Of the researchers who have attempted to define general education, Howard (1991) is most unlikely to be of much help to the average college classroom teacher. He makes general education such a highly philosophical subject that it becomes difficult to separate it from rhetoric. For example, basing his logic on what John Dewey termed the quest for certainty. Howard defines general education as the distinction between superstition on one hand, and science and reason on the other hand. He posits that general

education is more aligned with science and reason than with superstition, and should, therefore, be deduced from logical reasoning rather than from chance. Howard defines science and reason in the following terms:

These two realms that divide reality into the unchanging and eternal truths of philosophy and the changing and temporal conditions of activity, mean that for Western man, the purpose of knowledge is to uncover a pre-existing truth, rather than to bring it into being through activity in the world. It further means that the operations of the intellect in the purity and security of abstraction have a higher order of priority than the practical activities of men in interaction with their environment, as it also means that there are different orders of beliefs .... (p. 31).

Most undergraduate teachers of general education are likely to fail to understand what uncovering “pre-existing truth” and “the purity and security of abstraction” are all about. Trying to explain such ideas to their students will be a professional nightmare to them. In other words, Howard’s definition is more likely to confuse than help the undergraduate classroom teacher, and if that teacher is fresh from college, he or she may lack any alternative strategies of teaching the subject. The result will be lack of communication between the teacher and the students.

Another researcher, Jerry Gaff (1991) posits that general education is the entire curriculum of a general undergraduate degree like a Bachelors degree; as opposed to that of a more professional degree like Medicine or Law.

He says,

We use the term general education in its broadest sense for the purposes of this questionnaire. When we say general education, we include the formal curriculum required of all students, often referred to as the “breadth component,” “core curriculum,” or “distribution requirements.” We also include faculty development, course revisions, and even extracurricular programs if they enrich general education. (Gaff p. 235).

Other definitions of general education given by researchers like Bell (1966), Alexander (1994) and D'Arcangelo (1994) also fail to reduce the subject to a specific definition that can be summarized in a paragraph in the college catalog. And yet a clear definition is what the classroom teacher needs most. This is particularly the case at institutions like Michigan State University where educational policies are in a state of perpetual change.

The definition of general education that comes closest to my own understanding of it is that given by Kanter, Gamson and London (1997). The researchers define general education as "that part of the curriculum intended to convey the value of arts, sciences, and the humanities along with civic responsibility." Not only does this definition give general education its rightful place in an institution's curriculum, but it also specifies how arts and sciences must be approached in the classroom situation. They must be taught in such a way as to enable learners to exercise their civic responsibilities. For the undergraduate classroom teacher of arts and humanities, this means that general education, like any other subject, can be broken down into specific courses with clearly laid out objectives and assessment criteria.

It is only when general education is so clearly defined that the use of electronic media in teaching it can be effective because the teacher can build the media into his or her lesson plans. The teacher can then use the media as they should be used. That is introducing each medium before it is used, using it with clear learning goals for the students, incorporating it into the subject under wider discussion, and testing student comprehension of the subject matter. The outcome should always be that media accelerate the learning process. In other words, that learners learn better and faster with

media rather than without media. Otherwise the use of any particular medium or media should be reviewed or even discontinued.

The point to note here is that, unlike sciences, arts and humanities have been taught without electronic media for centuries, and that they continue to be successfully taught in this manner in many countries to this day. Introducing electronic media into the undergraduate general education classroom must, therefore, only be done if it will improve the teaching and learning situation.

### **Rationale**

Through this research I learnt that the use of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom is an issue that involves the dynamics of an entire institution of higher education, and not only the classroom teacher and the students. It also has implications on teachers' professional autonomy, institutional administration, and even public interest. In other words, the classroom teacher's choices regarding media usage is influenced by the need for collegiality in teaching, the availability of scarce resources, and the extent to which it is approved by the consumers. Hence the success or failure of media usage at an institution reflects the degree to which the whole institution acts as a team, rather than as sectors with conflicting priorities. For instance, I observed that at colleges and universities where the media are generally accepted, the use of the media is more effective than where the classroom teacher is in a state of cold war with others.

I also learnt that the use of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom itself is not a new subject, but one that has been growing fast in the past half century. What this suggested to me was that there should now be a concerted effort by all people concerned

to carefully incorporate the media into all undergraduate curriculums. In developed countries like the United States this has been happening since the 1950s when what were called educational videos were shown by some teachers in their classrooms. From this humble beginning electronic media have gradually replaced older teaching tools to the extent that by the 1970s video in particular had become the predominant teaching tool.

However, not all teachers welcomed this educational innovation with similar enthusiasm. Some were violently opposed to what they considered to be mere entertainment for the students. Hence, from the very beginning, the use of electronic media in the classroom has generally divided educators into two camps that hold strong views about the issue. While some are convinced that the use of these media is harmful to student learning (Mander, 1978), others argue that the media are indispensable for the innovative teaching of the subject (Crawford (1998). The modern undergraduate teacher of arts and humanities has to strike a balance between these two extremes.

One thing that continues to affect the use of electronic media in higher education is that there is no uniform approach to it. Teachers generally approach media usage as individuals. Even at an institution where the media are relatively widely used, the tendency is for individual teachers to be secretive about what they are doing with the media. The reasons for this are not clear on first examination of the subject. On further reflection, however, the following possibilities become apparent:

- At teacher training institutions media usage does not seem to be an integral aspect of the teacher-training program. Most teachers seem to induct themselves into media usage.

- Educational policies regarding the use of electronic media are not clear at many institutions, leading to conflict of interest between the institution's departments.
- At a more global level, the media are not equally distributed between the different sectors of any given country's population.
- Media are always changing, so teachers need constant retraining in them; but established teachers do not see the need for them to literally go back to school.

As of now, the use of these media at the various institutions in any country ranges from a teacher merely referring learners to watch specific commercial videos or television programs at their own time, to teachers and learners creating media programs for their own use. Although the latter case is more marked in the developed world where access to electronic media hardware and software is easier, the past ten years have witnessed a significant increase in the same practice in some colleges and universities in the more developed of the developing countries, like India and South Africa. Zimbabwe is following suit.

This raises the question of whether or not in countries like the United States where media usage for educational purposes appears to be most prevalent, a national policy has been established to guide classroom teachers. This question, in turn, also raises questions about the feasibility of enforcing media policies without ensuring the equitable distribution of electronic resources. Another issue that needs to be resolved is the reorientation of teachers in media usage. The question to be answered here is whether or not the teachers should be required to undergo such re-orientation; and what can be done in cases where teachers do not like to be trained in electronic media usage.

Duryea (1991) explains how at an institution of higher education, the success of any of the component units depends on the support it gets from the other units. For instance, he says that a teacher can only teach effectively if he or she gets the necessary administrative support. In other words, the classroom teacher is a team player whose quality of play is partly dependent on the general performance of the whole team, and only partly a product of his or her own ingenuity.

### **Why I Chose the Subject**

My interest in the subject of electronic media usage in the college classroom was influenced by three experiences that I had at Ohio University, the University of Zimbabwe and Michigan State University. This experience included:

- the planning of a media curriculum,
- observing trainee teachers at work,
- operating electronic media equipment and
- teaching with electronic media.

This exposure raised many questions in my mind, which I tried to answer through this study. Below is a summary of this exposure to electronic media in teaching.

### **The Teacher Training Program at Ohio University**

While I was doing my M.F.A. in Film and Theater at Ohio University in 1988, I assisted Dr. Betty Ford of the College of Education in her teacher training program. My responsibility was to take videos of teacher trainees as they were conducting lessons, and



to provide specific information on how the lessons went. The specific information mostly related to issues like student discipline which I could not video for technical reasons. Since the teacher trainees were graded on the basis of these videos, it was essential for me to understand the importance of everything the trainee teachers were doing, including how they used available teaching tools.

One issue that caught my attention was that some of the trainees became so nervous to teach in front of the camera that their teaching became incoherent. Since I was required to edit the tapes, however, the final version which I presented to Mrs. Ford was always a combination of many lessons into one. Inevitably, the editing included a lot of stock footage which may not even have been referred to in the classroom situation.

This experience left me wondering how accurate the assessment of the student teachers was. In other words, I wondered why my own expertise as a cinematographer should count for the student teacher's success or failure in practical teaching.

### **The Distance Education Program at the University of Zimbabwe**

From 1993, while I was working in the Administration department of the University of Zimbabwe, my responsibilities were extended to include supervising the newly established Distance Education program which was directed by Dr. Cleaver Otta. One thing that quickly caught my attention was that the main teaching tools in this program were lesson modules which were adapted from a similar program at the University of Nairobi in Kenya. In fact, some of the modules were direct adaptations from the Kenyan situation to the Zimbabwean situation, mostly involving changing the names of places like Nairobi to Harare (the capital cities) and Mombassa to Bulawayo

(second largest cities.) I noted, however, that this exercise presented its own problems.

One of them was that Mombassa and Bulawayo did not compare very well because Mombassa was by the Indian Ocean while Bulawayo was in a semi-desert.

The above situation was obviously caused by lack of teaching materials for an undergraduate program that was already in progress. What this suggested to me was that in such situations teachers have to do with whatever is available, even if it is not the most relevant. I came to the conclusion that if the teachers had alternatives they would have fared better. To this end I became interested in finding out the extent to which electronic media might help solve this problem. These media were the first to come into my mind because I am a qualified media practitioner.

### **The Instructional Media Center at Michigan State University**

Soon after registering for my doctoral studies at Michigan State University in 1994, I got a part time job as a media assistant in the Instructional Media Center. I have remained in this job throughout my studies because it enabled me to operate the newest electronic media equipment and thereby to explore their potential as teaching tools. My responsibilities included distributing electronic media to various classrooms, operating the media equipment where this was required and doing minor repairs to damaged equipment.

While carrying out these responsibilities I have observed a number of things which have increased my knowledge of electronic media as teaching tools. Some of the observations I have made are:

- Use of the media varies from discipline to discipline and from teacher to teacher. While disciplines like History make little use of any media, others like Business Studies are now using interactive video and video data projectors.
- Many teachers believe that they can relegate their teaching to a film or a video. In other words, they think that showing a video, for example, makes students understand a subject better than explaining it themselves.
- Many teachers are not comfortable with the media at all. They prefer to lecture to their students while their students take copious notes.
- Students, on the other hand, seem to prefer learning through the media although some sleep through the showings.
- The equitable availability and proper functioning of the electronic equipment cannot always be counted on. Sometimes whole lessons were canceled because of the unavailability of electronic equipment or because the teachers could not operate the equipment.

Considering that the above things are taking place at an institution that is pioneering media usage in education, I wondered what implications this might have for Zimbabwe, whose educational system still awkwardly rests on colonial foundations. It also became clear to me that media usage was closely linked with each country's history, which in turn, influences the current environment. I found it necessary to trace the subject from its historical source in order for me to pry into its future.

### **A Brief History of Education in Zimbabwe**

The situation in Zimbabwe regarding the use of teaching tools in the undergraduate classroom is one of the legacies of the British colonial administration which divided the population into black and white racial sectors. The white or European

sector was privileged while the black sector was not. A historical overview will put this in its proper context.

Zimbabwe was a colony of Britain between 1890 and 1980. It obtained its independence following a bitter and protracted racial war, known as the Second Chimurenga war. During the colonial era, the British created a social administration system that divided the nation on racial lines as Europeans and Africans. Coloreds (people of mixed race) and all non-Africans were classified as Europeans. The country, therefore, developed two distinct cultures that had little in common. Education and all other social services were provided on these racial lines that skewed provisions in favor of the white people. A dual education system was in operation, with only the University College of Rhodesia as the only officially non-racial educational institution in the whole country. European schools and colleges were well provided with teaching tools while African schools and colleges were not.

When independence came in 1980, the racial education system became one of the first colonial systems to be dismantled in independent Zimbabwe. Commenting about this, Zimbabwean prominent educator, Cowden Chikomba (1988) says that, with the integration of the two education systems, the new problem is how to do the teaching in classrooms where students come from different backgrounds. He concludes by saying that the only solution is for teachers to undergo retraining. Chikomba also suggests that schools at the same level should be uniformly equipped with teaching tools.

What I have observed in Zimbabwe is that independence and the deregulation of racial segregation in education only provided an atmosphere conducive for change, but that the change itself failed to take place. There are several reasons for this.

As racism went overboard, it was replaced by a culture of economic exclusivity, where rich people, who now included a few non-whites, kept their schools and colleges inaccessible to poor people by way of raising financial requirements. For example, while the school zoning system allowed students to attend the schools nearest to their homes, many of the former white-only schools raised their levies to make them unaffordable by poor (mostly black) people. This was facilitated by the fact that the new political and civic leaders practiced double standards, preaching school integration in public while sending their own children to exclusive (former white) schools and colleges.

Where poor people insisted on sending their children to schools of choice, often at great financial sacrifice, white people withdrew their own children and sent them either to exclusive private institutions in the country, or to South Africa and the United States of America. The University of Zimbabwe is an example of this trend. Although 64% of the teaching staff was white in 1993, only 7% of the students were non-black. Which means that the university teachers were sending their own children elsewhere while they stayed to teach students from a cultural background they were not familiar with. Obviously their commitment to improving their teaching was questionable, to say the least.

Zimbabwean education in general has also remained very conservative and divided on economic lines, making it difficult for technological innovations to be widely implemented. Even where economic factors have evened out over the years, traditional teaching methods like lecturing are still highly regarded in higher education, and the innovative teacher remains a rare and often unwelcome stranger. In fact, innovative college teachers in Zimbabwe are faced with the difficult task of convincing their colleagues and their administrators that the use of electronic media enhances college

education at all. Persuading other teachers to adopt electronic media into their teaching is made more difficult by the absence of academic forums for teachers in education. The Association of University Teachers (AUT) is political rather than academic in function.

This only indicates the complexity of the problem of incorporating electronic media into Zimbabwe's education. To add to this already complex problem, there is also the issue of preparing teachers in the use of these media. Teachers will not only have to cope with the problem of the accessibility of the media, but they will also need to become sufficiently conversant with the media to use them innovatively. Fortunately for these teachers, there will be no need for them to re-invent the proverbial wheel in Zimbabwe. They can learn from the experiences of their counterparts in developed countries like the United States that have a long history of media usage in education. In this way the teachers can develop fast, without having to make all the mistakes made by the media pioneers. Since the media have become increasingly more user-friendly, the teachers can adjust to them fast and also begin using them effectively.

Another important question that Zimbabwe needs to resolve is how it can introduce appropriate media into its very disparate education system, and what role its universities and colleges can play to accelerate the process. Appropriate media here means media that are in tune with the prevailing culture of the people of Zimbabwe. Like other developing countries, Zimbabwe does not produce its own media, but depends on importing them from the developed world, especially the US and South Africa. According to research, a cultural impasse usually develops where such importation of foreign media is done without prior research being done by the consumers. In

Zimbabwe's case, my research seeks to reconcile these cultural differences between producers and consumers.

In view of the above realities and observations, I decided to study an established academic program in which the use of electronic media was significant. I hoped that by analyzing how the program had developed I would derive some ideas on what works and what does not work in Zimbabwe. These findings would, in turn, enable me to make some conclusions concerning the expansion efforts at the University of Zimbabwe. For reasons explained later in this report, I believe that I could not have chosen a better program than the general education program at Michigan State University.

### **Media Usage in Higher Education**

Research indicates that the average undergraduate student watches television and uses the computer on a daily basis. Although this used to apply only to developing countries, in the past five years this has also become true in the developing world. In this respect, the undergraduate student may be better informed about media technology than his or her teachers. It is, therefore, the teacher who must strive to keep pace with his or her world by literally going back to school to learn about electronic media and their proper usage for educational purposes. The teachers also have to change their teaching methods, moving away from the traditional lecturing method to manipulating electronic media. Research suggests that this, in fact, is already taking place at most colleges and universities in the Western world.

The change in teaching methods is not taking place in isolation, but is a reflection of the general transformation of life as a result of the proliferation of technological

inventions. Where the use of these inventions is essential, teachers must constantly adapt to them.

At undergraduate level the incorporation of electronic media into the classroom signifies a major departure from the traditional concept of teaching and learning to more modern methods, a process which implies a lot of re-education and constant adjustment for the classroom teacher. Discussing the extent to which electronic media have pervaded today's education, Gregory Crawford (1998) goes so far as to conclude that this need for change does not end with the teacher, but it also affects the whole organizational structure and operational dynamics of an institution.

My inquiry into the subject is based on my assumption that the classroom teacher is the central factor to any curriculum changes, as it is the teacher who has the responsibility to implement the changes. Hence any such changes which are made without full collaboration with the teacher are bound to cause problems, not only for the teacher, but also for the entire institution (Birnbaum, 1988). Hence the introduction of electronic media into the college classroom hinges on teacher preparation.

In view of this central role that the teacher must play, it is vital for researchers on this subject to determine what teachers themselves think about it. The development of the general education program at Michigan State University enables us to see how teachers responded to this issue at various stages of the program's development.

From my initial inquiry I have noted that in the United States the introduction of innovative teaching methods has always met with initial resistance; but with time, the resistance diminishes. In the last half century, this has been the trend with regard to the use of radio, television, film and, more recently, computer. As early as the mid 1960s,



educators like Bell and Truman (Bell and Truman, 1966) argued that electronic media must be incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum. They were calling for constant revision of the general education curricula of colleges and universities to include classical films, arguing that general education must reflect the life the students would live after college. Since that life was increasingly characterized by electronic media, the researchers argued, so too should the undergraduate curriculum.

Discussing how the general knowledge acquired through the media can be used to expand the scope of college education, Bell and Truman conclude that:

.... in this day and age, and even more in the coming day and age, the distinctive function of the college must be to teach methods of conceptualization, explanation and verification of knowledge. As between the secondary school, with its emphasis on primary skills and factual data, and the graduate or professional school, whose necessary concern is with specialization and technique, the distinctive function of the college is to deal with the grounds of knowledge.: not *what* one knows but *how* one knows. (p.8).

The “how” of disseminating general education is thus crucial to the whole learning process. In my research this is the incorporation of electronic media into the undergraduate classroom, and the need for the teacher to master the media.

Studies have also been carried out on the impact of electronic media usage across the educational spectrum. These studies are relevant for my inquiry because they help to place the undergraduate classroom and its teacher in proper context. Much of this research concerns how safe and relevant it is for learners to be randomly exposed to commercially produced media programs from an early age. Some of the researchers have concluded that the younger the learners are, the more vulnerable they are to uncontrolled media use by the teacher in the classroom. Others have contended that any usage of the

media in the classroom is a dispensable luxury in lower education and a waste of students' time in higher education.

One of the researchers, Fred Harclerod, argues that electronic media may hinder rather than help the learning process. He suggests that the media must only be used in the college classroom if it can be statistically proved that both the teacher and the students can benefit from the usage. As to how benefit can be measured, Harclerod suggests that tests be established to compare classes taught with media and those taught in the traditional way.

Advancing a contrasting viewpoint, Evans (1968), Lent (1979) and Bondebjerg (1996) argue that the classroom teacher at any level of education has no choice but to adopt the use of the new dynamic teaching tools, and to adapt himself or herself to the new requirement, even if this means getting retrained in teaching strategies. They argue that failure to use the media may make a teacher's lessons boring, and this may reduce student absorption of the subject being taught.

The process of adaptation to electronic media is viewed differently by college teachers from different backgrounds. Some are for it, others are against it and a third group is uncommitted. Those who support media usage in the college classroom contend that since students are exposed to the media at home, it is necessary for the teacher to link home and school or college in teaching. Those opposed to the issue contend that college education is an end in itself, and its application in life should not be the primary concern of the teacher.

Addressing the argument posed by opponents of media use, that some of the media may contain issues that are not appropriate for some learners, the researchers who support

media usage argue that this is where the innovative teacher comes in to carefully select what is suitable and discard what is unsuitable for his or her classroom. Bell and Truman (1966) and Gaff (1991) put much emphasis on this issue, arguing that the ability to select appropriate teaching tools is, in itself, a sign of a good teacher. Further, the researchers do not think that any teacher should be intimidated by modern electronic media because electronic media equipment is designed to be user friendly (easily operable). It is a matter of pushing buttons, a thing which anyone should be able to do. In any case, the researchers argue further, it is essential for a teacher who teaches with the aid of electronic media to get prior exposure to them before he or she has to use them in class.

While the incorporation of educational media into the college curriculum has been warmly welcomed as the natural trend of learning by some educators like (Schuller 1954) and Britton (1994) who regard it as an inevitability, it has also been vehemently resisted by others like Mander (1978) and Postman (1985), who view a teacher's frequency of electronic media use in class as a sign of laziness and a distraction to proper student learning. They define proper learning as the teacher lecturing and the student taking notes. There are also other researchers like Sarupria (1994) and Tyner (1992) who argue that the decision to use or not to use media in class is not for the individual teacher because it has deeper administrative, cultural and even ethical implications. These educators, therefore, advocate for controlled use of the media to make sure that the media conform to the political and ethical standards of a particular situation. Sarupria, in particular, argues that college teachers in developing countries are often flooded with foreign educational media which are an impediment to cultural development because they encourage foreign values at the expense of local ones. While he does not object to media

usage in the college classroom, therefore, Sarupria thinks that each country should create its own electronic media for use by its teachers.

In this study I base my conclusions on the premise that the issue of integrating electronic media into the college curriculum is of great significance to the college class teacher who works with more mature learners. In view of this, the teacher must be viewed as the most important factor in deciding what tools to use and how best to use them. This conviction stems from my observation that there is a marked difference in the teaching responsibilities of teachers in higher education as opposed to those in lower education. In school, teachers teach and learners absorb knowledge, but in college student learning is a process of discovering truths and solving problems rather than simply memorizing and regurgitating facts. It requires the use of all available learning aids, and the teacher is the common provider of these. Just as the media enrich people's lives through entertainment and information dissemination, they also bring the learning situation to life by presenting realistic images.

The extent to which the classroom teacher was able to put this reality into practice at Michigan State University is the subject of my inquiry.

### **The Undergraduate Classroom Teacher and the Fast-changing Electronic Media**

When television was invented after the Second World War, people in and outside education were fascinated by any moving pictures at all, regardless of its quality. As time went on, however, the introduction of color and numerous artistic nuances made television and other media more attractive to use at home, in commerce as well as in

education. Teachers at first used the media as supplementary teaching aids and in special education where use of the media was not optional. In time, however, programs specially designed for education were produced and teachers used them more liberally in lower education than they did in higher education. The situation regarding media usage in higher education remained unchanged until the late 1980s when video became more widely used. In general traditional teaching methods continued to be valued above modern innovations by teachers.

That situation had greatly changed by 1990. Many teachers were using the media as teaching tools. The college classroom teacher of today does not only use the media for regular teaching, but also for innovative teaching. For instance, rather than give a rambling description of life in the Amazon forest, a Sociology teacher nowadays tends to show a documentary. Properly introduced, the documentary will reveal much more about the life than a description can. Used together, the description and the documentary give the student a fuller understanding of the subject.

Research suggests that many teachers do acknowledge the importance of teaching with electronic media, but are intimidated by the media's impermanence. As they begin to get comfortable with one medium, new ones replace it, or the medium itself undergoes major change. In computer, for instance, users were just beginning to be comfortable with word processing and simple graphics a decade ago when more new applications of the computer were introduced. With the more recent introduction of such concepts like CD-ROM, the internet and cybernetics, there can be no doubt that the question facing educators at the turn of the 20th century is no longer whether or not the media will

pervade all aspects of pedagogy, but rather who will be able to use them ten years from now.

All this implies a lot of work on the part of the college classroom teacher who must not only strive to master electronic media, but also learn to use them in a creative way. Given the fact that students now become familiar with computer and other media at an early age, it becomes clear that the task ahead of the teachers is considerable. For the teacher to retain the confidence that students have in him or her, he or she must work tirelessly to improve his or her own ability to understand and use electronic media effectively. For example, if a college professor wants to carry out research involving quantitative analysis of data, he or she must be conversant with the methods of data collection and data processing employed.

Mary Ann Roe has the following to say about the character of today's learners and the demands they make for the classroom teacher:

Students in higher education today are demanding as consumers. Often paying for education with their own limited money supply, they have higher expectations for learning something worthwhile in exchange for their funds and time. These adult students place high demands on faculty, as well as upon themselves, and will not tolerate time wasted on trivial, irrelevant, and unimportant issues. They rapidly become frustrated and hostile when they sense that money and/or time is being wasted. (pp. 86-87).

Unfortunately, the use of electronic media is often seen as trivial and irrelevant by the more traditional students. This can be a source of frustration for the creative teacher who believes in the use of the media.

On the same issue, Roe goes on to explain that these students also bring a lot of knowledge and expertise to the classroom, and are willing to share their expertise with others. They also often want to use information immediately so that they can relate it to

their real life situations. As far as technology is concerned, some of them may even be experts at the technology that the teacher is trying to understand. If the opportunity arises, it is, therefore, wise for the teacher to tap this expertise for the benefit of the class as a whole.

The increase in media usage has affected the way in which subjects are taught across the college curriculum. Many teachers now realize that students learn as fast, and sometimes faster, when they (the teachers) use media in their teaching than when they stick to the lecture approach. However, becoming aware of an issue is one thing, and doing something about it is quite another. The average student comes to the classroom to learn, and expects the teacher to do the work for which he or she is paid .... to teach. The students bring learning problems to class, and they expect the teacher to help them solve the problems rather than get students to solve each other's problems. Hence the modern college classroom teacher has no option but to become a student and learn the rules of the new game.

### **Electronic Media for Teaching Arts and Humanities**

As pointed out above, electronic media entered the classroom with the invention of the radio five decades ago. Their increased usage is a phenomenon that many teachers have come to accept as inevitable. In the sciences, animated pictures are used extensively to illustrate things like the operation of the internal combustion engine, how plants grow and how rain and snow are formed. The animation serves to give students a life-like image of what is being taught in order to make the subject easier to understand. The scenario is different when it comes to the teaching of arts and humanities subjects which

are basically theoretical. Here some people do not see the relevance of, for example, trying to illustrate Thomas Beckett's Waiting for Godot , a play based on the stream of consciousness concept ; or the Four Noble Truths and Eight Paths of Buddhism.. What purpose does it serve, they argue, to try and recreate the Christian Trinity of deities or the themes of a Romantic poem? They view such subjects as befitting to be inculcated through the didactic lecture method rather than through trying to recreate reality.

Many teachers, however, acknowledge that the media enable deeper understanding of a subject. They are aware that although the concept of illustration is as old as education itself, it is generally accepted that the media improve illustration *per se*, making it more authentic, and repeatable. By using the media, arts and humanities teachers in higher education are able to simulate real life situations which students comprehend faster than long verbal explanations. Even subjects like history come to life when they are presented through the media. For example, today students understand how dinosaurs lived through viewing films like “Jurassic Park” than from history books.

Crawford (1998) says about this, “By employing a wide variety of information technologies, academic institutions have changed the ways faculty and students teach, learn, and do research” (p.424). As I will explain in the next chapter, recent research has amply illustrated that, properly planned and used, the media improve learning for the students while at the same time facilitating teaching for the teachers. As I shall also indicate in the following chapters, the opposite is also true. Where media are not properly introduced into the education system, they can greatly hamper learning.

Many college teachers have found that educational media are more convenient to use than the traditional teaching tools because media are repeatable and also easy to



duplicate (Paterson 1991, King 1993). Thus one video, for example, can be made into many copies that can be used by many teachers concurrently, thus saving scarce resources.

Like most innovations in education, however, media usage in higher education is not without its own shortcomings. The media have been criticized as encouraging laziness on the part of teachers, and passive acceptance of things for the students. Some of these negative aspects of the media have been highlighted by educators like Postman (1985) and Evans (1968) who are convinced that educational standards are likely to be lowered by too much use of the media. They are particularly opposed to what they see as the uncontrolled use of the media in education by teachers who do not have any formal orientation in them. These educators also think that it is lazy teachers who tend to use media most because they do not want to do their own work. In educational systems that are centered on examinations, the college teacher who uses media must also produce exceptionally good examination results. If he or she fails to do this, as sometimes happens, undue blame is placed on the media.

The educators opposed to the uncontrolled use of media in education also contend that while the use of media is suitable in some subjects, their use across the college curriculum is not always advisable, as it causes more problems than it solves in some courses. One of the problems cited is that the media are causing a rift between members of staff at the same institution (Bloom, 1957). This rift pits teachers against administrators on one hand and the more progressive teachers against their more conservative colleagues on the other hand. It also divides teachers themselves between those who want to use media and those who don't. The result is that staff members tend

to pull in different directions instead of working as a team. When this happens, it is the student who suffers.

Many educators argue that since education must enable each learner to achieve prescribed goals like graduation, there must always be a nation-wide effort to ensure equity in the distribution of available electronic media. Efforts must also be made to ensure that all college and university teachers approach higher education in the same way. The disparity in teachers' thinking about media use in education calls for urgent attention.

This need for teachers' continual adjustment to media usage and familiarity with technology is even greater in colleges like Michigan State University where media have been incorporated into the curriculums of some programs. This mostly applies to courses like IAH 201, America and the World, which is taught primarily through electronic media. Here the question is not whether or not the teacher wants or does not want to use media, but how quickly he or she can learn to use them.

In such situations, teachers are, in fact, appointed on the basis of their mastery of the media, and they must make sure that they remain on top of the situation. Allison King (1993) posits that the college teacher must cease to be an uncommitted instructor and become involved in the manipulation of technology for learning. This means that the college classroom teacher must keep abreast of all developments in educational media and technology.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have stated what the problem regarding the use of electronic media in the college classroom is. I then put the problems in the context of the theories

regarding practice and teacher orientation. I also indicated the importance of taking cognizance of an institution of higher education's dynamics, and the implications that this has on the teaching of general education in the undergraduate classroom. To give the full scope of the problem, I went on to indicate how different conceptions of the same problem lead to different approaches to its solution, and how each institution's unique circumstances determine the way the teachers at the institution teach general education. Finally, I analyzed the role of the undergraduate general education classroom teacher as an implementer of educational policies and a policy maker in his or her own right.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Summary**

In this chapter I describe the literature which discusses the role of electronic media (radio, film, television and computer disk) in the classroom at various stages of education. The wider context of media usage enables me to justify why I focused on the undergraduate classroom.

My literature review has had to be extensive because I am examining the teaching and learning of general education both in the undergraduate classroom and across the undergraduate curriculum; and also both within and across related cultures. The literature I reviewed suggests that the teaching of general education, and in particular, the issue of incorporating electronic media into the undergraduate curriculum is a complex subject. Not only are institutional dynamics at an institution complex in themselves, but also no two institutions are the same. These issues become even more complex when considered in a global context where different educational systems and pedagogical policies are involved. The use of electronic media by the undergraduate classroom teacher of arts and humanities is shown through this research to be dependent upon the interplay of various factors.

A lot of literature has been written on these complexities which make each institution unique. For my study, I have grouped the literature according to the way the researchers view the incorporation of electronic media into the college classroom. As

these objectives are synonymous with the dynamics of an institution of higher learning, I have put the literature into categories which reflect authority patterns or who has what power at an institution, the teachers' professional rights and responsibilities, public accountability, equity in the distribution of available resources, the international dimension and ethical considerations. Below is an overview of the key points of each of these criteria.

### **Authority Patterns**

The literature I put in this section deals with the following issues:

- The administration and governance of institutions of higher learning.
- The part the teacher plays in the above

### **The Professional Rights and Responsibilities of the Teacher**

The literature in this section covers:

- The teacher's professional rights and responsibilities
- The extent to which teachers are prepared to compromise the above

### **Public Accountability**

The literature in this section discusses the extent to which the following opinions are taken into consideration when new programs are introduced or when major changes are made to old programs.

- The opinions of parents about what their children learn
- How students view what they learn
- What the news media have said about innovative educational programs

### **Equity in the Distribution of Available Resources**

The literature that I put in this section covers how multi-ethnic institutions tackle the issues of diversity and the equitable distribution of resources between the rich and the poor. It also covers the importance of students having prior exposure to the computer.

### **The International Dimension**

The literature in this section covers the following aspects:

- Possible resistance to the use of media produced in foreign countries
- How advisable it is for developing countries to produce their own electronic media for use in their own education systems.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The literature that I put in this final section tackles the sensitive question of how good the electronic media that are available to college teachers are. It raises the possibility of some of the media being:

- Too commercial
- Sometimes too full of pornography, swearing and violence which are taboo in some cultures

The significance of each of these items to the life of an institution is outlined in the following table.

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>
authority patterns	institutional governance and administration	coordinating institution's activities
professional rights and responsibilities of teachers	what teachers deserve and what they contribute to the institution	ensures team work between faculty and administrators
public accountability	satisfying the expectations of consumers (students and the public)	getting the consumers' approval
equity	equal distribution	ensuring equal access to provisions by all
international dimensions	effects of what happens in one part of the world on other parts of the world	possibility of exporting appropriate technology
ethical considerations	what is good and what is not good to do.	avoiding sensitive issues

My classification of the literature into the above categories is informed by Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker and Riley's (1991) theory of educational guidance. The authors

posit that although institutions of higher learning have a lot in common, each one of them remains unique, and its teachers must adjust their innovative teaching to its particular dynamics. The dynamics are how the different sectors of an institution vie for control as they pursue the institution's central mission. The authors also point out that institutions of higher education also "rarely have a single mission, which makes it difficult for anybody to make general conclusions about them. On the contrary, colleges and universities often try to be all things to all people." (p.31), which means that in their manner of operation they try to satisfy a variety of interests. A third characteristic of universities and colleges is that their goals are not clear (Krammer and Weiner ,1994), (Birnbaum , 988), Peterson,(1991). The institutions sometimes even accept new goals to make the situation even more complicated. A teacher's decision to use electronic media must, therefore, be made in the context of how authority is distributed at the institution.

Although many educators acknowledge that the teacher's role is central to student learning, they do not agree on how the teacher should relate to other players of the game, such as administrators, fellow teachers and the public. Some argue for teacher autonomy while others are in favor of team playing. Even a teacher's decision to order a video is regulated by prevailing circumstances.

The electronic media whose use by undergraduate teachers I studied are the radio, film/video and computer disc. I chose these three because they are the most commonly used, and are also user-friendly. Teachers and students do not need to acquire special skills to use them. Of these media, television is the oldest. When it was introduced into the American classroom in the 1950s, some people gave it the status that the computer is given today. They envisaged a time when the teacher would be irrelevant because the



radio would do all the teaching. While some educators viewed this as a positive thing to happen, others went to war with it. By the 1970s the more versatile video took over, relegating the radio to sporadic supplementary lessons in lower education. Now, in the current decade the computer has become the most common teaching tool.

As some of the literature I reviewed suggests, the entrance of electronic media into the college classroom was by no means smooth. It was characterized by widespread controversy over the appropriateness of using the media to replace the traditional teaching tools like the chalkboard, the flip chart and the humble overhead projector. In addition to being tried and tested, these traditional teaching tools required no expertise at all to use them. The main reason for the opposition to the extensive use of the radio in the classroom stems from the fact that it was considered to be primarily for news dissemination and entertainment, and not for pedagogical purposes. While educators were more prepared to accept these media in the teaching of certain subjects in lower education, they did not think that the media were appropriate at all in higher education, which they considered to be more serious.

Following is an analysis of the literature that addressed each of the six themes that I have identified above. Although each of the researchers concentrated on one theme, some of them covered other themes too.

### **Authority Patterns**

According to the researchers in this section, an undergraduate teacher's ability to teach his or her class effectively is primarily determined by the way the institution he or she works for is governed and administered. (Birnbaum, 1988). These two preconditions,

in turn, determine the interrelationships between individuals at the institution (their dynamics) and their relationships with the outside community. In addition, other related institutions like governments also play critical role. The dynamics of an institution is, itself, a manifestation of the interaction of various inter-dependent facets. This is the type of institution, its size and its central mission. In addition, colleges and universities also have to manage issues relating to diversity and equity, faculty autonomy and tenure, and public opinion. This makes academic institutions complex and, therefore, difficult for the classroom teacher to manipulate them to his or her own persuasion on his or her own.

From among the researchers who have examined the administration and governance of academic institutions, Keller, (1983) and Birnbaum (1988) have compared the running of an academic institution and the management of business enterprises. Both are involved with the supplying of essential commodities to their clientele. The researchers conclude that in business terms, colleges and universities are run inefficiently because they lack a clear line of command, are not cost effective, and may even appear chaotic to the casual observer.

And yet the fact that these institutions are successful in their missions is generally accepted. The reason why universities and colleges succeed where other badly run businesses fail is that they are based on well established organizational systems whose priorities are different from economic profit. Some of their basic concerns are research, the dissemination of information, decentralization of power and the maintenance of institutional prestige. Unlike commercial businesses, these institutions are part of a continuum where every individual strives to keep links with the past while contributing to

future development. Underneath the appearance of chaos at these institutions is a concerted effort to fulfill central missions, regardless of how vague the missions may be.

Bolman and Deal (1984) discuss the issue of leadership at such institutions, coming to the conclusion that, unlike in the past, today's university and college leaders have to deal with many interdependent issues, and they must use different strategies to succeed in their objectives. To be able to do this, the leaders or managers must possess the following organizational skills:

- Management skills: As managers they must have a big picture of their institutions and facilitate collaboration between sections.
- Consultation skills: Where consultants must be employed, the managers must still have a clear understanding of the goals their institutions are trying to achieve.
- Political correctness: The managers must be seen to be acting in accordance with what is expected of them by the public, which includes students, parents, and news media.
- Conflict resolution skills: When breakdowns in communication occur between different sections of the institution, the managers must have the necessary skills to restore harmony.

The term “manager” can be replaced by “teacher,” and all the above conditions will apply in relation to the classroom. That is, teachers must possess skills to manage their classes, the ability to consult when necessary, concern for political correctness, and the skills to resolve conflicts which may disturb the teaching and learning process.

Bolman and Deal (ibid.) also discuss the organizational theories and the organizational frames that the leader of an institution of higher learning needs to have in order to be successful. While what they discuss is particularly directed at the leaders of the institutions, it also has relevance for the classroom teacher because he or she does not

only take an active role in the running of the institution, but must also constantly adjust his or her teaching to both administrative and public expectations.

Krammer and Weiner (1994) suggest that teachers need various managerial skills and interpersonal sensitivities to deal with such a situation. These include the ability to team up with others to pursue common goals, and the ability to empower others to fulfill their own goals.

The situation is much worse in developing countries where the availability of media hardware and software depends on such other factors as the availability of accommodation for the media and teachers' ability to use equipment at all. Some institutions in developing countries cannot afford even the cheapest media equipment. Others do not have electricity. Since students at such institutions must write the same highly centralized final examinations with those from institutions which can both afford and use the media, the question of equity in media distribution becomes an ethical one. In other words, media use becomes discriminatory, and an unfair means of disseminating

Another writer who discusses policy in educational media is Robin Moss (1984), an American educator. Moss has a radically different view from those of Sarupria and Al-Saleh, mostly because of his different historical background. To Moss the use of electronic media in schools and colleges is not an issue that can be regulated by school and state or government administrators. He argues that since these do not have direct access to the learners, they cannot know what the learner needs more than the teacher does. That being the case, Moss argues that the teacher should be allowed the freedom to use educational media as he or she finds fit.

Moss views the educational media as having already started a revolution that cannot be stopped. It is a revolution that has already begun to transform, not only individual educational institutions, but education as a whole. Just as the telephone and the car have become part and parcel of today's life, so too have become video and computer to modern education, Moss argues. To him the question is no longer whether media are going to dominate education or not, but how the traditional teacher is going to be reeducated to suit the demands of the technological era.

Moss does not think that students will have any problem being taught through electronic media because they are exposed to computers, video and television every day of their lives. It is the teachers who must strive to cope with technological advancement. It is also the teachers who are more likely to oppose the introduction of educational media for fear that it will reveal their own inadequacy. Moss has this to say:

While the transformation in the school implied by the video revolution may cause problems for certain staff, children are unlikely to find any difficulties with an increase in video materials for study, any more than with computer learning.  
(p.90)

Moss feels that discussion on this subject should concentrate on how the teachers can cope with students' mastery of educational media, not whether or not teachers approve of the introduction of the media into education.

Moss's view is echoed by many other Western researchers, among them Dieter Kaam (1996), Charles Schuller (1954), Wilbur Schramm (1981) and John Bitton (1994). Kaam points out in the introduction to the Educational Media Instructional (E.M.I.) of March 1996 that by the time children leave high school at the tender age of 18, they will have spent 15,000 hours of study and 18000 hours of television viewing. It is clear that

students who enter universities and colleges in the Western world will have had ample exposure to electronic media. This means that the students are learning more about life from the media than from the teacher. Consequently, Kaam argues, the teacher must incorporate the media in his or her teaching so that the student does not experience two worlds, the exciting world of the media and the dull world of the lecturing teacher. Shuller urges school and college administrators to take a leading role in encouraging the use of media in teaching if their teachers are to remain abreast of modern developments in technology. He is convinced that educational technology has come to stay, and unless educational administrators take the initiative to prepare their institutions for it, the administrators themselves may become irrelevant in a world that literally administers itself through media use.

Schramm encourages educational administrators to take bold steps to encourage media use in their institutions. The steps are described as bold because Schramm is aware that they are likely to be criticized from different sources. He gives case studies of American educators, including Governor Lee of American Samoa, who made bold decisions to introduce media in education, and ended up getting government support. In the introduction to his Molding the Hearts and Minds, Bitton goes a step further than Schramm when he describes media education as a revolution that educators have to adjust to if they are to remain effective.

Like Moss, all these researchers do not consider that teachers have any choice between using or not using media in their teaching. The researchers posit that what the teachers need to do is to literally go back to school to learn the basics of media use because the media have already taken over all forms of education. Obviously, this can

only apply to situations where the media themselves are easily available and generally accepted. This view does not take into consideration the use of the media in developing countries, or even in the distressed sectors of the developed world.

Yet another researcher who discusses the issue of innovative teaching in the context of educational governance and administration is Al-Saleh (1985) from Saudi Arabia. He also sees a need for the establishment of policies to guide the use of electronic media in education. He is, however, primarily concerned, not so much with the general cultural invasion from the West through the media, but rather with the need to let each Saudi Arabian educational institution adopt its own approach to the use of both locally produced and imported media. He argues that since each institution is unique, so too are its educational requirements.

Al-Saleh actually seems to be reacting to views like Sarupria's that advocated for a common national approach to media use in education. He sees each educational institution of higher learning in Saudi Arabia as unique, with its own specific needs that cannot be catered for through a collective approach. He takes much cognizance of the fact that individual institutions have different needs for using electronic media, and trying to get them to work out a common policy is unrealistic. For example, Al-Saleh argues that a liberal arts department is not as likely to use educational video as a film school. While the liberal arts can completely dispense with video use and still prosper, the film school cannot do the same. Although he also sees a need for central government to give some policy guidelines concerning the use of educational media, Al-Saleh argues that each institution of tertiary education should be left to interpret the guidelines according to its own priorities.

Al-Saleh considers the use of electronic media in Saudi Arabian education to be an innovation. He argues that innovations are but new ways of doing the same things differently, and as such the people who are supposed to make use of the innovation need to understand why they are changing from the old ways at all. On this issue, Al-Saleh has this to say:

For an innovation to be successfully adopted, the organization itself should be ready. That is, policies, rewards, and resources should be provided to support innovation . . . . The frequency of instructional media use by faculty will be related to their perception of administrative support. (p15)

In other words, Al-Saleh only considers "innovation" to be possible within the context of "provided" parameters. The innovation is only the extent to which the imaginative teacher is able to include other teaching methods and materials to enhance the effect of educational media. It must never be an imposition from outside.

In view of the above, the undergraduate liberal arts teacher must be diplomatic in his or her interaction with administrators, knowing that they partly determine his or her success in using the media. Although in the United States college teachers are more autonomous than their counterparts in developing countries, they still depend on administrators in matters like financing of their projects. Hence they must always be in good books with the latter. All the above suggests that the undergraduate teacher is more of a team player than a player of monopoly. Whatever decisions he or she makes regarding teaching his or her subject must get the approval and support of those in charge of administration and governance at the university or college. his also suggests that the teacher must get involved in administrative matters so as to be in a position to influence



decisions that affect him or her directly. However, there remain other problems that affect the teacher's decisions.

### **The Teacher's Professional Rights and Responsibilities**

The next issue that has been discussed by researchers regarding the teaching of general education at college and university level are the rights and responsibilities of the teacher. Many of the researchers are of the opinion that since the teacher is the one who converts the theory of teaching general education into practice, his or her position in relation to other factors needs to be fully understood. The average classroom teacher at most universities and colleges is a professional person with a masters degree in the field he or she teaches, and some years of teaching experience. Such a person clearly understands his or her professional rights and the responsibilities that go with the rights. The question is: To what extent is the teacher's role understood by other team players?

Birnbaum (1988) posits that for any positive change to take place at an institution of higher learning, faculty has to be centrally involved; and that for faculty to give their best performance, they need high morale. The researcher places faculty morale at the top of cycle of the four factors that are responsible for the smooth running of an institution of higher learning. The other factors in Birnbaum's cycle are institutional prestige, a sense of community and student enrollment. These factors require adequate financial resources to operate. Advancing the same argument, Baldrige et. al. (1991) posit that the professional should be enabled to make his or her own decisions and to express his need for freedom from organizational constraints; but that this must only take place within the context of a professional "bureaucracy" (p.37).

Other researchers who have analyzed the position of the college classroom teacher with regard to the teaching of general education have covered all its aspects ranging from teachers' early fascination with video technology in developed countries in the 1950s and 1960s, to the current innovations with the media in the form of interactive video, computer disc and the world wide web. They generally acknowledge that the impact of electronic media on the way general education is taught is so strong that every teacher has to make some adjustments to keep abreast of developments. However, they do not specify how the teacher can achieve this in view of the many constraints that he or she has.

Other scholars (Chaffee, 1991; Crawford, 1998; Kramer and Weiner, 1994) are convinced that, with the more recent introduction of new uses for the computer, more efforts need to be made to integrate the media into the undergraduate curriculum; that is, making media usage a required aspect of undergraduate studies. The scholars are aware of the implications of such a development for the classroom teacher, and go on to suggest what they consider to be a compromise situation. They say that such a compromise can only be reached through collegial support and financial viability. This suggestion, while viable to some extent, does not give due consideration to issues that are beyond collegiality and financial viability.

Since the need for the undergraduate teacher to adjust to new situations mainly concerns the use of electronic media, many researchers have argued that it is also on this criterion that the modern teacher's effectiveness needs to be determined. These researchers argue that the need to adjust to the media is not a new phenomenon because at every stage in the development of the media, many educators questioned the relevance of allowing the media to dominate pedagogy. Some even argued that such a move has never

been necessary with more humble teaching tools like the flip chart and the overhead projector, but pedagogy has been conducted through them successfully.

However, opinions have always varied on this issue, with some researchers promoting increased use of the electronic media in education (Valmont, 1995), and others condemning the media as an expensive luxury and a distraction to learning (Mander, 1978). There are also some researchers who view the use of electronic media in higher education as both good and bad, arguing that any teaching tool is only as good or as bad as the person using it (Rowntree, 1994). These researchers argue that the use of any teaching tools does not, in itself, create good teachers, but it is generally accepted that using appropriate tools facilitates teaching and learning.

In America, there also exists literature that examines how teachers can, with the help of their students, produce video materials designed for their own specific use. This literature addresses the question of media relevance directly, showing how media produced for the general public cannot be expected to address the needs of any particular classroom. The argument here seems to be that media only becomes relevant if it is produced by those who use it. This argument, however, seems to assume that every teacher is an expert media producer and that classrooms will have ready access to video cameras and editing suites. It also underestimates the costs of media production in terms of time and money. In other words, the idea may be theoretically sound, but it is not generally applicable because it is too elitist.

Some researchers who have taken this approach agree on the point that the modern teacher cannot avoid using educational media in his/her teaching. They suggest that since educational media are a recent development, teachers who were trained before

media use in education was widespread need to be retrained. The training can be done on the job, to minimize loss of working time for the teachers. The training would also ensure that the teachers get acquainted with the latest developments in the media industry.

Valmont (1995) is one of the researchers who advocates for teachers to be given in-service training in media use. While he is convinced that all affected teachers must get the training, he also calls for tact in approaching the teachers about it, arguing that a tactless approach could be resisted by the more established teachers, who also happen to be very influential in decision making. They include school heads, and subject heads who determine the acceptance of any proposed changes to the education curriculum.

Valmont cautions that the teacher must first get convinced that the use of video improves his own teaching and learning before being asked to undergo the proposed in-service training. The next issue to consider after the teacher has received the training is how he or she can get the right educational materials to use. Often this issue is taken for granted and teachers are left to use their own discretion on what media they can use.

Valmont goes on to suggest that the best media for any teacher to use is that which he/she can produce with his/her class.

Another issue that parents will be concerned about is how testing will be done. For example, will students be tested for not sleeping during a video show or will they still have the burden of studying books in addition to viewing the media? In the latter case, the video will be seen as an unnecessary addition to a learning situation that already had all its requirements. In answer to these queries, Valmont postulates that the process of producing media itself becomes the main lesson. The final product is of minor importance. He even argues that the use of commercially made educational media is not

conducive to learning because it gives the viewer a wrong impression of life. For instance, in video a viewer is expected to accept cuts, wipes and fades and other techniques that misrepresent true life. It is, therefore, necessary for the learner to realize that what he or she has taken to be reality is, in fact, a representation of reality.

Valmont thinks that, however relevant and well produced a video may be, a teacher should not use it just to replace his own teaching. If a teacher simply comes to class to show films, this will suggest that he/she did not prepare his /her lesson well. Video is a tool that the teacher should only employ to supplement his own teaching. Valmont suggests the following as some of the ways in which teachers are known to have misused electronic media in their teaching:

- Using any video that is available.
- Using video without first introducing its contents.
- Failing to use video to stimulate discussion.

For these errors Valmont blames certain entrenched attitudes that some teachers have. He has this to say about these negative attitudes:

Older people, therefore, often tend to believe that not much is learnt from television. On the other hand, younger people have been so immersed in television that, perhaps, they do not realize its impact on them. (p.11)

Here, while accusing older teachers for lagging behind technological development, Valmont also thinks that younger teachers should use video thoughtfully. They should not just use it in any way. The teachers should make a distinction between video for entertainment and video for educational purposes. Failure to make this distinction leads to random use of video, which Valmont considers to be retrogressive.

Valmont also tackles the issue of educators' and parents' attitudes to media use. He thinks that these attitudes often do not have strong enough grounds, and comments:

"One fundamental attitude prevalent in educators and parents is that television greatly detracts from formal school education. . . . especially children's learning to read, and this has been used as a sufficient reason to condemn video totally." p.4)

Valmont's concern here is not the non acceptance of the media itself, but the fact that there are times when it is justified, and other times when it is not.

Discussing the same subject of how teachers should approach the use of educational media, Hansen (1994) goes further than Valmont to suggest that the teacher must have a sense of commitment to the use of electronic media. Since teaching is a profession or a lifetime commitment, he or she should remain constantly familiar with its changing demands. Only by so doing can the teacher continue to use educational media effectively.

Another researcher, Ibrahim (1985), points out that the teacher must manipulate video to produce effects that cannot be produced without it. He gives the example of sound or image magnification to create needed effects. He says about it:

Videotape can play an important role in aiding sound production. Using videotape to magnify the image of a native speaker making speech sounds may prove valuable. Magnification of the image also establishes direct contact between the native model and the student by providing the learner with a dynamic image of the target language in use. (p3)

Ibrahim goes on to explain that video improves the learning situation by combining sound and visual effects. Careful manipulation of these effects by the teacher can enable the teacher to convey thematic aspects that verbal description alone cannot achieve.

Wetzel (1994) discusses how television now affects every aspect of life, and recommends that teachers should use it in their daily work. He goes so far as to show

how teaching is likely to become much simpler and cheaper all over the world through the use of electronic media. He thinks that this is made possible by the fact that video can be duplicated and shared by many users, and writes. Once made, a video can be duplicated for simultaneous use by countless teachers and learners. On this he comments:

Sharing relationships within and between organizations are frequently a consideration for distance education and television-centered systems. This is particularly true for smaller operations, because sharing enables costs to be borne by many. . . . Whether a technological infrastructure already exists within an organization for other purposes or can be shared between organizations, can have an important effect on costs. (p.33)

While Wetzel argues strongly for teachers to use educational media extensively, he overlooks two fundamental issues, namely, how the institution views the teacher's use of the media, and how the teacher will get the resources he/she wants.

Some researchers try to draw a line between educational and entertainment media, explaining that there is media that is made specifically for education and media that is specifically for entertainment. Trouble arises when these two functions of the media are wrongly applied. One researcher who holds this view is Stuart Deluca. He defines television as "the public use of video: the production and distribution of video programs intended for public consumption." Deluca contrasts this use of television with the use of video for "instructional" and "educational" purposes. (p.xi )

Whichever approach to the use of media in education we accept, it will still indicate that there are basic considerations that we need to make in order to come up with a more acceptable policy. These considerations indicate that the teacher can only use media effectively when there are laid out policies to guide him or her. This will lead to my central question of who makes the policies.

Although the cultural issue is of greater concern to Third World researchers like Sarupria, some researchers from the developed world also see it as important. The difference in how researchers from the two worlds view media in education is that those from the developing world tend to regard it as a negative force coming to destroy, while those from the developed world tend to regard the media as an alternative culture.

Bondebjerg (1996) believes that media should merge with other technologies to create a comprehensive culture in which the media will no longer be viewed as separate from other aspects of life like air travel and modern medicine. Using the O.J. Simpson trial as an example, Bondebjerg argues that the dramatization of the trial by a drama group sometimes appeared to have more logic than the real life story itself. To him, this lifted art and put it at the same level as reality. In other words, art had extended the concept of what culture stands for. Culture is, therefore, not just what people are and what they do, but also how they extend reality through the expert use of the media.

Bondebjerg goes on to give various tabloids of the O.J. Simpson trial type to support his conviction about the extent to which this concept of culture can be taken when he comments:

In all these examples, tabloid journalism or soft human interest journalism has arrived on television, and private life stories have been lifted into public discourse, changing the established forms of journalism. At the same time new forms of television documentary . . . . building on the documentary film tradition . . . . have emerged, where hybridization of factual forms and fictional elements are found (p.28)

The concept of creating a fusion between the media and culture is expressed by many other researches from the two world who argue that the media cannot be separated from culture, but that they should become the vehicle through which culture is disseminated.



While resistance to new methods of teaching has always existed, it has been found to be strongest at post secondary level where teachers tend to be comfortable with lecturing. The teachers are highly self confident and, therefore, difficult to convince to the need for any new methods of teaching. After all, many of them will have risen through the educational ranks using the tried and tested writing board or flip chart, and will feel uncomfortable to, literally, go back to school to learn to use the new tools. These teachers also dislike using the new media because they do not have as much control over the electronic equipment as they do the more traditional teaching aids. For example, electronic media is affected by power shortage, and are prone to unpredictable breakdowns. The writing board is not. Hence teachers will use the slightest sign of equipment malfunctioning to condemn its use in favor of the unfailing chalk and talk teaching method.

Discussing this subject, Evans (1967) notes that college teachers, more than K-12 teachers, tend to trust the "tried-and-true teaching methods" (p.68), and distrust any new methods, which they regard as risky and experimental. These teachers hold the traditional view that learning is a serious matter which should be conducted in a serious atmosphere, in the total absence of any detractors. Not only do these teachers argue that education must only be disseminated by the teacher using his or her own creativity, but they are also convinced that only trained teachers can use it effectively. They regard the use of any teaching aids beyond the writing board as irrelevant distractions to student learning.

Evans (ibid) thinks that the teachers have a lot of influence on their students regarding media use. He, therefore, argues against what he considers to be the

uncoordinated use of the media in education because it creates a situation in which anything goes. In such a situation, he argues, not only does media usage depend upon the whims and preferences of the individual teacher, but it is also influenced by the innovative teacher's desire to experiment with the latest inventions which have not yet been tested. This makes it impossible for educators to set acceptable standards of media use in the classroom.

For this reason, the contributors to Evans' book argue that educational media must be used very sparingly in the classroom. While they will accept some use of video and computers because the teacher and his/her students can control them, they are particularly opposed to the use of television, which they regard to be primarily for entertainment and the broadcasting of sensational events rather than education. The implications of this on the undergraduate teacher of arts and humanities is that he or she must constantly seek to dispel people's fears about the negative effects of media use.

To conclude this theme, it seems clear that the undergraduate teacher's autonomy is curtailed challenged with regard to media usage in the classroom. Even where the administrative system and financial viability allow the teacher to be innovative, there still remain issues of feasibility and propriety for the teacher to deal with. The teacher may also have full authority over his or her classroom, but that authority does not extend to mastery of technology and the occurrence of mishaps. These and other factors make the teacher remain dependent on the contributions of other people, which compromises his or her professional autonomy.

## **Public Accountability**

Public accountability is another crucial issue that has been examined by researchers as it relates to the innovative teaching of general education in college. The main argument posited by these researchers is that the consumers of the education given by an institution must be satisfied that the education they are receiving is valuable.

Likening such an institution to other social services that are based on customer satisfaction, Baldrige et al. have the following to say:

Like schools, hospitals, and welfare agencies, academic organizations are “people-processing” institutions. Clients with specific needs are fed into the institution from the environment, the institution acts upon them, and the clients are returned to the larger society. (p.31.)

The researchers go on to explain that people, unlike industrial products, are very demanding. They demand the best services, and will not be content with unskilled or semi-skilled workmanship. Baldrige et al. could also have extended the analogy between human and material products by explaining that the machinery or technology to be used in “people processing” must also be understood and accepted by the clients. In this analogy, the teacher is the workman and the learner is the product. It is the responsibility of the teacher, therefore, to ensure that students learn properly.

Another view of public accountability is given by Freire (1970), who compares pedagogy to a political situation where a political candidate must do the will of the people to be voted into power. Freire goes on to explain that once the politician is in power, the tendency is to forget the people; and that when this happens, it is the responsibility of the oppressed to claim their power back from the oppressor. In this metaphor, Freire posits that just as politically oppressed people need to use their own resources to liberate

themselves from their oppressors, in education learners need to free themselves from learning environments that do not allow them to contribute towards their own learning. In both the political and educational situations, the dominant people (oppressors and teachers) dehumanize their subjects (the masses and learners), making them lose faith in themselves as their own liberators. But Freire is not appealing to oppressors to stop oppressing the oppressed. Rather, he calls upon the oppressed to free both themselves and those who oppress them. According to Freire, it is only when the oppressed manage to remove the dehumanizing conditions that their humanity will be restored and they can live like full humans again. Freire has the following to say about this:

But the struggle to be more fully human has already begun in the in the authentic struggle to transform the situation. Although the situation of oppression is a dehumanized and dehumanizing totality affecting both the oppressors and those who they oppress, it is the latter who must, from their stifled humanity, wage (war) for both the struggle for a fuller humanity; the oppressor, who is himself dehumanized because he dehumanizes others, is unable to lead this struggle. (Freire.29)

Similarly, Freire argues that the pedagogy or education for the oppressed people must be a humanizing medium if it is to serve its true purpose as a liberating (humanizing) agent. For this to be possible, the learners must be involved in the processes of formulating their curricula. As long as education is formulated by some people for others, it remains a dehumanizing prescription that should be rejected by the learners. For education to be humanizing, it must engender critical thinking in both the teacher and the taught. Critical thinking will enable the two parties both to internalize education and to reflect upon the challenges it poses. Reflection will enable the teacher and the learner to take mutual action to resolve their mutual problems. In other words, good education is that which creates dialogue between the teacher and the students so that learning becomes

a collaborative exercise in which both sides learn from each other. It should not be a one-sided affair.

Following this theory, Freire attacks what he terms the "banking" method of teaching in which the teacher acts as a banker who deposits money in a bank for future benefit to himself or herself. Freire considers that this method of teaching proceeds from the assumption that the student is an empty receptacle into which the teacher pours knowledge, which he will later retrieve through tests and examinations. Such a method does not allow critical thinking on either side because it is a denial of free mental exercise. What it will engender is patronage or false generosity in the teacher, and a dependency syndrome in the student. When the student gets to realize this, he or she is likely to resist learning as a whole. The alternative to this unprogressive form of education is what Freire calls problem-posing education. In this method of teaching the teacher poses real life problems for the class to tackle. The process of solving the problems enables the students to internalize the issues at stake, and to employ their own creativity in seeking solutions for the problems. Hence pedagogy becomes a shared experience rather than an imposed doctrine. Both sides learn from each other in a healthy atmosphere.

Comparing the two pedagogies, Freire finds the banking education to be unproductive and dehumanizing as it denies the learner the opportunity to contribute to the learning process. The learner is treated like a sponge which is expected to absorb water to saturation. Problem-posing education, on the other hand, is the preferred education because it makes the teacher and the student partners in the process of knowledge acquisition.

Freire emphasizes the importance of dialogue in the relationship between the teacher and the students, arguing that for education to take place at all, there must be dialogue between the two sides, and that the dialogue (the word) must take place in a friendly atmosphere. Dialogue is, by its nature, mutual. This implies a sharing of knowledge between the teacher and the students. Where dialogue is denied, the student represents oppressed people who need to fight for their own liberation. With regard to the use of electronic media in the classroom, Freire's argument would support a situation where teachers and students are empowered to introduce the tools.

Another researcher, Hooks (1994), literally begins where Freire left by arguing that the Freirian concept of education only takes root when the teacher engages herself or himself in the learning process; or when the teacher is also willing to learn. Hooks' theory of engaged pedagogy is her own interpretation of how education can be used as a liberating factor by the enlightened teacher. Although Hooks agrees with Freire that education liberates the minds of the oppressed, she has her own opinion about who takes the initiative to bring the freedom to the oppressed learners. She argues that this is the responsibility of the enlightened teacher. Her approach to education is one in which the oppressor (teacher) and the oppressed (students) wage a combined war to liberate themselves from tradition because tradition tends to put them into compartments that do not allow free thinking. She argues that it is only learners who get a liberating education who can become liberating teachers because they are liberated themselves.

Advancing the same conviction, Conroy (1972), Rose (1989) and Turow (1977) illustrate by means of their own autographs how education only succeeds when its consumers consider it valuable. Conroy, to begin with, illustrates that education that is

imposed on a group of learners cannot be a liberating factor because the learners will fail to appreciate its value. In a narrative on an imaginary Yamacraw island, Conroy illustrates how black children on the island grew up in a situation in which they were dehumanized and made to feel that they could never achieve anything in life. Conroy tries to introduce empowering education, but fails to break the resistance to his efforts because both the children and their community fail to see what he is trying to achieve. In the end all he can say is:

Of the Yamacraw children I can say little. I don't think I changed the quality of their lives significantly or altered the inexorable fact that they were imprisoned by the very circumstance of their birth. I felt much beauty in my year with them. It hurt very badly to leave them. (Conroy, 258).

What Conroy benefited from his experience was the fact of having done his personal best. He had sacrificed a whole year of his life to the service of needy people, but unfortunately, even his best was not what the situation wanted. Perhaps only an enlightened teacher from Yamacraw island itself could bring about the desired change to the hopelessness and poverty of the island. But even such a teacher would have difficulty changing the prejudices of the local educational authorities.

Another educational writer, Scott Turow (1977), presented a similar situation in which the best intentions on the part of the providers of education failed to meet the consumer's needs. He reveals how first year Law students were indoctrinated and dehumanized by a system of education that stifled all free thinking among students. Turrow's central theme in the novel is that the education that is given to first year Law students, not only at the highly esteemed Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts where he studied himself, but also at all other similar institutions, requires

students to parrot their work instead of understanding it. Turow mostly blamed the so-called "Socratic method" of teaching that was used for teaching "what are generally thought of as the basic subjects" (p.4). He argued that this method of teaching makes the students dread learning so much that they regard going to law school as going to "meet the enemy" (p.12). He concludes by saying:

But in most cases, I saw the fury generated by the Methods project as more of the success/achievement/competition hysteria. People just wanted to beat each other. In retrospect, though, I recognize that the summary-judgment motion satisfied impulses that had been frustrated all term" (Turrow 129).

This shows that the learners were like Roman gladiators who were only allowed to have brief periods of rest as they were engaged in a fatal contest for the amusement of the privileged patricians.

Mike Rose (1989), is another researcher who tackles the issue of public accountability in education. He describes how marginalized students were frustrated by a method of teaching that emphasized grammar and other rigorous methods of teaching that only made life difficult for the learners, and did not help them meet life's challenges. He reveals the pointlessness of such a system of education through the stories of imaginary students who went through it, and then tells the story of his own education and the frustrations he underwent. About this experience he says, "All the hours in class seem to blend into one long, vague stretch of time. What I remember best, strangely enough, are the two things I couldn't understand and over the years grew to hate: grammar lessons and mathematics. (p. 18). The classroom was so bleak for Rose because lessons were drilled instead of being related to the lives of the learners. Because of this, the learners tended to



daydream and to react with resentment when they were picked upon to give answers by their teachers.

Finally, the innovative college classroom teacher has to realize that he or she must satisfy the expectations of his or her public, even if this means compromising some of his professional rights. In most cases the public is not even aware of the teacher's rights and responsibilities, but has a general view of what constitutes high educational standards. For example, parents are more concerned about their children's grades than what the teacher used to enable the students to attain those grades. The public will quickly condemn what it considers to be a waste of learning time, even though this may mean a teacher's resorting to unfamiliar methods of teaching like showing videos.

### **The International Dimension**

If educational innovation affects a teacher's work in a country where technology originates, what can be expected of countries that only consume media produced elsewhere? The answer is that the reaction to.

Other research indicates that from the time when the use of electronic media in the classroom began to become significant in the United States, educators have held different views about the media's appropriateness in schools and colleges all over the world. These views have varied from ardent promotion of educational media by researchers like Bazalgette (1992), to its outright condemnation by others like Postman (1985). In between are the views of researchers like Sarupria (1994) who argue that, for the media to have lasting importance, both their producers and end users must take full cognizance of

the moral and ethical values of the consumers. Sarupria sites cases in India where some media were rejected by education systems just because they were foreign.

The issue of the acceptability of pedagogy to its clients also has an international dimension. Today's world is divided into media producers and media consumers; and in the field of education there is often friction between the two worlds. While the producers are more concerned with the marketing of their products, the consumers often feel that their cultural values are being eroded. Although time has greatly narrowed down the degree of difference between the two worlds, it will be some time before the two worlds are completely compatible. Because of the political, economic and cultural conditions prevailing in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, the crucial question remains media accessibility. While researchers like Wa Thiongo (1986) argue that foreign media are designed to colonize the minds of the consumers, others like Al-Saleh (1985) are more interested in how foreign media can be adapted to local Third World situations. Perhaps it is this compromise that will enable existing media to have relevance in institutions of higher learning all over the world.

The issue of difference in cultural and ethical values among educational researchers only becomes prominent when the attitudes of researchers from the two worlds are compared and contrasted. This suggests that cultural and historical factors exert considerable influence on the college teacher, so that what may appear as independent decision on the part of the teacher is partly a reflection of societal influences. Which would suggest that teachers from both worlds are equally affected by their cultures, and the differences that are observable are differences between the cultures themselves and not between individual teachers.

It would appear that the reason why the use of the media is viewed differently between the two worlds is that education is more centralized in developing countries than it is in developed countries. In developing countries teachers mostly use the media obtained for them by their governments from developed countries. What this suggests is that the governments are the ones which determine what media are suitable for their education, and teachers only use what is made available to them. On the other hand, teachers in the developed world have free access to the media and the opportunity to choose what media they want to use in the classroom.

Both approaches have their own merits and demerits. On one hand, it has been observed that while centralization of the media may stifle an individual teacher's creativity, it guarantees the maintenance of teaching standards where these are crucial to educational achievement. On the other hand, while the liberal approach to media use enables the creative teacher to improve his own teaching, it is considered to leave some students in the hands of incompetent or even irresponsible teachers. Only a compromise situation seems to be the solution, but such an ideal situation is difficult to achieve. This leaves the problem at the teacher's doorstep in both situations.

Research has revealed that while a limited amount of media usage is tolerated in lower education, in college showing videos and films is regarded as a waste of time. This mostly applies to the liberal arts where the established chalk and talk method of teaching is preferred. The use of the media is only tolerated in technical subjects like engineering and medicine where the writing board cannot adequately illustrate concepts like the functioning of an engine or cell mitosis.

One American researcher who argues for teachers to be controlled to some extent in their choices of educational media is Tyner (1992). He argues that giving teachers unlimited freedom of choice is a perfect recipe for chaos in education. Tyner is convinced that if America cannot coordinate its own technology at school level, then it cannot hope to attain more intangible ideals like true democracy which are less quantifiable than media use. He feels that America is in danger of destroying its own educational system through allowing teachers with different attitudes, training and experience to use media as they like.

Almost taking over from where Tyner left the subject, Britton (1994) argues that the need to develop a systematic approach to media use in education is greater in developing countries which rely on imported media not designed for these countries. He considers it unethical for foreign media to be used in a country's education system uncensored.

With reference to Latin American countries, Tyner says that U.S. domination of film production and television programming in these countries has created moral problems like increased teenage pregnancy which are retarding the countries' development. Tyner concludes that only the media produced by a country for its own education should be allowed into the schools if the countries are to retain their ethical and moral codes. If these moral codes are allowed to be destroyed, the nations themselves will be destroyed.

Another issue that has been discussed by researchers on this subject is innovation. It has been argued that in Third World countries, innovation in education is generally viewed with suspicion and fear. The reason seems to be found in the sources of

the media that are used in Third World education. Since the first media to impact Third World education tends to be soap operas which have no educational value, teachers are generally not convinced that the media in general are suitable as teaching aids at all. The teachers tend to associate the foreign media with entertainment and pornography. Any other media coming from the same foreign culture tends to be viewed the same

The public also tends to regard the teacher who uses educational media a lot as lazy and even immoral. Teachers in the Third World cannot take such labels lightly because the security of their own careers greatly depends on their maintaining a good moral image in their society. In the Third World, when a teacher makes a mistake which would normally have been condoned, he or she is more likely to be condemned if his or her mistake is attributed to the influence of what is considered to be bad foreign media. To avoid this, educational institutions in Third World countries generally control the media that goes into the classroom.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The researcher who first caught my attention on the issue of the rights and wrongs of media usage is Sarupria (1994), a professor from India who studied educational media in India and America. His main concern is the need on the part of India to formulate and implement policies to regulate the use of media, not only in schools and colleges, but in the country as a whole. Sarupria notes, with great concern, that electronic media from developed countries are being indiscriminately used in India's education by people whose interest is primarily commercial. The classroom teacher in India finds himself or herself flooded with foreign media that has no direct relevance to his subject. Sarupria's

argument here is that it is essential for educators in his country, and in the Third World as a whole, to establish media use policies that promote local cultural values.

What worries Sarupria is not that Western technology is invading India and other Third World countries. Indeed, he even sees this as a positive and inevitable development, like the adoption of English and French as national languages in former French colonies. Rather, he argues that since Third World education has to keep pace with global development, it must of necessity employ the educational technology of the developed world, but it must do so within its own cultural context. Sarupria even advocates for greater use of the media in both formal and non-formal education in developing countries, arguing that if the teacher does not make use of electronic media, he or she may waste a lot of time explaining things that students already know because the students have daily access to the media at home.

Sarupria is uncomfortable with the fact that the media currently flooding India's educational institutions are designed for foreign educational systems, and are likely to be unsuitable for India in terms of morality. He, thus, sees the need, not only for policies to regulate the use of educational media in his country, but also for keeping out what he sees as counter-productive media like pornography, excessive swearing and violence. He would like a situation where Indian educators and their students are given the opportunity to produce electronic media, especially videos and 16 millimeter films, based on local themes, using local subjects. Not only would this be cost effective, but it would also increase national pride among learners. The researcher is also convinced that students learn best when they use their mother tongues.

Once this objective is attained, Sarupria argues that electronic media, and video in particular, should be used to literally open universities on the screen. In a way he is advocating for the concept of virtual university, which seems to be gathering more and more popularity in the United States as the 20th century winds to and end. He says that in future teachers can conduct their lessons on television. The lessons can be supplemented with videos that students can acquire and use at their own respective paces. In this way education can be provided at a much cheaper rate than that which involves paying tuition and accommodation costs. Sarupria sees this as the only way in which developing countries like India can afford to expand their university studies, considering the high cost of building physical structures. He also sees another advantage to the development of universities of the air, so to say. Students would study in their own home environments rather than in artificial environments in which young people are grouped together away from their home environments.

Sarupria clearly does not see an active role for the educational institution in this matter. The policies that he advocates for are statutory ones made by government bureaucrats for educators to implement. However, while this argument would ensure that a country's education develops according to a central plan, however, it seems to ignore that any educational policies will be implemented by teachers, and that it is necessary to involve the teachers at the policy formulation stage.

The question of ethics and morality is considered to be so important by researchers like Lent (1979) that it is considered to be a new form of imperialism being imposed on the developing countries by developed countries ... a colonialism considered to be worse than political colonialism and even slavery because media colonialism makes

a people lose their identity together with their freedom of choice. As such all efforts must be exerted to make sure that the evil influence does not spread. The ideal thing is that every country should be left free to develop its own educational media that promote values.

Researchers like Bazalgette (1992), on the other hand, dismiss the question of ethics, arguing that the fact that a developing country has its own media industry does not automatically mean that the industry is appropriate for the country's media needs. A lot of research must go into trying to acclimatize the technology to the culture and moral values of the consumer.

It, however, seems that where this has been attempted in the Third World, governments have tended to take a central role, and the products have tended to be political propaganda of little or no educational value.

The unsuccessful use of educational media to promote ujamaa or scientific socialism in post-independence Tanzania has been given as an example of the inappropriate use of media by political bureaucracies. The teacher is portrayed as a mere implementor of decisions that he or she did not take part in formulating. While such a situation may be excusable in lower education, it sounds detrimental to the learning process itself in higher education.

Closely related to the issue of media ethics is the question of relevance to different cultural situations. People want to know of what relevance the available media have to the educational cultural and goals of a particular country or institution. Before college teachers resort to media use in their classrooms, they must establish whether the media



are the best teaching tool for each occasion. It is, therefore, not only foreign media that need to be assessed for relevance, but locally produced media as well.

The main thing that the researchers who discussed this issue wanted to do was to define what educational media are, who their target audiences are and what messages they disseminate. Based on this definition, the researchers sought to establish the extent to which consumers of educational media are consulted when the media they will use are made. These issues depend on who the producers and consumers of the media are and what their relationship is like. Inevitably, the answers to some of these questions lead us back to the issue of media policy discussed above.

Unlike the researchers on policy issues whose definition of the media is general, the researchers who discussed media relevance were more interested in distinguishing media items and comparing their relative relevance to education. More specifically, the latter are not content with using the term "video" to include film and television. They view television as the audio-visual medium for general entertainment and news, film as the medium for pictorial stories and video as the medium most suited to documentaries and demonstrations of specific subjects. Hence video is considered to be more relevant for education than the other two.

The researchers also define the media collectively as electronic media, print media and voice media. Of these, I was mostly interested in electronic media and their relevance as a teaching aid, although I could not help using Ngugi Wa Thiongo, a literary scholar from Kenya, as the basis of my understanding of how the media function and how the function relates to education. Wa Thiongo (1986) argues that all media are designed to colonize the consumer's mind, and the colonized people need to develop their own

progressive philosophies to rid themselves of mental colonialism. For example, he argues that the media that are in the English language are designed to induce a liking for the language, its culture and its cultural norms. The effect that this has on the consumers is to make them unable to see anything good in their own way of life and to accept the English way of life as perfect. To these consumers then, what appears to be relevant media for their own education becomes English media.

The consumers who have been mentally colonized in this way can still turn the colonialism to their own benefit by applying their own values to it. Only then can they think correctly and act appropriately. Ngugi argues, regarding the use of the English language in Africa, that social and cultural norms are basic to the formation of all basic concepts, and that a person cannot think concretely when he or she is operating in a foreign cultural environment. He says about this:

Whereas it is accepted that we use English , and will continue to do so for a long times to come, the strength and depth of our cultural grounding will ultimately depend on our ability to involve the idiom of African Culture in a language that is closer to it. (p99)

In other words, it is now time for African nations to get rid of the colonial mentality that led them to believe that English was superior to their languages, English culture more advanced than African culture, and English education more relevant to national development than the education that African nations can develop for themselves.

Ngugi Wa Thiongo goes further to argue that the influx of foreign literature and technology into developing countries can be viewed as a new form of colonization.

Whereas many developing countries have only recently emerged from political colonization by the countries that are now technologically developed, Ngugi thinks that

they are now being immersed into mental colonization, which is worse than political colonization. He thinks that intellectuals in affected countries should embark on a program to decolonize the mind. Otherwise the education they will give to their own children is colonial education which is irrelevant for their development as sovereign nations because it does not free their minds.

While Ngugi Wa Thiongo mostly concentrated on the literary arts, only covering educational technology as a byproduct of literature, other researchers writers have specifically discussed the relevance or irrelevance of foreign educational media outside their home situations. These researchers generally agree with Ngugi that Third World countries need to create their own technology, including educational media.

Gerald (1990) is one of these researchers who agrees with Ngugi. He has this to say on the subject, "No work of literary art can be properly understood in total abstraction of its context." The context that he refers to is the cultural and linguistic background of the writer in this case. Thayer (1980) makes the same conclusion in regard to educational media. He argues that the media in themselves are but instruments which are used to achieve the preconceived objectives of their producers. Luc (1991) argues that proper acquisition of educational technology by a developing country can only take place where the technology can be diffused with the receiving country's cultural values. The recipient must first study and understand the culture of the donor country. Then the assimilation process follows. Where such assimilation cannot take place, Luc argues that it is pointless to use foreign technology. The result is likely to be a distortion of reality resulting from inability to imitate accurately. Luc postulates that this is what

happens in many situations where developing countries borrow video materials from developed countries and use them without first adapting them to their own conditions.

Although Robin Moss argues strongly in favor of a media policy for developing countries, he almost contradicts himself when he argues that technology is, in itself, not suitable for the developing world. He basis his argument on an experiment that was carried out in Kenya and Tanzania in the 1960s. During a campaign to promote socialist education (ujamaa) videos made in Britain, using British characters, were used to mobilize the populations of the two countries to rally behind the new program. The result was enthusiastic acceptance in the initial phase, but before long the people lost interest in the new education program. Moss concludes that the program failed because video is not suitable for Africa. He says about this situation, "The place of video in distance education programs for Third World countries is by no means assured, " adding that his views stemmed from "the unhappy experience of the 1960s, with ambitious and oversold educational television schemes disappointing many through administrative, technical or pedagogic failure."

Moss's observation that the educational videos had failed to produce the required results was accurate although he found the wrong reasons for it. In blaming the failure of the educational media project upon the political administration of the two African countries, the weaknesses of the people in charge of executing the campaign as well as the crude equipment available, Moss misses the real point. The substantive issue here is relevance. African audiences failed to relate to video materials produced by people who did not understand their cultural values and their interests. In the videos, the British producers were literally talking down to their African audiences in typical British

patronizing style. It did not take the Kenyans and Tanzanian's long to react to this attitude and reject the educational program itself.

One can assume that the British, as media experts, must have produced an artistic masterpiece in this project. However, their masterpiece failed to produce the desired results because it was addressing fundamental issues from a colonial point of view. The British media experts failed to realize that they were not also experts on African affairs, and they produced a program that Africans could not relate to. The program was, therefore, irrelevant for the purpose it was intended. What this suggests is that although educational media are needed as much in the Third World as elsewhere, serious attention needs to be given to their mode of production. It is important that the media be produced by people who fully understand the cultural context of the media.

Reeves (1993) proposes a solution to this issue. He argues that all media importation into developing countries should be stopped because the media were originally designed to serve colonial interests. As the former colonies are trying to develop their own communication systems, they should begin with alternative media, which he defines as: "media which have been developed and used by groups which are in some way denied access to and opposed to the dominant mass media apparatus of the press, broadcasting, and . . . the cinema." (p.233) The media are usually associated with revolutionary movements fighting to counteract foreign-based cultural trends.

An example of these media is the concept of "third cinema". (p.235) which was developed in Latin America in the 1960s. This is a cinema that is based on giving people what they can afford. Its target audience are working class people, and its producers are the masses themselves. Based on socialist principles, the cinema seeks to abolish class

distinction from amongst the masses of one country or region. To achieve this, the cinema deliberately dispenses with the expensive finery of First World cinema which cannot be afforded by Third World countries. Commenting on the mode of production of Third Cinema, Reeves has this to say:

Third Cinema films may take any number of militant forms ---- pamphlets, didactic, report, essay, and witness-bearing films ---- but should resist the temptation to lay down aesthetic norms. They should counter the cinema of characters, that is, first cinema, with themes, and that of individuals with masses, and the author with the operational group. (p.236)

The mode of distribution of the cinema is also mass oriented. The films are distributed by means of an underground structure. Since schools are part of the community, Third Cinema is bound to find its way to them, and students will be able to learn what is relevant to them because they are its subjects. Most schools in developing countries are poor, so they will be able to afford their own media more than they can afford foreign ones.

I have noted that all the researchers who addressed this subject agree on the point that educational media are not easily transferable from one situation to another. The researchers from the developing world consider foreign media to be a corrupting influence, and those from the developed world are not convinced that commercially produced media can satisfy their educational needs. For example, American researchers even argue that educational video produced by commercial producers is designed to attract sales rather than to educate children. While this is practical in developed nations, it is a far cry in undeveloped nations.

Researchers who discussed the relevance of media to education seemed to accept the fact that the media are, like cars, a permanent feature of 21st century life. Their

concern was how people could distinguish between what is useful and what is not useful to them. There are other researchers who are concerned with the more fundamental issue of whether the media should continue to be used by anyone for anything at all outside the scope of information dissemination and entertainment. These researchers base their arguments on ethics and morality, and they either unreservedly condemn or condone the use of media in education. It seems that a compromise between these opposing positions is what educators should strive for.

Postman (1985) views media as a whole as evil and deadly. Evil because media's sole purpose is to deceive viewers under the guise of amusing them, and deadly because media destroy the human mind's capacity for creative thinking. He, therefore, sees no need for media at all, and strongly believes that its continued use will kill America.

Comparing the media to an adored human oppressor, Postman deplores how Americans have allowed the media to reduce the image of their nation to the show business of Las Vegas. He deplores how Americans have been induced to believe that appearance is all that matters in life, giving the example that even national presidents who were bulky like William Howard Taft were no longer popular because Americans now wanted good looking presidents, regardless of how they performed. Postman also says that Americans themselves have become passive and egotistic because of the negative influence of the media.

Postman argues that the media are bad because they distort the truth to the extent that by the time it is given to viewers it is not the truth itself but a biased version of it. Because the media are but channels of expressing their producers' biases all that Americans are accepting as the truth are the opinions of individuals who control the

media. Because Americans have abandoned the print media which could be subjected to greater scrutiny due to its permanence, Postman thinks that they have allowed themselves to drift further and further away from the truth and from critical thinking. He has this to say on the issue:

I hope to persuade you that the decline of a print-based epistemology has had grave consequences for public life, that we are getting sillier by the minute. And that is why it is necessary for me drive hard the point that the weight assigned to any form of truth-telling is a function of the influence of media of media of communication. (p.24)

Here Postman is offering to save America from the impasse it has allowed itself to get into; that of accepting media bias as the absolute truth. The only way America can be saved from this situation is to be persuaded to abandon the media, television in particular, completely.

Postman condemns television more than other media because it deceives people into thinking that what they are being given is good for them. Television achieves this deception through entertainment. Television adverts create a craving for commodities like beer and sweet foods without revealing the dangers in them, and consumers are content with the "advice" given in the adverts. When news is given, emphasis is put on what things looked like more than on their implications. For example, a news report on a car accident will tend to emphasize the mangled vehicles and flowing blood instead of what caused the accident and how other accidents can be prevented. But this is what Americans have been made to accept as good reporting by the media. If any reporter tries to analyze a situation without showing dramatic pictures, he or she will be rejected by the viewers. But this does not resolve the ethical question.



Postman argues that it is through such biased placement of emphases on trivialities that the media producers distort, not only the truth itself, but also the cultural values of a nation. He says, "The concept of truth is intimately linked to the biases of forms of expression. Truth does not, and never has, come unadorned," but that it is "a kind of cultural prejudice." (p.22) Hence Postman argues that media designed for education like "Sesame Street" is not free from bias. It is a product of the media, and what it portrays as the truth is a "Sesame Street" version of the truth. Postman is most unsparing in his condemnation of the media when he illustrates how he thinks they have destroyed the future of America by corroding its education. He says:

We now know that "Sesame Street " encourages children to love school only if school is like "Sesame Street." Which is to say, we now know that "Sesame Street" undermines what the traditional idea of schooling represents. Whereas a classroom is a place of social interaction, the space in front of a television set is a private preserve. Whereas in a classroom one may ask a teacher questions, one can ask nothing of a television screen. Whereas school is centered on the development of language, television demands attention to images. Whereas attending school is a legal requirement, watching television is an act of choice.

.....  
Whereas to behave oneself in school means to observe rules of public decorum, television watching requires no such observances, has no concept of public decorum. Whereas in a classroom, fun is never more than a means to an end, on television it is the end in itself.(p.143)

It is the reduction of education to trivial entertainment by television that mostly riles Postman. He resorts to biblical language to emphasize his abhorrence of how television, which he calls the new curriculum designed "to influence, teach, train or cultivate the mind and character of youth" (p.146) has blocked all positive aspects of education and replaced them with its own commandments based on simplicity, attraction and entertainment. Exposition is regarded as the enemy of the new form of teaching and learning, and entertainment is hailed as the its main objective. On these grounds Postman

concludes that Americans are amusing themselves to death by making television, rather than books, their main source of information.

Another researcher who argues that media dispense with ethics as they pursue the profit motive is Siepmann (1952). He posits that after a teacher has explained a subject clearly using the traditional teaching tools, there is no need for the same subject to be screened because students will tend to concentrate more on the entertainment aspects of video than on facts and logic. He conducted a study at Xavier University through which he proved that students with televisions at home did not perform any better than those who did not have them. This led him to make the following conclusions about the value of television as a teaching and learning tool:

1. There was no significant difference in school achievement between televiewing and non televiewing children.
2. Learning was not much affected by the way parents controlled their children's television viewing.
3. Poor television habits, lower IQ s, lower parental control, and poorer school achievement were mostly found in the same child, proving that television viewing was not the main factor in a student's poor performance.
4. Television can be used to excess, resulting in damage to physical well-being and mental alertness. (p.104)

Siepmann also cites "several other studies" which "confirm that the viewing of television does not as a rule seriously affect achievement." What surprises him is that despite such findings, teachers insist on using television in their teaching. Siepmann concluded that it was likely that the teachers use media in their teaching to satisfy their own egos or merely to appear modern.

Siepmann is among many educators who are convinced that the use of television in education must be discouraged. His main reason for coming to this conclusion is that education is too serious an issue to be entrusted to the entertainment media. He believes that teachers must do the work they are hired for. They are not hired to show television, but to expose information. That is what they must do all the time. He concludes that it is only the lazy and uncreative teachers who will resort to television to supplement their poor teaching. A teacher who has not prepared his lesson properly will resort to showing a video on the same subject as if the video could ever teach better than a trained and dedicated teacher. If television could teach better than teachers, there would be no need for this expensive human item in education.

Siepmann also argues that if children are shown television at school, this will make their exposure to the medium excessive because television viewing is the number one favorite pastime for children at home. School should provide a healthy break from television viewing, not an extension. Children need variety in their lives, and they learn best when they are given information in different ways. There must be a reason why a child leaves the comfort of home to go to school, and that reason cannot be television.

One of the most scathing attacks on educational media was made by Mander (1978), who advocates for the elimination of television, not only from the schools, but from homes as well. Mander is very unsparing in his condemnation of television, which he accuses of, among other things, distorting facts and dulling the mind. What he gives as the four arguments for removing television from life are that it acts as a wall obstructing the human mind to perceive reality, that it colonizes the mind by creating false values

about life, that it deprives the human mind of cognitive reasoning, and that it induces bias by highlighting only the preferences of its artists.

Mander opens his condemnation of television by referring to it as horrifying, full of aberrations, and even gives it the image of a beast that swallows people's minds and their living patterns. He explains how he came to have such a negative view of television by describing his own life in the media. The son of Jewish immigrants who eked out a poor livelihood in New York, Mander describes himself as a renegade from his family because he gave up careers that were more meaningful in order to pursue a career in advertising and journalism. It was only during the pursuit of his work that he began to realize what the media stood for. They were a vehicle of disseminating a distorted view of life, and persuading people to consume both goods and information that had no value to them.

Describing how television affects the human mind, making it incapable of independent analysis of perceived television images, Mander has this to say:

And so the final effect, as we will see, is that the two kinds of image. . . . artificial and natural . . . merge in the mind and we are driven into a nether world of confusion. Like the Solaris astronauts, we cannot distinguish between the present and the past, the concrete and the imaginary. Like the schizophrenic, we cannot tell which image is the product of our own minds, which is representative of a real world, and which has been put inside us by a machine. (p.217)

Although Mander does not address the question of educational media directly, we can conclude from such comments as the above that he would also strongly disapprove of it. He would argue that anything that made people in general to lose their sanity could only destroy the minds of young learners.

Of late, general opposition to the use of television and other electronic media in education has become less acrimonious. The media are seen as a devouring monster, but a lesser evil that modern life has to put up with. The opposition that exists now is about the media being used as teaching aids. There are many educators who still believe that uncontrolled use of the media in education is potentially harmful to the learners. What these educators do not agree on is what measures need to be put in place to control the use of media in education.

A series of surveys carried out by Schramm in 1972 indicate that opposition to the use of media in education may just reflect the amount of exposure to the media that any group has had prior to the testing time. A survey he carried out to determine media preference by subject (Plan A-D p.85) showed only a slight difference between language arts (58.1%) and social studies (55.6%). This shows that subject is not a determining factor on how much educational media are used by teachers. Another survey he carried out to determine the average students' weekly exposure to television in American Samoa (Table 11, p.88) showed the following trends:

- In 1965 high school students saw more television than elementary school students.
- By 1975, elementary school students saw more television than high school students.
- On the whole television viewing decreased from a daily average of 7.44 to a mere 2.80.

These results are confirmed by those of a third survey Schramm did to find out the extent to which grade level determined acceptance or rejection for educational media (Table 12, p 93). The results of that survey show a general decrease of media preference

from 70.6% in Grade 5 to 23.5% in Grade 12. From these results we can extrapolate a similar decline in media preference in college education. And yet, when the same group of students was surveyed from grade to grade, the level of media preference remained constant. This suggests that it is not the educational level that makes students like or dislike media. Rather, it is a question of how much exposure a student had to the media in general before the testing which determines it

The Third World's view of ethics and the educational media is given by Lent (1979) who, like Ngugi Wa Thiongo, is convinced that media are the new form of cultural imperialism that the developed world is subtly imposing on the developing world. Lent says that the media tactics that are being used in the Third World are a replica of those used in the First World. He views as ironic the misconception prevailing in some developing countries, that their media "have been modernized." (p.14) Lent does not see such modernization as possible because countries like America and Japan continue to exert their influences on the countries of the developing world. Lent points out that, instead of reflecting the problems and aspirations of their own people, the media in the developing countries are more interested in world affairs and general issues like the gross domestic product (G.D.P.) of a country measured against the G.D.P.s of other countries of the world, when such a country still has poverty, ignorance and disease among its people.

Although he acknowledges that modern Asian scholars are making an effort to adapt Western media to Third World conditions, Lent also does not see the media being of any value in the education systems of developing countries because the media is rooted in foreign cultural values which emphasize individualism rather than collectivism in

cultural matters. He concludes his study by making reference to Pausewang who suggested the formation of "an intermediate technology for developing nations." (p.114) But Lent carefully avoids explaining how this is possible in view of the expansionist tendencies of the media of the developed world.

From all the above, it is clear that ethics and relevance are closely related. In educational terms anything that seems to be an imposition may be regarded as unethical, and may be resisted as strongly as that which is downright sadistic. This being the case, college teachers of arts and humanities must use media with caution in order to avoid hurting people's feelings. The teachers' own success is measured to a large extent by the degree to which they manage to reconcile cultural differences.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In this chapter I have given a review of the literature that I have read on the teaching and learning of general education, and on the use of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom. For greater ease of reference, I have grouped the literature according to the topics that it addresses. The topics are

- an institution's system of governance and administration
- what faculty consider to be their inalienable professional rights
- the extent to which the public is consulted before major decisions are made
- issues relating to the acknowledgment of diversity and the implementation of equity at an institution.
- the implications of the use of one country's media being used in another.

- the things that the classroom teacher will exercise his or her judgment before making a final decision.

Grouping literature in this manner enabled me to compare one set of researchers with others.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Summary**

The purpose of my inquiry was to collect and analyze data about how electronic media had come to be an integral part of teaching and learning at Michigan State University, and how the undergraduate teacher adjusted to shifting policy demands. The main sources of the data were past and current teachers in the IAH 201 media-based program. In this chapter I describe the methods I used for collecting these data, including the problems I encountered in the process, and how I resolved them. The chapter is divided into the following sections:

#### **Study Objectives**

In this section I give the terminal objectives of my study, which can be summarized to the following:

- To study the history of innovative general education at Michigan State University in order to assess its similarities and differences with its more recent counterpart at the University of Zimbabwe, and the status of general education in the undergraduate curriculum.
- To assess the extent to which the undergraduate general education classroom teacher has to use electronic media for teaching, and if so, the extent to which he or she needs to adjust to often conflicting administrative and professional demands.

- To determine what teacher preparation is essential for the effective use of the media in undergraduate teaching.

The inquiry was based on the hypothesis outlined below.

### **My Initial Hypothesis**

In this section I explain my hypothesis at the beginning of the study. The hypothesis is that the undergraduate classroom teacher is the key to successful undergraduate teaching. Any tools the teacher may choose to use only facilitate his communication, but can never replace him or her. The teacher must, therefore, be enabled to play a leading role in determining how the media are to be incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum. This hypothesis is derived from the theory of self efficacy which states that adults perform best in any task if they are empowered to use their own discretion to solve the problems they encounter; and conversely, a denial of self efficacy generally results in work stagnation (Schuftan, 1996). Electronic media are not an exception to this educational principle.

### **Data Collection Methods**

In this section I describe the methods I used for collecting the data I needed. I used the following three methods for collecting the data:

- Studying archival materials
- Interviewing staff members
- Analyzing some materials used for teaching the controversial course IAH 201

## **Objectives of the Study**

This study examines the use of electronic media in the teaching of innovative general education at Michigan State University at undergraduate level by tracing how the general education program developed from the time when general education was introduced into the university curriculum on an experimental basis up to the time when it became a full discipline in its own right. During all this time teachers used different approaches to teach general education courses.

This was because MSU was a pioneer in trying to establish general education as a separate discipline from other disciplines. Because of this, the development of the program was attended by many pitfalls; and the way forward was not always clear for both administrators and teachers. This process took more than fifty years because problems were encountered along the way. In the course of this painful developmental process, the classroom teacher had to make many adjustments to his or her teaching in order to remain an effective teacher. Administrative, collegial, financial and other factors also played their respective roles to make the development of the general education program at MSU a fascinating and challenging study for me.

I became particularly interested in the way general education teachers at MSU responded to different teaching environments because I am also a teacher in the same field at the University of Zimbabwe, with a keen interest in finding out how the media may ultimately become an integral part of the undergraduate curriculum. What I have observed is that, although the teaching of general education to undergraduates in the United States has, for a long time, been considered to be in jeopardy by scholars like Kanter et al., (1997), recent scholarship seems to suggest that the subject is being revived

through creative teaching methods, particularly the use of electronic media. This view seems to support the effort that has been put into the development of the general education program at MSU since 1942. Because of this effort, the status of general education seems to have risen considerably at the university over the past ten years, but so too has opposition to some of its innovations.

After my initial investigation about the use these media, I came to the conclusion that I needed to establish the following things:

- Who the general education teachers themselves are, how much experience they have, and what disciplines they come from.
- The types of electronic media that the teachers use, and why they choose these particular media.
- Why the teaching of the subject varies from institution to institution, and even from classroom to classroom at the same institution.
- Why there has been so much controversy on the teaching of general education at the university, and what steps have been taken to minimize people's differences.
- The importance of the environments under which the teaching and learning of general education takes place.

Answers to these questions enabled me to address the basic themes I outlined in chapter one of this study.

Recent studies conducted by the Carnegie Foundation suggest that at many universities general education has been taught as an extension of fine arts rather than as a comprehensive discipline in its own right. The situation at Michigan State University is different. Here bold attempts have been taken to broaden the scope of general education. The reason for this seems to be that from 1987 when Dr. Ernest Boyer described the

general education program at the university as bold and innovative, there has been further encouragement for teachers to continue experimenting with the teaching of the subject. As a result the concept of general education at MSU has become more focused than that held at other institutions.

When general education was introduced at MSU in the 1850s, it did not have a clear definition, and it was taught by faculty in different disciplines to students who did not meet basic university entrance requirements. The subject was, in fact, no more than education for living for those who took it as a terminal subject, or a university entrance qualification for students who wanted to proceed with their studies. But the subject underwent several revisions, and by 1998 the situation had greatly changed. It was now a broad discipline, taught by highly qualified faculty, media experts (through the media) and teaching assistants. It is this transformation of both the subject and its teachers that was the focus of my study.

The journey that general education has traveled to get to where it is now at MSU was, however, is far from being smooth. It was full of obstacles and pitfalls that sometimes made the program appear to be gyrating in one place. The purpose of my study is to trace this course of development in order to see how teachers avoided the obstacles and pitfalls in their way. The study is in the form of a case study because the historical approach helps me to put each major development in chronological order, which, in turn, helps me to determine which factors influenced each developmental stage. In the study I was primarily interested in finding out how the teacher, not only survived the major policy changes that took place in the program, but also adjusted himself or herself to cope with the different ways of teaching implied by each policy change. The

study also seeks to determine the role that the teacher played in decision making, what influence the teacher had on student learning and how the teacher himself or herself was influenced by the work environment.

Next, I observed that nearly all innovative teaching of general education at Michigan State University involves the use of electronic media; and that media usage in the college classroom has spread across the world.

As I pried deeper into this prospect, however, I came to the realization that the situation at MSU regarding the use of electronic media is still far from being conclusive. I learnt that the history of the general education program at the university has been a mixture of the bitter and the sweet to the classroom teacher who has had to adjust to its many changes. What fascinated me even more was how the program at MSU nevertheless seems to march on into the future like a veteran of many battles. I became interested in finding out, not only what enabled the program to survive the battles, but also how the teacher's role can be further defined in order to meet his or her expectations. I believe that this is the main problem that needs to be solved. To this end I formulated an initial hypothesis to guide me in my inquiry into the subject.

### **Initial Hypothesis**

My inquiry is based on my conviction that any teacher operates best when there are specific objectives to achieve, and when the objectives are pursued within an enabling environment. In other words, the teacher is a team player who can only play the game well when all things are equal. Any individual innovations the teacher may want to introduce will be judged within the context of the general rules of the game. The

innovations are only allowed to succeed if they appear to be advancing the institution's central mission.

This hypothesis is supported by Schuftan (1996) in his article "Community Development Dilemma: What is really empowerment?" He posits that "empowerment is not an outcome of a single event; it is a continuous process that enables people to understand, upgrade and use their capacity to better control and gain power over their own lives" (p. 260). Schuftan goes on to explain that empowerment proceeds by giving people alternative ways of doing the same thing, and giving them control over resources. In more concrete terms, empowerment means:

- Allowing people to take the initiative in attending to their own needs.
- Enabling people to address symptoms rather than wait to treat a festering wound.
- Empowering people to solve their own problems.
- Building team spirit.

The extent to which these ideals were recognized at Michigan State University in relation to the development of the general education program is the subject of this study.

The famous American educationalist, John Dewey suggested that a teacher with a well defined program to teach and all the support he or she needs could be self sufficient, that is, he or she could experiment with teaching methods until he found a perfect one. Waks (1998) strongly challenges what Dewey calls the free flow of social experience from the teacher to the learner by asserting that information never flows freely from the teacher to the student. Learning only takes place when certain obstacles are first removed. He says: "The value of educational institutions and practices is decided by their success

in promoting a wholeness of experience, a spirit of cooperation, an ease of interaction in a community” (p.5) . With regard to my study, this means that the undergraduate classroom teacher cannot operate independently from colleagues, administrators and the concerned public. A teacher’s success also depends on the availability of essential resources and an atmosphere conducive for change.

The study examines the teacher both as a catalyst and a pawn of a pedagogical process that employs the teacher, not only as a service provider, but also as a team player with administrators, students, parents and the public. The teacher’s position in the team both demands conformity and allows limited innovation. If the teacher is required just to conform with laid out institutional rules and regulations, he or she is denied the free exercise of his or her professional rights; and if teachers are given unlimited freedom, there is a possibility that some of them may misuse the freedom. The innovative teacher must, therefore, carefully balance his or her professional rights and responsibilities.

It is the extent to which the general education teacher at Michigan State University was able to walk this tight rope that I examined in this study. This is why it was also necessary for me to vicariously walk the same tight rope in order to fully understand its tensions. The classroom teacher at MSU had to adjust to major policy changes stemming from administration. This research attempts to determine how the classroom teacher viewed these changes, and how he or she reacted to them.

### **Data Collection Methods**

I used three methods to collect my data. These were studying archival materials, interviewing staff and analyzing some teaching materials. I often used more than one



method at any given time. For example, as I was studying archival materials, I contacted appropriate people to verify the data I had collected. Below are the key details concerning these methods.

### **Studying Archival Materials**

#### Two reviews of the history of general education at Michigan State University.

The two reviews are by Kuhn (1955) and Dressel (1969). Dressel makes an in-depth study of how general education at Michigan State University emerged from vague ideas for expanding student knowledge, to a discipline with some of the most stringent regulations in higher education. Kuhn, on the other hand, makes a brief assessment of the popularity of the program between 1942 and 1953. He argues rather emotionally that what used to be a good program was killed when too many innovations were made to the program with the formation of the Basic College in 1944.

The 1979 MSU Board of Trustees' resolution on General Education. At its meeting of April 26 and 27 of 1979, the MSU Board of Trustees made the following resolutions regarding the teaching of general education at the university:

1. Affirmed its commitment to general education as defined by the Academic Council.
2. Supported the establishment of the University Committee on General Education (UCGE) as a standing committee of the Academic Council.
3. Recommended that primary responsibility for general education courses be assigned to the general education departments.
4. Requested a review by the Board, "at appropriate times," of the general education program of the University.

The 1985 MSU report to the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

On its pages 330 and 331, the Michigan State University Report to the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools described the method of teaching general education at the University as “distinctive to Michigan State University” (p.331) because four academic departments had been tasked with the responsibility to improve it.

Dr. Ernest Boyer’s commentary on the way general education was being taught at Michigan State University of 1987. Dr. Ernest Boyer, a highly respected educational innovator, described the teaching of general education at Michigan State University as “remarkably appealing and coherent.”

The 1987 CRUE survey of academic personnel regarding how satisfactorily MSU was teaching general education. This survey was completed by 2, 122 staff members. A big majority indicated that MSU was doing a ‘good’ or ‘very good’ job of educating undergraduate students in natural science, social science and humanities. Out of twelve areas of undergraduate education, the following were rated good or very good in teaching general education:

Social science 69.3%

Natural Science 67%

Humanities 62%

This result indicates that members of staff at the university were happy with the way general education was being administered.

The 1988 CRUE survey of MSU students regarding the Humanities Department and interdisciplinary departments. A total of 4201 students completed the survey. The results matched those of the staff members in praising MSU for doing a good job in teaching general education. The students also strongly recommended the interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of general education at the university.

CRUE recommendations of 1988. Following the two surveys, CRUE made the following recommendations without any further consultation with faculty:

- The establishment of schools of Integrative Studies, one in each of the three core colleges.
- Faculty were left free to join any of the schools they wanted.
- New faculty must be affiliated to some departments before they could be accepted into the general education program.
- An extended period of time would be allowed for teachers to prepare their schedules.

These recommendations were supported by an administrative structure of the core program drawn up by CRUE.

President John DiBiagio's statement on general education at MSU of June 1988.

On June 10 1988, President John DiBiaggio commented in a letter to Dr. Thomas Greer that he believed that MSU had done "an excellent job of molding liberal and practical education."

The interview of Provost Scott and Associate Provost Simon in the Welcome Week edition of the State News in 1988. In an interview with Joanne Bailey, a State News correspondent, Dr. Simon defended University policy on general education. The press was criticizing the University for trying to destroy the Humanities department.

The November 1988 proposals of the deans of Arts and Humanities, Social Science and Natural Science for the creation of three centers for integrative studies. The deans of the participating schools made proposals for the teaching of the subject. The main outcome of this was the establishment of the three centers of integrative general education as we have them today.

Responses to the above proposals by UCC (1/5/89) UCGE (1/6/89), the New York Times (1/27/89) and the Washington Post (10/29/87). The University bodies praised the general education program praised it, but the print media voiced concern about the arbitrariness of the decisions being taken by administration.

### **Staff Interviews**

My strategy for doing the interviews was that I was helped to identify a person with a long association with the history of general education at the university. The ideal person turned out to be a staff member who was one of the editors of PRIMIS, a student handbook described in greater detail later in this report. My contact person gave me a list of people to contact, and also told me how they were connected to the program. The contact person herself was very well informed on the subject, and she gave me a general

outline of how general education had developed at Michigan State University. However, I chose not to include her among my research subjects because the way I had approached her was different from the way I was going to approach my interviewees.

My next step was to draw up a set of initial questions that I was going to ask each of my interviewees. I called each of the people who were still at or around the university, introducing myself and my research topic (ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN THE UNDERGRADUATE CLASSROOM: A Case Study of Teaching in Innovative General Education). I then made the following requests to them:

1. My reliable sources have identified you as a person who can give me the data I need for my inquiry on the above topic. I am requesting to interview you on the topic at a time convenient to you.
2. If you agree to be interviewed, I will also ask you to allow me to record the interview on audio or videotape. The recording will be for my convenience only, and will not be included in my report.
3. If you have any materials that I can analyze for my research, I will be most grateful if you could give or lend copies to me for purposes of the inquiry.

As it turned out, all but two of the eight staff members I contacted agreed to be interviewed either directly or by phone. Of the two who were not able to participate, one is now working in Los Angeles, and the other had other commitments to attend to.

I drew up the set of questions in the Appendices section of this report and sent them to each one of the interviewees. I followed up by making appointments to interview them. Two of the interviewees, the incumbent Director of IAH and the Director of WKAR) proved to be more forthcoming with information, so I asked them for follow-up interviews, which they granted me. It is these two who also gave me materials to analyze in the form of documents and videos.

### **First IAH Director and History Professor**

A long-standing member of the History department, this professor had the longest association with the program. He directed the IAH program from its formation in 1988 until 1997 when he went on leave and was replaced by the current Director. Due to his extensive involvement in all aspects of the teaching of general education, the professor is recognized throughout the university as both a pioneer and a veteran supporter of general education studies. He is familiar with all the developmental stages of the general education program, and I got the following information from him:

- Access to the files with all the correspondence regarding the teaching of general education at MSU. The letters were written, in most cases, by Presidents and Provosts .A general overview of developments in the general education program from 1942 to 1997.
- An explanation of the terms that I was not familiar with concerning my study.
- The MSU general education catalog.
- The names of the persons I should contact next.

After speaking to him on two occasions in 1997, I gained a complete and clear picture of general education at Michigan State University.

### **History Professor and Former Chairperson of the University Committee on General Education**

The professor still teaches general education courses under Plan B. Her main points were:

- General education has not been given due respect by the university community. Its teachers have been looked down upon.

- The core course is too localized and elitist. It gives students a distorted picture of the world. It makes general education easier for the rich and more difficult for the poor because it relies on expensive equipment..
- The establishment of IAH 201 was a big mistake. It watered down general education for the purpose of saving some money. What was lost in educational quality is worth more than the money that may have been saved.
- The video course is dull to students and a nightmare to the teacher. Its introduction was unfair also because it was introduced by a person who knew he was leaving, but did not reveal this until the very end. Last minute arrangements had to be made to find a suitable replacement. Faculty recommendations to improve the videos were sometimes overlooked.
- Although most of the Teaching Assistants do a good job, the use of too many of them to replace qualified teachers may be counter productive.

In brief, the professor thinks that there is virtually nothing worth retaining in IAH 201. It is a failed experiment which should be discontinued for everyone's good.

**English Professor and Former Chairperson of the Humanities Department. The Professor Teaches for the IAH under Plan B**

The professor expressed great personal interest in the subject. The following were the main points expressed by this professor:

- The Humanities department was doing a good job administering general education, and administration arbitrarily took away this responsibility, replacing it with a situation where the subject is difficult to define, let alone to teach.
- The core course America and the World is too American. It does not enable American students to know much about the rest of the world. It could as well be called America as the World.
- The IAH 201 course has caused a lot of dissatisfaction among faculty. Some have left because they did not want to be reduced to video players.
- On the contrary, Plan B of the IAH course is a good thing because it allows faculty to create their own courses and teach them as they want.

## **The Director of WKAR**

The Director is highly qualified and experienced both as an educator and media producer. He also does not do his work on his own, but has a team of experts under him. These are media producers, editors, narrators, actors and technicians. In producing videos for the general education program, the Director and his team produced some of the footage, but they also got some from film libraries at various universities. There was the difficult task of producing a series of tapes at the rate of one in nine days. The fact that they were able to do this task is a tribute to their expertise. From the Director I got the following information:

- How the videos were produced, including the recruitment of talent and the management of labor
- Knowledge of who initiated the production of each video and what inputs went into each of the videos
- How archival and other materials were obtained despite the fact that the program was running on a shoestring budget
- What he saw as the value of using the media in the college classroom, and what changes were necessary

The Director was also very frank about the criticism about the videos. He was happy that he and his team had managed to produce the videos at all, adding that under the right circumstances they could produce better work. He also gave me two video tapes and two production scripts to analyze. As a media person myself, I learnt a lot from the videos, and fully understood why they started a controversy that may never end.



## **The New IAH Center Director of the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities**

I got the bulk of my data from the new Director of the IAH Center whom I was fortunate to have several contacts with directly and through e-mail and telephone. Not only did he enable me to see the interrelationship between the various pieces of data I had collected, but he also gave me a lot of new data. From him I got the following help:

- The definition of the term “integrative studies” and the difference between the three centers of integrative studies on campus.
- The role played by the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities, and the Center’s relationship with its counterparts in Natural Science and Social Science.
- The main reasons why members of staff held different views about the teaching of general education at the university.
- How teachers and teaching assistants were recruited into the general education program, and how teaching assistants were trained for their job.
- The difference between Plan A and Plan B of the IAH program, and the methods used in teaching them.
- An explanation of how faculty drew up their course schedules and monitored the Teaching Assistants who helped them.
- An explanation of how the Center for Integrative studies in Arts and Humanities operates, its administrative structure, teacher recruitment system and how it was funded.
- Explaining the problems that teachers of general education encountered, and some solutions that have worked in the past.
- Explaining in some detail the strengths and weaknesses of the video program.

The professor also demonstrated to me how IAH teachers make use of available electronic media., and gave me the IAH syllabus and other documents included in the description below. Finally the Director gave me what he considered to be the strengths

and weaknesses of the current way of teaching general education, and what his Center is doing to improve the situation. These two issues are discussed in detail elsewhere in this report.

### **The Director of Instructional Television (ITV)**

Although I was not able to meet him, the Director gave me very useful information on the phone and through e-mail. The main points that he raised are:

- As MSU began its new perspective on the teaching and learning of general education in the early 1990s, there was more interest in working with ITV, especially from IAH.
- To help teachers adjust to teaching with electronic media, ITV was often asked to rework current television materials to bring them into line with syllabi.
- Both IAH faculty and ITV staff place more emphasis on newer technologies such as CD-ROM and web approaches.
- The fact that there are large numbers of Teaching Assistants is beneficial to the general education program because more teaching methods are used. Some of the Assistants are also very good at using electronic media. Some teachers depend on them.
- General education is vital to all students because it opens wider horizons of employment for them.

The professor was generally positive about the progress of general education at MSU. He argued that the problems that the program was encountering were but stages of development which strengthened rather than weakening it.

It is clear from the above interviews that most of my interviewees held similar views about the way CRUE has administered the general education program since 1988.

They generally felt that CRUE did not adequately consult faculty before making major changes to the program.

### **Analyzing Teaching Materials**

Next I analyzed the teaching materials that I was given by two of my interviewees.

The MSU Catalogue for the 1998-99 Academic Year. Analyzing the catalog enabled me to see the general education program in the context of the whole university's curriculum.

Primis (Fall 1996-Spring 1997). Edited by Dvorak, Lammers, Geissler and Nichols, Primis is a student handbook that describes the IAH 201 course in detail. It contains the following items:

- a 101 word course description
- a statement of the course objectives
- the texts used in the course
- an overview of a typical week in IAH 201
- course assignments in video viewing , writing, inquiries, reports, an end-of-course project, conversations, museum visits, and viewing film series

This extraordinarily thick handbook also gives students advice on how to approach the course, and has other details concerning attendance, grading, academic honesty and information about other places on campus where students can get assistance. The

contents of the handbook confirm the misgiving expressed by some of my interviewees that the title America and the World is not appropriate for the general education course IAH 201 at Michigan State University. It is a collection of primary source materials almost entirely about American history, save for a few brief references to Europe. In the handbook Africa only exists in the vague memories of some former slaves, and Asia and the Pacific are omitted altogether.

Model Syllabus and Schedule for IAH 201 ( Spring 1998). In January of 1998 faculty of record produced model syllabi for Plan A and Plan B of the controversial course IAH 201. The new Plan A syllabus is considerably different from the PRIMIS one above. Whereas the focus of the old syllabus was comprehension of the provided passages, that of the new syllabus is critical thinking. Instead of requiring students to merely explain what is in the passages and videos, the new syllabus gets the learners to look for answers to the following questions:

1. What is America as a political, civic and economic community?
2. What is America as a social community?
3. What have been America's expressions?
4. What have been America's visions?

Unlike the old syllabus which relied on literary passages and historical videos, the new syllabus makes more innovative use of electronic media. Students are required to read and understand comprehension passages, vie videos, use computer disc and make use of physical archives. Instead of having all materials strictly prescribed in a cumbersome book, students are encouraged to explore and find new meanings to what

they are studying. The syllabus also makes general education truly integrative by including topics like the following:

- analyses of novels like The Great Gatsby, The Yellow Wallpaper and Coming of Age in Mississippi
- coverage of other subjects like American Art, Photography, Jazz and Architecture.
- provision through CD-ROM of a wide variety of subjects that the student is free to explore

In terms of content, however, the syllabus remains largely America-centered. A more suitable title for it would be something like American Affairs or The American World.

Videos. I analyzed two of the forty one videos that were produced for the general education course IAH 201, America and the World. The videos are *Cultural Contact* and *The Road to Revolution*. I was looking for the following things on each video:

- Level of difficulty (Is it easy to understand)
- Amount of information covered (Can the learners grasp it all at one time?)
- Method of presentation (showing or telling)
- Relevance to the syllabus

I found both videos lacking on three of these criteria of analysis. Only relevance to the syllabus was adequate.

Cultural Contact is about the initial contact between native Americans and Europeans. It describes how Europeans brought good and bad things to the indigenous people of North America. Together with Christianity and European civilization they also

brought the black death, and economic greed. The result was conflict and war between the two peoples, which wars the Europeans won and turned into virtual genocide. The Road to Revolution is about the inevitability of the American Revolution owing to the intransigence of the British colonialists. It highlights events like the Boston Massacre, the Massachusetts militia's attack on British troops at Concord Bridge and the Declaration of Independence itself.

These historical events are presented graphically in the videos. The videos have the same structure, which is as follows:

- Theme music coming in, going under and then out as
- Program music replaces it and also goes under, then comes
- The talking head of the Guest, who gives a general overview of the subject, supported by the video's teaser ( fast pictures designed to draw attention). The Guest is a recognized scholar on the subject.
- A detailed narration of the subject by a Narrator, who tackles the subject from its beginning, explaining the underlying themes.
- A staged conversation between the Narrator and the Guest in which the Narrator asks questions and the Guest gives long explanations
- The Guest giving his concluding remarks

The above is supported by visual inserts of video footage that highlights what the Guest and the Narrator are saying. In short, the producers of the videos followed the standard form of film production.

## **Choice of Department**

My choice of the department to study was influenced by the fact that Michigan State University has developed a general education course that is taught almost entirely through electronic media. The controversy aroused by this innovation made me curious as to why the course, IAH 201, was created, and the effect it has had on the teaching of the program. I then discovered that the whole general education program at the university is a subject that needs investigation, especially with regard to how its classroom teachers adjusted to the demands of their versatile subject. It was clear to me that teaching in the program must have been a pleasure to some teachers and an endless nightmare to others. I was interested to find out, not only how the dichotomy was resolved, but also what prospects this approach to the teaching of general education has in America and abroad.

I have chosen the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities as my case study because its teaching program tries to blend more than one disciplines in one classroom. This approach is fascinating because it attempts to integrate learning with real life. In real life people are exposed to a composite world and not to a world of separate disciplines. For example, medical doctors need to know the cultural beliefs of the people they work with in order to fully understand their medical problems. Similarly, in the college classroom it is healthier to teach literature in the context of history and human psychology rather than as an independent discipline. Literature always reflects historical and other important conditions.

I was able to collect all the data I needed from sources at Michigan State University. Where necessary, I was able to go back to my sources to confirm data.

## **Chapter Overview**

The data I collected and my analysis of it is laid out as follows in this book:

CHAPTER AND TITLE	CONTENTS
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why I chose to address this particular problem</li><li>• Comparison of the Zimbabwean and American situations</li></ul>
THE PROBLEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis of the problem</li><li>• Rationale of my research</li></ul>
LITERATURE REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What has been written on the subject by researchers from different parts of the world</li><li>• The gap that I want to fill in this literature</li></ul>
METHODOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• My research paradigm</li><li>• The methods I used to collect and analyze data</li><li>• How this book is arranged</li></ul>
HOW INTEGRATIVE STUDIES EVOLVED AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How the general education evolved, and how IAH evolved from the program.</li><li>• Brief comments on the reasons why major steps were taken.</li><li>• Comments on how teachers reacted at each stage,</li></ul>
RESEARCH FINDINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Results of my inquiry</li><li>• Implications for MSU</li></ul>
IMPLICATIONS FOR ZIMBABWE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A review of higher education in Zimbabwe</li><li>• Relevance of my study to Zimbabwe</li><li>• My recommendations on the use of electronic media in Zimbabwe.</li></ul>

## **Data Analysis**

As this was a qualitative inquiry, my concern was not in scoring points on a grid and coming out with a neat statistical analysis. Rather I was more concerned with the relevance each piece of data had for my inquiry, and which section of my report to put each point in.

## **Concluding Remark**

In this chapter I gave an outline of what my research was about, the objectives of the research, and the methods I used for collecting the data.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **HOW INTEGRATIVE STUDIES EVOLVED AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

#### **Summary of Chapter Contents**

Electronic media have now become an integral part of general education studies in the centers for integrative studies at Michigan State University. The integrative studies themselves are the culmination of a program that has been evolving at the university since the institution's origin. It is only in this historical context that recent decisions on the use of the media in the undergraduate classroom were made. In view of this, it becomes essential for me to teach this evolution and evaluate its implications at every level. This chapter gives a chronological outline of the events that took place in the history of the teaching and learning of general education at Michigan State University between 1857 and 1998.

The following table shows the main developmental stages in the history of the general education program at the university:

## **PERIOD**

### **I. THE FORMATIVE YEARS: (1857-1942)**

## **MAJOR EVENTS**

- General education taught as a supplement to Agriculture and related courses.
- In 1936 a commission appointed to study the relevance of these informal general education studies.

### **II. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GENERAL COLLEGE (1942- 1947)**

- 1942: President John Hannah introduces formal general education studies as supplementary university entrance qualifications.
- 1944: The General College changes its name to the Basic College to reflect its new status as a set of core courses
- 1947: The Basic College comes under attack from parents and students for not fulfilling their expectations.

### **III. THE TURBULENT YEARS (1947-1987)**

- 1947-1955. The contrasting administrations of Dean Howard Rather and Dean Clifford Erickson
- 1953: The introduction of terminal comprehensive examinations
- 1953 Revision modifies the set of core courses, tightened conditions for Comprehensive exams and gives more autonomy to the teacher
- 1955: General College becomes University College.
- 1973: Provost Winder establishes the Council to Review Undergraduate Education (CRUE).
- 1979: The University Committee on General Education (UCGE) replaces *ad hoc* committees that used to run general education programs for the Academic Council.
- 1979: MSU Board of Trustees approve the general education program as a permanent feature of the undergraduate curriculum.
- 1987: General education program highly praised by Boyer, the North Central Association, MSU staff and MSU students.

#### **IV: THE CRUE RECOMMENDATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT (1988-1998)**

- Establishment of schools of integrative studies
- Establishment of the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities (IAH)
- The teaching of course IAH 201, America and the World

#### **The Formative Years (1857-1942)**

It is interesting to note that studies in general education at Michigan State University are nearly as old as the university itself. When the studies began the concept of general education at the university, as at other universities in the US today, was very imprecise. General education was vaguely defined as the acquisition of any skills that were considered essential for life, and were not part of the major disciplines. In the course of half a century, MSU molded and remolded the general education program into the relatively well defined disciplined that it has become by 1998.

By 1857, only two years after the university was founded, the purpose of general education was to enable students to practice what they learnt in theory by engaging in community service work. As part of their disciplinary studies in Science and Agriculture, students were required to practice the skills they were learning by working in the local community. Community leaders then wrote comments on each student, and the comments were used for either passing or failing students in their practical courses. The following are some of the skills that were taught:

- Time Management
- Book Keeping

- Typing
- Personal Hygiene and Nutrition

What was called general education at that time, therefore, was more of education for living than a specific academic discipline in its own right. Its connection to the general education program of latter years was that students were required to write reports and to make verbal presentations about their community service. Hence writing was taught as a means to an end. Although not much significance was placed on these skills, the concepts of accurate writing, critical thinking and logical reasoning were kept alive until they were used as the basis for the general education program eight decades later. (Kuhn. 1955).

### **The General College (1942-1944)**

For nearly a century, therefore, the teaching and learning of general education at the university was, at best, informal. Different disciplines approached it differently. The formal study of general education only started with the establishment of the General College in 1942, following the recommendations of two commissions appointed by the university's administration to assess how high schools rated the subject. The 1936 commission to review the status of general education in high schools and a follow-up review of 1938, both headed by John Hannah, strongly recommended the following:

- The establishment of a two-year terminal general education program for underprivileged students who were not able to qualify for university in the normal way.
- The emphasis of writing as an academic discipline.

In other words, the commissions recommended that general education must not just be included in the teaching of subjects like Engineering, but must be taught as specific skills that the student could use to get employment or to live a fuller life. This was considered essential because of the following conditions which prevailed at that time:

1. Only one third (30%) of the students who entered Michigan State University managed to get degrees. The remainder had to return into the harsh world empty-handed.
2. In the absence of a uniform way to prepare students for university studies, high schools were left to improvise. This resulted in some high schools doing worse than others and, therefore, putting their own students at a disadvantage. (Dressel p. 116). There was need for one set of criteria for admitting students into the university, and general education could provide such criteria.
3. With so many students failing to get degrees after being admitted into the university on unspecified criteria, it was incumbent upon the university to give the failing students another chance.
4. The university, on the other hand, was primarily concerned with academic integrity, which did not allow it to sacrifice academic standards.

The very fact that the general education program was for less qualified students was a disincentive to both teachers and students because it seemed to deny some students the opportunity to do further studies. Faculty who taught in the program also had to bear the low opinion they were given by fellow faculty. In anticipation of this problem, the 1938 review made two provisional recommendations. The first was that high school students should write a university entrance examination at their respective schools. The second was that students who narrowly failed to qualify for university entrance in Spring should be provisionally accepted for university pending their writing more examinations and getting better grades in Summer. For some reason, both recommendations were not

implemented, and the university administration came up with its own solution, the establishment of a two-year terminal program in life skills mentioned above.

The General College was established in 1942 in response to appeals from parents and students for Michigan State University to provide basic education to students “with apparent deficient backgrounds, who could be admitted into the university ‘either by passing an examination or by taking remedial or make up courses’” (Dressel, p. 115). These students, who did not satisfy the requirements of normal university entry, would be equipped with life skills rather than academic disciplines.

The task of formally establishing the General College fell on the shoulders of President John Hannah. The resultant General College’s curriculum of 1942 was, therefore, a major departure from the education for living courses that used to be offered by academic disciplines (Blair, 1990). Whereas the old system merely extended the operation of the disciplines, the new general education courses were specific skills like reading and writing, which could be applied across the university curriculum, in addition to being useful life skills.

The General College was established on an experimental basis for the purpose of “serving high school graduates who were presumed to be incapable of completing a regular course of study.” (Kuhn, p. 421). It enrolled the students for a two-year terminal program in subjects like Typing that were designed to enable the learner to be successful in life, as opposed to advancing with academic learning. Entry into the College was determined only by high school principals because they were considered to be the people who knew the educational levels of their high school graduate best.

### **The General College Becomes the Basic College (1944)**

The two-year general education curriculum was very broad. It did not have any core courses, but allowed students to make all kinds of subject combinations depending on their own interests and goals. Hence students learnt different things through it. Some took course combinations that were in line with the sciences, others leaned towards the arts and humanities, while only a daring few made broad subject combinations. The only requirement was that each student must choose any four of the following courses:

COURSE TITLE	COURSE CODE	CREDITS
Introduction to the Arts	Art 101, 102 and 103	6
Survey of the Physical Sciences	Geology 101, 102 and 103	9
Introduction to the Social Sciences	History 101, 102 and 103	9
Survey of Home Economics	Home Econ 140a, 140b & 140c	12
Writing, Speech and English Laboratory	Speech 151, Eng. 152 and 153	9
Survey of Human Biology	Zoology 101, 102 and 103	9

A year of Mathematics or a foreign language could substitute any of the surveys. Students must pass a total of 92 credits with a “C” average.

The program was also designed to take a relatively small number of students (385 men and 95 women in the 1944 academic year) but the demand for general education was much broader. Educators, employers and parents all argued that all students entering the university needed the basic life skills that were being provided through the Basic College.

To this end the university resolved to expand the provision of general education across the curriculum by offering clinics in Reading, and Writing and Speaking. Unfortunately the clinics involved such highly specialized and individualized tuition that a very small number of students could benefit from them. For example, in 1947 the clinics could only accommodate fifteen students for general education study. Though good in itself, the idea of general education clinics was viewed as a recipe for failure, and had to be discontinued. The only faculty to express interest in it were the very few who taught it, which gave the impression that they supported it for personal rather than professional reasons.

The large intake in the 1943/44 academic year had made it clear to the MSU administration that the general education program must be broadened into a basic requirement for every freshman entering the university. Hence in 1944 general education was made mandatory across the university curriculum, and because of that the General College changed to the Basic College. Consequently the numbers of students doing general education suddenly rose from a handful to all the freshmen at the university, but the number of teachers did not also rise so dramatically.

This was a major change which had serious implications for the classroom teacher. Whereas in the past teachers had taught classes of about 30 students whom they got to know well, now they had to lecture to crowds of over 200 faces. It was no longer possible for teachers to give direct attention to students who needed it. In other words, the teaching of general education was no longer student-oriented. In class the teacher could only give general lectures and, at most, answer a few questions. Consequently, the



student failure rate increased to the extent that it concerned both parents and students.

This, in turn, put greater strain on the teachers, who were blamed for failing the students.

Teachers voiced this concern right from the establishment of the Basic College.

By 1947 what had begun as murmurs grew into rumblings that the university administration could not continue to ignore.

### **The Turbulent Years (1947-1987)**

The period between 1947 and 1987 was, therefore, a time of troubled metamorphosis for general education at Michigan State University. Response to the general education program was varied. Outside the university the program was praised for its uniqueness and creativeness (Kuhn p.421) but within the university it began to face problems which threatened to kill it. As long as the criticism remained general, the program could creep on indefinitely. But it was not long before the program's critics picked a common target for their criticism and began a concerted pressure for change.

That target was the Comprehensive Examinations which were introduced in 1953. These end-of-year examinations were introduced to standardize general education studies, following complaints from some parents that the studies lacked focus. Both students and faculty voiced strong opposition to the examinations, which they saw as an unnecessary hindrance to their success as teachers and learners. They also argued that the examination caused unnecessary stress among students (Dressel p.126).

Despite this early criticism of the general education program, however, there was widespread support for it. By the MSU anniversary in 1955 the program was well established and was receiving praise from various sectors. One of its supporters at the

university was the dean of the Basic College, Howard Rather, who used his own prestige to gain more recognition for the program. Dressel (1987) has this to say about Dean

Rather's support:

So long as Howard Rather remained dean of the Basic College, his commitment to the existing pattern and his prestige served to negate, if not refute entirely, all of the questions and dissension that had grown up around the Basic College. As dean, he continually enunciated that the role of the Basic College was to serve the rest of the institution, and he leaned heavily on an advisory committee drawn from the various schools. (p. 130).

With this kind of support, the faculty involved in teaching general education had no problem teaching its courses; but this only remained so as long as policy on general education remained the same. Unfortunately the policy was prone to change with the coming of each new dean. The problem was that committed supporters of the program like Hannah and Rather could not be there for ever. When Rather retired due to ill health, he was replaced as dean by Dr. Clifford Erickson, an educationist "who had been far removed from the Basic College" and did not seem to fully appreciate its importance (Dressel, p. 130). Erickson proceeded to make decisions that were considered to be too abrupt and ill considered by the general education faculty.

This unpredictability on the part of central administration introduced what one of my interviewees called curriculum wars. The wars were the struggle between faculty and administration on who should control the teaching and learning of general education.

### **Curriculum Wars (Starting 1953)**

In these early years the general education program was taught only by qualified faculty. The faculty were initially recruited by the university to teach specific disciplines

and were only later assigned to general education. These faculty members resented having to examine general education differently from the way they did other disciplines. To them this was proof that the general education program was a sick child in need of major corrective surgery. Faculty also resented the fact that the comprehensive examinations were managed by an Examination Board over which they had virtually no influence. In effect, the very existence of the Board of Examiners undermined the classroom teacher's authority.

The fact that the Comprehensive Examination became the sole means of assessing students in general education created a lot of pressure among faculty. As the university grew, so did the numbers of students in general education classes. Whereas in 1944 the average class was thirty students, by 1970 classes could be as big as three hundred students, and a faculty member had to teach and examine such a population of students without any assistance. The sheer amount of work made it impossible for faculty to give attention to student problems. If, for instance, student number 283 was in hospital the day before the final examination, that student just failed.

There were also other issues regarding general education that were of general concern. One of them was the transferability of students' courses from junior colleges to MSU. While parents and students wanted the university to accept the transfer courses as they were, university faculty were not sure how to rate such courses. To settle the problem, some faculty suggested that the controversial Comprehensive Examination should be given to all students from junior colleges seeking to enter the university, rather than to those already at university. The suggestion was strongly resisted by parents and college principals who saw it as a way of blocking students from entering the university.

They argued that the exams could only be considered as fair if all high school students were prepared for them equally. What this implied was that the Basic College as a whole had to adjust its own curriculum to the various humanities and fine arts curricula in the client junior colleges. University faculty resisted such a move.

One advantage that the junior college curricula had over the MSU one was that the colleges were more established while the general education program at MSU was still undergoing major transformation. It was, therefore, the university which would have to adjust to college level rather than the other way round. For university faculty the implication was that they themselves would not only have to adjust to teaching huge classes of students from a variety of academic backgrounds, but they also had to accept a reduction process where higher academic standards had to match lower ones. did not have much of a choice and they resented being taken to ransom in this way. Dressel has the following to say about this:

The question of students getting double credit for the same course is another thing that worried faculty: "Should a student transferring to Michigan State University be permitted to use a History sequence for a basic course requirement and also have that History counted as part of a major" (Dressel p.127)

Faculty were divided on the issue. While some did not see anything wrong with a student taking advantage of his or her pre-existing strengths, others thought it encouraged specialization too early in a student's career, arguing that such early specialization was a limitation on the student's ability to gain wide basic knowledge.

The university administration decided that this state of uncertainty regarding the teaching and learning of general education had gone on for too long. Besides, the uncertainty had become an issue of national interest, and educators were calling on MSU

to be more definitive about the general education program so that it could serve as a role model for smaller colleges and universities. To this end a commission was set up to suggest long-term changes in the general education program at the university, which were reflected in the 1953 revision of the general education curriculum.

### **The 1953 Revision**

Following the recommendations of the committee set up in 1952, therefore, the general education curriculum underwent major revision in 1953. The first major curriculum revision took place between 1953 and 1955. The changes tightened the conditions under which a student could take the Comprehensive Examination. This meant that fewer students would qualify to take it, and those who qualified stood a better chance of passing it. Performance criteria were raised and individual instructors were given the power to fail a student who might get a passing final examination after getting failing grades throughout the term. The test case became that of a Biological Science student who ignored taking general education courses during the term but went on to write the Comprehensive Examination and got an “A”. The general education course instructor gave him an “F”, and the faculty member’s result stood. (Dressel p.125).

The success of the test case was also the first major victory of faculty against what was regarded as bureaucratic imposition. They felt that the status of the Board of Examiners was “demeaning and insulting” to them because it did not allow them to use their own discretion in teaching general education. Faculty now felt empowered to implement more changes to bring general education into line with what they considered

to be high academic standards. By the centenary of the university in 1955, the following changes had been made to the program:

1. Comprehensive examinations were discarded. In their place came a common term examination which was weighted at 50% of the student's final grade. The other 50% came from the instructor's assessment.
2. The seven basic and elective general education courses were combined into four core courses. In other words, the element of option was eliminated, and students had to take the same general education courses, namely: Social Science, Natural Science, Humanities and Communication Skills (which replaced the controversial Written and Spoken English). This was done to minimize students' hassles with making correct choices.
3. The course Written and Communication English changed to Communication Skills so that it could also include a wider range of communication skills.

The new general education program was available for all freshmen and sophomores. This enabled them to know what was expected of them in advance.

### **The General College Becomes the University College (1955)**

Another major change that took place in 1955 was that the General College became the University College. What this meant was that the general education program was no longer experimental, but had become an integral part of the university curriculum. Before the establishment of the University College, general education teachers were looked down upon by other faculty as teachers without an established discipline. Henceforth the faculty responsible for teaching the program would have distinct status and could expect to advance their status within their discipline.

Changing the course title from Written and Spoken English to Communication Skills did not solve the problems that were inherent to that subject. It only transferred

them from one department to another. Dressel sums up the situation in the new department in the words:

The Department of Communication Skills had been assigned a task it could not fulfill. The load carried by faculty members in reading students themes was arduous and little appreciated. The task of listening and reacting to student speeches generated no sense of exhilaration. The improvement services in writing, speaking, reading and arithmetic, all at one time attached to that department and providing a necessary service, could lead the casual observer to see the entire department as operating at sub-college level (Dressel p. 134).

The implications of this state of affairs to the classroom teacher was, not only that the teacher had to have multiple communication skills, but also that the teacher just couldn't cope with the curricular demands placed before him or her. Add to this the growing numbers of students, the need to hire inexperienced faculty and the relatively low status of general education as an academic discipline, and you have a situation where experienced faculty began to leave general education for new professional pastures. By 1959 the brain drain had become so great that a new strategy had to be adopted to save the course from dying a natural death.

That change was brought about by Edward Blackman, chairman of the Department of Communication Skills in 1958. Following his recommendation, the department changed its name to American Thought and Language. Not only did this make the course more substantive, but it also appealed to American national pride, and was highly regarded by parents as it was based on American history and culture.

Like all major curriculums changes before and after it, however, the change in both the name and the curriculum of this subject placed some faculty in considerable difficulty. Since they had been hired on the basis of their ability to teach communication skills like Speech Therapy and Letter Writing, these teachers had difficulty learning specific subjects like the American War of Independence or the Civil Rights Movement. They saw the change as a demotion in their status and resented it on those grounds also. In consequence twenty-five of them left the department (Dressel p. 135).

But the new course was not without its own strong supporters among faculty. Some faculty had always branded communication skills as “communication about drive!” (Dressel p. 135). This was a reference to speech making which still formed part of student assessment. The possibility of students’ driveling was considerable in a program that included impromptu public speaking. Some faculty saw this course as favoring more mature students at the expense of younger ones. These faculty members, therefore, hailed the curriculum change and expressed the hope that learning about concrete things would help to make students more realistic in the way they viewed issues.

Throughout the 60s into the early 70s the debate on how to teach this controversial subject continued. Some of the suggestions that were made are:

1. Modifying American Thought and Language to increase emphasis on writing skills. Some educators felt that writing skills could be sacrificed for content subjects which were easier to teach.
2. The re-establishment of advisory committees which would be consulted on curricular issues on the basis of similar committees which used to exist in the General College. The committees would also be responsible for the supply of teaching materials.
3. Teaching American Thought and Language largely as Communication Skills had been taught, but using examples from American history and culture.



Up to the early 1970s the University College managed general education by coordinating the teaching of reading, writing and critical thinking in four participating departments, namely, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Science and American Thought and Language. In February 1973 a University Standing Committee on General Education was established to monitor the progress of general education.

### **The Establishment of the University Committee on General Education (1979)**

Since February 1973 the general education program was administered by an *ad hoc* committee whose main responsibility was administrative. University faculty argued that this partly explained why the committee was apparently unconcerned about the academic value of general education at the university. To faculty, administrators seemed to be primarily concerned trying new administrative strategies to keep general education alive, regardless of the inconvenience it caused. In response to this criticism the MSU Board of Trustees established the University Committee on General Education (UCGE). This Committee made the following changes to the general education program:

- Assigned responsibility for general education courses to general education departments, namely, Arts and Letters, Natural Science, Social Studies (with the department of American Thought and Language also involved.)
- Established review meetings which would meet at appropriate times to assess the progress of the program.
- Giving more power to the classroom teacher to determine what to teach on a daily basis.

The last point is significant for this study because, before then, curricular decisions were made by the administration for the teacher to implement. The teacher just implemented the decisions of the university administration, a situation which caused considerable dissatisfaction. With the new change, faculty were now able to introduce new courses which they could examine in their own ways. Two new courses introduced in this manner were Comprehensive English and Humanities in the Contemporary World. This introduced the multiple track approach to the teaching of general education, which also meant the elimination of the unpopular comprehensive examinations.

Other changes that resulted from UCGE's reforms are:

1. A set of core courses was established,. Each of the departments assigned to teach general education contributed the same number of courses into the general education program.
2. Each of the participating departments hired its own faculty to teach its own content of general education. The faculty could come from any department at the university. Collaboration between the teaching faculty in the different departments was minimal because each department approached the subject from its own disciplinary angle.

In December 1985, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools published the results of a survey it had conducted to determine the popularity of the general education program at MSU in high schools. The highlights of the survey were that the organization of general education at MSU was popular and unique, and that four disciplinary departments were "committed entirely to the teaching of general education courses" (North Central Committee Report, December 1979, p. 331). In 1987, Dr. Ernest Boyer echoed what the North Central Committee had said about the general education program at MSU.

Following Dr. Boyer's comment, CRUE conducted two of its own surveys to determine the program's popularity at the university. The first one in 1987 was completed by 2122 members of the MSU academic personnel and other interested people. The survey concluded that the program was very popular, and that the departments of Social Science, Natural Science and Humanities were regarded "as areas of strength" (CRUE Report, 1987, Table 1). The second survey, in March 1988, was completed by 4201 undergraduate students. The survey's main results were as follows:

ITEM	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE
Humanities Department doing a very good or good job in educating its students.	68%
Humanities Department should be maintained.	83%
Interdisciplinary departments must be maintained	73%

Dr. James Anderson, the Chairman of the Humanities Department, notes in a letter to CRUE of May 12, 1988, "The student survey results corroborate the results of the faculty survey regarding the humanities education of undergraduates." Anderson goes on to suggest that the above percentages could have been higher were it not for the fact that many of the respondents had not taken a Humanities Department course, and had responded saying they did not have enough information to judge.

These facts are important because, as we shall see below, CRUE seems to have proceeded to ignore the survey results and gone on to make what were subsequently viewed as arbitrary decisions by some faculty. The measures taken by CRUE are described in this chapter, and the response to them is in the last chapter.

### **Crue's Recommendations (1988)**

With the death of the University College, the Council to Review Undergraduate Education (CRUE), which was established by Provost Winder and Academic Council in 1973, set out to review the general education program and made recommendations which were to be immediately implemented. (Kuhn, 1955; Dressel, 1957.). The recommendations' main objectives were:

- To establish a University Center of Integrative Studies. The purpose of the Center would be to coordinate the teaching of general education done by the various college schools mentioned below.
- To establish college schools of integrative studies formed and named according to the knowledge and skill areas of Language; Social, Economic and Behavioral Sciences; Arts and Humanities; and Physical and Biological Sciences.

These changes were based on the collaborative organizational model of teaching, where a kind of democratic unity is put into practice. This is a kind of unity which still allows individual to play separate roles. It involved the coordination of several related department to tackle one common problem, and was to be collaboratively managed by three schools and a department (Social Science, Humanities, Natural Science and American Thought and Language). The difference between the new arrangement and the old is that in the new proposal Humanities was to serve as the coordinating department. In the old arrangement the three schools were autonomous.

## **Provisions of the CRUE Recommendations**

Some of the main provisions of the CRUE recommendations were the following.

- Faculty may or may not belong to an academic unit of the college that houses the school. Members of current general education departments may become members of these schools or request assignment in other units.
- New faculty may be hired with a full or part time affiliation with a school, provided such new faculty have academic unit affiliation other than school.
- An extended period of transition will be necessary to develop the proposed program. Perhaps wise to present newly developed courses initially as options. (CRUE REPORT, 1988).

These recommendations were backed up by an administrative structure which indicated how each of the three centers was to be run. Briefly, each school would have the following main functions:

1. Monitoring and overseeing all core courses and periodically reviewing them.
2. Be in charge of development, administration and staffing for the center.
3. Ensuring curricular coordination between courses offered by the different college-level schools.

Each college-level school would use its own initiative to recruit its own teachers, create appropriate courses and see to it that they were taught effectively. To this end each school would be assigned a skill to teach, and would be named according to the knowledge and skill they imparted. For example, the College of Language would concentrate on language skills and the College of Arts and Humanities would enhance student understanding of these particular disciplines. Faculty with interest and expertise in the disciplines would be recruited from any department.

CRUE gave the above proposals to the deans of the above-mentioned schools and the chairman of the Department of American Thought and Language, requesting them to make counter-proposals. These four were very critical of the proposals, mostly arguing that the proposals were dissipating rather than synthesizing general education. Their counter proposal was the establishment of three schools of integrative studies discussed in the next section of this book.

### **Proposed Schools of Integrative Studies**

The next step for CRUE was to ask the three schools in charge of general education, Humanities, Natural Science and Social Science, and the department of American Thought and Language to respond to the proposal with suggestions on how each would implement the proposals. The schools responded in a predictable manner, each one suggesting itself as the ideal center for the program. CRUE rejected all the departmental proposals, sighting the following weaknesses.

Staffing problems. In their responses to the CRUE proposal for a university-wide center responsible for general education, the departmental units were each asking to do their own recruiting of staff. CRUE indicated that this was likely to cause the following staffing problems:

- Each unit was likely to recruit staff from its own discipline at the expense of other disciplines. CRUE equated this with jury duty, arguing that this was not conducive to the creation of a university-wide center but an extension of the services already being provided by each respective unit.

- There were no apparent incentives to attract good teachers into the center. It was, therefore, likely that large salaries would become the only incentive. This would make the center too expensive to run, and would also deny teachers professional fulfillment.
- The result was likely to be poor educational standards. Without incentives and job satisfaction, it was going to be able to retain good teachers in the center. This was going to be worsened by the fact that the departmental units were all proposing one year as the length of staff assignment to the proposed center. These factors would not enable a teacher to initiate a course and grow with it.
- It was likely that any job description for staff recruitment would favor one unit. It must also be noted that the units themselves were not equally amenable to integration. For example, the Humanities might be more amenable to integrative learning than the more technical Natural Science.
- In the event that no staff could be attracted to teach a certain course, the university would be forced to assign teachers to teach the course. This would run counter to faculty autonomy and might make teachers leave the proposed center.

CRUE noted that units were proposing that classes of up to 300 students be taught by single staff members with the help of teaching assistants. This was likely to reduce the teachers to mere lecturers rather than facilitators. Essential disciplines like student writing would be left to graduate assistance whose own mastery of the disciplines was still developing.

Curricular problems. CRUE argued that keeping the general education program broken up into departmental units was unsatisfactory because of the following reasons:

- It would lead to inevitable duplication of services. For example, an essential film would have to circulate between the units, being shown and explained by different teachers at different times and under different circumstances. This would result in the wastage of scarce resources.
- The units did not define clearly what the core curriculum was going to be and how it was going to be taught. In the absence of a centralized core curriculum

and shared guidelines, units would inevitably come up with ad hoc core curricula which would not serve the general interest.

- Subjects like critical thinking were likely to be neglected in a situation where things were not clearly defined, and where the daily routines of teaching large classes would absorb teachers' attention.

Critics of the general education program argued that unless things changed, the general education curriculum at Michigan State University would become so unspecified that anything would go. Consequently undergraduate education at the university as a whole would deteriorate to unacceptable standards. Asking the units to go back to the drawing board and come up with more acceptable proposals, CRUE redefined its criteria for a university center for general education.

The idea of attempting to maintain unity in fragmentation by distributing general education responsibilities among various departments could only last for a limited time. It was soon found that the departments teaching general education were not coordinating their activities as much as anticipated. Instead, disciplines resorted to minding their own business, and this had the effect of further fragmenting the general education program. The courses were no longer taught in an integrative manner, but tended to fall into line with their respective disciplines. If such a situation were allowed to continue indefinitely, there was the possibility that general education courses would completely fail to speak to each other.

UCGE gives guidelines. Rejecting the proposals from the departments, the University Committee on General Education (UCGE) redefined CRUE's recommendation and asked the departments to go back and work out new proposals



which would make the program truly integrative and interdisciplinary. The main guidelines that UCGE gave to the departments to help them polish up their suggestions were:

1. There was need for a university level structure to cater for general education.
2. The general education policy of the university must be defined and used as a basis for drawing up the proposed center's program.
3. The approach to teaching must be truly integrative, allowing the student to broaden his or her mind.
4. A task force should be appointed to work out the program for implementing the CRUE recommendation.
5. "To enhance the coherence and integration of the core through widespread use of interdisciplinary and multi disciplinary work that encompasses a number of emphases areas to be studied throughout the undergraduate experience" (UCGE report, page 2).

These recommendations were ratified by the University Committee on Curriculum (UCC). The result was the establishment of three centers of integrative studies, namely, the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities (IAH), the Center for Integrative Studies in Social Science, and the Center for Integrative studies if Behavioral and physical Science. Each of these centers was tasked with the responsibility to recruit teachers from related disciplines, offer genuinely integrative courses and coordinate the teaching of general education. The basic notion now was to offer general education not only in the first two years degree study, but also to offer it vertically up to the graduation year.

The implications of the new arrangement to the college classroom teacher can only be analyzed by examining the history and operations of one of the centers. For this

study I have chosen the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities. My choice of the Center was influenced by the following factors:

1. I am a teacher in the field, and therefore familiar with the curriculums and methods of teaching used.
2. I was fascinated in the media-based teaching used in teaching one of the courses, America and the World (IAH 201).

In the next chapter I will give a detailed background of the origin of the Center for Integrative Studies (IAH) as an academic discipline.

### **The Establishment of the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities**

The Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities (IAH) at Michigan State University is one of the three centers established to teach general education on the lines of the CRUE recommendations of 1988.

IAH itself is best understood in the light of the department it replaced as a coordinator of general education studies. The department of Interdisciplinary Humanities, generally known as the Humanities department (comprising such courses as History, English Literature, Philosophy, Religion and Visual Arts) was the coordinator of general education before the dissolution of the University College in 1979. The department of Humanities contributed the course Western Civilization to the general education program. The course was a comprehensive one, covering world history and civilization from the early Greeks to the 20th century. In the 1950s and 1960s the course was very popular with the students, especially after it had undergone some revisions to expand its curriculum by including other world civilizations, namely, the Chinese, Indian, Islamic and African civilizations.

## **Teaching and Learning in IAH**

In IAH the individual teacher's ability to adjust to new demands has meant the success or failure of both the program and the teacher's own career. According to the survey I carried out among past and current teachers of the program, the developments have been a source of both joy and grief for the teachers concerned, depending on their own orientations and preparedness to learn new teaching methods. Generally, the older teachers tend to be more apprehensive of innovation in teaching while the younger ones welcome change more readily.

In the decade that it has been in existence, the IAH Center has undergone considerable transformation, which in turn, has placed new pedagogical demands on the shoulders of the classroom teacher. The transformation mainly concerned teachers experimenting with new teaching methods, in particular the compulsory use of electronic media. Such innovation received both support and criticism from both academics and the general public. While academics were concerned about maintaining high educational standards, the general public was concerned about the implications of the change from the old system which they had become accustomed to. In an article entitled "Humanities Department's Future Uncertain" which appeared in the State News during Welcome Week in 1988, Joanne Bailey lamented what she called the "possible dissolution of the Humanities department." The article gave the impression that a good system of teaching general education was being sacrificed for no sound reason. The writer's use of terms like "close down humanities" and "the elimination of the humanities department" seem to be a reflection of a general feeling of apprehension about the future of the department

concerned. What the apprehension implied was that the new system would have to be better than the one it was replacing.

For the classroom teacher, the transitional period from the old system to the new was as much a time for learning as it was for teaching. Not only did the teacher have to adjust to a discipline in apparent perpetual transformation, but he or she also had to adjust to a stronger encroachment of electronic media in college education. Indeed, the main continuing debate on the Center, and a sub-topic of this study, is the effect of the college classroom teacher's using media. It is a topic that has characterized IAH for the whole of the past decade.

### **IAH's Administrative Structure**

IAH itself does not teach general education, but coordinates the teaching of its courses by Fine Arts and Humanities teachers. This status enables the Center to ensure that general education is taught in a manner which ensures the courses do not get absorbed into the various disciplinary curriculums. For example, the center must ensure that Literature remains one of the bases for teaching general education, rather than that Literature itself becomes one of the general education courses. In other words, the general education program should remain focused on the teaching of writing, critical thinking and logical reasoning and not go into other details like religious doctrines, literary genre, and film history.

## **IAH Center Staffing**

IAH has a skeletal administrative staff responsible for coordinating the teaching of general education courses. This staff is made up of the following positions:

- The Center Director
- A Secretary
- A Supervisor
- A Technical Consultant

The Center staff is responsible for administrative aspects, and has no direct control over how the general education program itself is taught. For instance, the Director of the Center does not in any way supervise the actual classroom teaching beyond making sure that each course is assigned the right faculty. The Director also does not control how the courses are examined and graded. For the most part, the classroom teacher has complete authority over the course or courses he or she teaches, and it is the teacher who supervises the work of any Teaching Assistants that he or she may be responsible for.

The Center does not have any teachers to teach its courses. The teachers, be they faculty or Teaching Assistants (T.A.s), come from departments like English and History, where they are either authorities in their respective disciplines or graduate students with adequate exposure in their fields. The Center Director's main responsibility is to produce a schedule of courses and invite faculty from different disciplines to teach them. Since the teachers are the experts in their respective fields, the Center Director relies on them to produce any new courses to be introduced into the general education program.

If a proposed course is sufficiently interdisciplinary and promises to provide vital learning for the students, the Center is likely to approve it and students can take it as an option. For a new course to be approved, it must also not be on offer in its discipline. For example, a course on the Slave Trade is unlikely to be approved because it is only related to one discipline, history, and is likely to be offered by the Department of History. On the other hand, a course on Anti-slavery Themes in African Literature is more likely to be approved because it is related to at least two disciplines, history and literature. Hence the IAH program promotes creative teaching while at the same time giving the teacher the autonomy he or she needs.

Another feature of the Center is that it is not responsible for the remuneration of the teachers at all. This means that the center will not have to deal with such issues as salary increases and/or staff promotions. Teachers who teach for the Center are full time members of different departments who provide an essential academic service to the university community, while the Center provides them with teaching hours. The two sides depend on each other for survival. The autonomy that the Center allows its teachers is a major departure from the old system. For over five decades general education teachers have fought for the authority to determine what to teach and how to teach it.

And yet this apparently ideal state of affairs is not without its own problems. One of the problems is the controversy that has characterized the use of teaching assistants in the program. Another problem that the Center has had to contend with from the outset is the adequacy of the teaching methods used. A third problem is about the extent to which electronic media may be effectively used for teaching general education. All the three questions are considerably involved, and will be answered in the sections below.

## **Teaching Assistants (T.A.s)**

The Center provides learning for over 6000 students per semester, or a total of about 12000 students every academic year. The large numbers of students inevitably influence the way teachers teach their respective courses. The numbers are so big that if faculty were to teach them on their own, they would have to teach classes of up to 300 students, a situation which makes direct interaction between the teacher and individual students impossible. Under such circumstances also, the only viable teaching method would be the traditional lecture method, possibly with the assistance of microphones and overhead projectors. Grading the assignments of such student populations would be another nightmare for the teacher.

These problems were anticipated at the planning stage, and a system was put in place to enable faculty to employ teaching Assistants (T.A.s) to help them with some of the work. The T.A.s are graduate students in the College of Arts and Letters who are hired by individual faculty depending upon the numbers of credit hours they offer to teach for the Center. One Graduate Assistantship is assigned for each 100 students taught by a faculty member, and the services of the Graduate Assistant are not limited to general education work.

The decision to make use of teaching assistants was influenced by two factors:

- The need to relieve the relatively small number of faculty of their pressure of work.
- Saving money.

Faculty remains divide on the degree to which the above objectives were fulfilled. Some faculty believe that the measures did take the bulk of the teaching load off the faculty

involved, and also saved the university some money. Other faculty, however, argue that the teachers of the general education program continued to teach unmanageably large classes, while factors like the continuous training of T.A.s and the prescribed use of certain teaching tools all contributed to keeping the course unattractive to teach and expensive to administer.

As will be explained in more detail below, many faculty assigned most of their teaching and grading of work to the TA whose training in media was minimal. The TAs only refer to the faculty the questions they cannot answer themselves. As should be expected, there are some talented teaching assistants who end up so good at the subjects they assist with that the faculty is rarely needed. On the negative side, however, there may be some teaching assistants who are so weak that the students they teach may lose a lot. Another disadvantage of using TAs is that they come from all kinds of backgrounds, and they have a high turnover rate since some of them graduate each semester. One of the faculty I interviewed equated the use of TAs in teaching to teaching on the subway.

The Center puts all the teaching assistants through an orientation course at the beginning of the academic year. The orientation course enables the T.A.s to be conversant with the courses they will be assisting in, and also with any teaching tools that faculty may choose to use (see next chapter). Because of the factors mentioned above, however, training T.A.s is an endless process. By the time the average trained T.A. is beginning to gain confidence in his or her work, he or she is about to graduate and be replaced by another who may not be as effective.



## **What TAs Think about Their Work**

When I first talked to teaching assistants involved in the teaching of general education, I was under the impression that they would defend the program strongly. On the contrary, the teaching assistants I spoke to were critical of the program they worked for. The following are what they consider to be the main weaknesses in the T.A. program:

1. The orientation they are given at the beginning of the academic year does not prepare them adequately for the job of teaching undergraduates.
2. Some faculty literally abandon their T.A., who must then battle to keep afloat at great sacrifice to themselves in terms of time.
3. What is required from Teaching Assistants varies from one department to another, and also from one teacher to another, which makes it difficult for new T.A.s to know what is expected of them. In many cases they have to learn about these expectations the hard way.
4. When students have complaints they find it easier to complain to the T.A. rather than to the teacher because teachers, unlike T.A.s, have control over their grades.
5. Remuneration for teaching assistants sometimes does not accurately reflect the amount of work done.
6. The teaching of IAH 201 was heavily criticized by one T.A. who felt that it was too impersonal. He thought that there was need for direct interaction between teachers and students.

The teaching assistants did not only criticize their position, but gave some encouraging comments. In particular, they argued that, beside the money, the assistantships give some students basic training for teaching in future. One of them asserted, "We need them; they need us." He explained this to mean that while faculty needed the help of T.A.s, the T.A.s stand to benefit from the exposure to teaching that they are afforded.

## **The IAH Syllabus**

The IAH program is made up of two curriculum plans, Plan A and Plan B. Plan A is made up of one course, The US and the World (course code IAH 201), which has the following features:

1. It is a required course, which means that every student has to take it.
2. It is taught mainly through the use of electronic media.
3. It is taught mainly by Teaching Assistants, under the supervision of faculty.
4. It is controversial.

Plan B comprises a menu of courses that are designed and taught by faculty from the various Arts and Humanities disciplines. It is, in many ways, a continuation of how general education courses used to be taught in the Humanities department. Below are some details about these two courses.

### **Plan A (IAH 201)**

The course IAH 201 (THE US AND THE WORLD) is a requirement for every student at Michigan State University. It was originally planned to be a history based course which would enable undergraduate students to write and to think critically and logically, but in the course of time it acquired more demands which both the teacher and the student have to satisfy. The course has been criticized by both teachers and students for this rigidity.

The content of the subject itself was only to serve as a basis for teaching the basic skills. When it was introduced, a recommendation was made that teachers should use simple electronic media like video in teaching it. In 1991, however, the use of electronic

media as a teaching tool took precedence over other teaching methods to become the only teaching method to be used in this course. Video and television were the only electronic media easily available to the college classroom teacher at that time. Other electronic media, namely, e-mail, interactive video, CD-ROM and the World-Wide Web were gradually introduced in the course of time. It is, indeed, through this course that the university as a whole has pioneered the use of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom.

In the prospectus, the course is described as offering undergraduate students “a common opportunity to think critically about the unities and diversities of the American experience from pre-Columbian times to the present, on the basis of historical, literary, artistic and other cultural materials” (IAH syllabus, page 1). In other words the course is almost exclusively on American history and how Americans responded to “internal and external challenges and opportunities” (p.1). What this indicates is that the course is inflexible. It does not allow creative teaching for the teacher, and in this case, the Graduate Assistant who conducts most of the classes.

In teaching this course, teachers must use prescribed materials, which are: primary source readings and video texts especially produced for the course. To supplement this, the teacher must conduct class discussions with the class, undertake museum visits with the class and give the students many writing exercises. Through these methods it is hoped that the student’s understanding of the American people will be broadened and deepened.

Teachers teach their classes either as combined sessions or as larger groups which combine smaller groups together.

Combined sessions: Where students meet in groups of thirty to watch (mostly) videos, discuss their contents and do assigned writing. These sessions are conducted by Graduate Assistants, whose main responsibility is to see to it that the media are properly screened. The Graduate Assistants are also expected to answer as many of the students' questions as they can, taking note of the questions they cannot answer. These questions are then answered by the faculty member in charge of the course on the few occasions that she or he meets the group. I will explain the merits and demerits of this method of teaching later in this analysis.

Section meetings: Where a whole section (up to four combined groups) meets with a Graduate Assistant to discuss the highlights of the week's readings and showings. The meetings normally take the following formats:

- open class discussions in which the Graduate Assistant serves as a moderator, making sure that every student's opinion is respected.
- small groups formed by the Graduate Assistant for that occasion only.
- the Teaching Assistant asking a few students to read what they wrote during the week and using the readings as a basis for discussion.

All the work for this course is put into thirty five topics, each one of which has a set of readings and screenings. The readings are primary texts written by individuals who lived through eventful times in the history of America, and the screenings are documentaries with the interpretive comments of faculty at various universities who are experts on the subjects covered. Students also visit museums so as to increase their knowledge of the topics covered in the readings and videos. They use the information

they get from the museums for writing assignments and for learning how to argue logically. The course outline explains in some detail exactly how this subject is to be taught. The main points that it raises in this regard are:

1. It spells out the objectives of the reading passages regarding the author's social and cultural background.
2. The way in which each passage must be read, including that students must take notes to support their minds.
3. The readers' initial impression, and how to see connections between subjects.

On the surface it appears that this is an exciting course with clear objectives and well laid out teaching procedures. On the contrary, a deeper analysis of the course indicates that by its very tightness, the course is as much a nightmare to the teacher as it is a sordid bore to the average student. It is only the exceptional faculty member who can possess all the skills required to teach such an intricately designed course effectively. It is only the rarest teacher who can, for example, be an expert historian, sociologist, media interpreter, language teacher, and cinematographer. The average teacher will fall short of this. And the scenario is made worse when that teacher is a mere Teaching Assistant with only a few days of initial orientation as his or her preparation for teaching the course. The teacher also does not only have to follow instructions like a learner driver, but he or she also depends on too many other things being equal. Some of these are:

- Technology must work right, and it often doesn't.
- Museums must anticipate the requirements of the class teacher and meet them without fail. This may not be the case sometimes, and the teacher has to improvise with what is available.
- The student must be physically present all the time. The student who is absent for whatever reason falls behind.

The result of all this is that lessons are sometimes unsatisfactorily delivered, and students lose confidence in the teachers' competency. In far too many situations, the teacher tends to take the easy way out ... that is push the video into the machine and watch it together with the class. If such an operation is well timed, the students are likely to be streaming out to go to other lessons by the time the video ends. In some cases students' heads get stuffed with so much irrelevant information that they do not know what to ask at the end. It becomes much easier to just quietly slip away and come back to the subject later.

## **Plan B**

Every student must take a course from Plan B, which means making a choice from the many courses offered by various faculty. Each Plan B course is proposed by a full time faculty member to the Director of the Center, who analyzes it for possible inclusion in the curriculum for the next year. A typical Plan B course outline has the following details:

- Course identification: semester, department, course title, teachers (faculty and T.A.s), course code, meeting place, meeting times, teachers' office hours.
- Course content: course objectives, brief narrative course description, course prerequisites, assignments, grading.
- Course objectives: attendance policies, class participation, reading materials, class discipline
- Lecture schedule: showing the topics to be taught in each lesson, reading assignments, written assignments, group work, discussion sessions, dates for

tests and examinations, teaching materials (if any), and also indicating any public holidays.

- Reading materials: Indicating required and recommended reading materials.

These courses are designed by the faculty responsible for them, who submit them to the IAH Director for approval. The faculty prepare these courses in the same way as they plan their disciplinary courses. The only difference between the two is in the content. Otherwise the teacher is free to include any materials he or she considers to be essential, including any teaching materials the teacher needs. As already stated, the Center Director does not exercise any direct control on the way these courses are taught. The teacher has freedom to determine this.

The faculty who served the old system found it easier to adjust to Plan B than to Plan A. The former was in many ways a continuation from where they had left when the Humanities department coordinated the teaching of general education. Faculty who had taught general education before did not have to undergo major retraining to enable them to cope with the more interdisciplinary approach to their subjects. For instance, a History teacher did not find it difficult to teach a subject like Human Conflict and Moral Dilemmas: War, because war is a major component of history.

Plan B also allows the teacher to be fully in charge of his or her course, and the teacher includes only as much of electronic media as he or she is comfortable with. Should any electronic tools planned for a particular lesson fail to work, the teacher can easily alter or even eliminate them. The above-mentioned course, for example, includes only one film in the teaching schedule, but the course description clearly indicates that

more than one visual images might be used. It states that representations of war “can also be conveyed persuasively through poignant images and moving stories.”

### **Teaching Materials Used in IAH**

To different degrees, both the above plans make use of teaching materials.

Materials for Plan A are prescribed and fixed while those for Plan B are optional and flexible. Because of this, all the controversy regarding the use of electronic media in the college classroom has to do with Plan A. To get into this subject we have to begin with the reasons why the decision to use electronic media as a teaching tool was made. Faculty who were involved in the transition from the old to the new system of teaching general education give the following as the major reasons for the decision:

1. To save money by creating a situation where fewer faculty and more graduate students were used.
2. To take advantage of the mushrooming of technology following the adoption of computers as an additional teaching tool.
3. To give all students at the university the same academic background early in their academic careers at university level.

These are all legitimate reasons for building electronic media into the college curriculum, and controversy only arose when it appeared that the above objectives were either not being met or the proverbial cart was running away with the horse.

Although actual figures of how much saving was done in terms of money are not available, it is logical to conclude that the employment of Graduate Assistants and a minimum of faculty did save money. In addition to the fact that students are paid at a much lower rate than faculty, there is also the fact that students are not paid the benefits



paid to faculty. The only significant financial disadvantage concerning students is their high turnover, which necessitates the retraining of new ones. Since the retraining is done just before the beginning of the academic year, however, not much time elapses before the trained students are operational. As for taking advantage of new technology, IAH has, indeed, pioneered the creative use of electronic media for educational purposes. The Center popularized the use of e-mail in the early 90s, and is now trying to go a step further into the world-wide web. One positive thing about the course IAH 201 is that it gives every student the same introduction to the way Americans view the rest of the world. In a way, it forms the university's academic culture.

### **The Video Program and the Classroom Teacher**

The video program that was created for teaching the course IAH 201 (The US And The World) in 1989 had both positive and negative effects on the classroom teacher. On one hand it increased the teacher's skills, while on the other hand it placed new demands on the teacher. The program was established in order to:

- provide a common background knowledge for each student at Michigan State University.
- use available technology for teaching.

To this end a series of 40 videos was prescribed. The task of producing the videos was given to an experienced academic and media specialist, a faculty member in the Telecommunications department with both experience and expertise in video production. He was asked to work with faculty from the various departments in charge of teaching general education to put the entire IAH 201 course on video. He was given one year to

accomplish the task, with virtually no resources at his disposal. The faculty member and his staff had to carry out the unenviable task at breakneck speed, under constant pressure from the teachers waiting to use the videos. That the task was accomplished at all is in itself a tribute to the faculty member's unquestionable expertise and commitment to duty.

The production of each video followed a standard format. A faculty member approached the Director responsible for the production of the videos with his or her proposal for the video. The Director then took over and used his cinematographic expertise to do a production that was as professional as the circumstances allowed. He assigned the work of editing the materials to his Associate Producer, who made sure that the subject was coherent and that the product would be a video of between 30 and 45 minutes in length. The Associate Producer was also an academic, and she always immersed herself into the subject at hand before reducing it to a production script on which the video would be based.

To standardize the productions, the production team devised a common structure for all the videos. Each video had to have the following features:

- Computer animation and background music introducing the program
- A talking head of the professor responsible for the course (e.g. a Department Chair), with appropriate stock footage from archives of educational video. The general introduction was for the purpose of giving continuity to the program as a whole.
- Another talking head of the teacher responsible for the course, introducing the topic for the day and spelling out the objectives of the particular lesson.
- If the teacher's voice was not strong enough to make the lesson convincing, a Narrator was invited to give an artistic rendering of the video.

- The rest was editorial work where sound effects and fill-up footage were added to iron out gaps and inconsistencies.

The videos were produced with footage donated by the archives of university libraries, and could, therefore, only be used at MSU for educational purposes. The producers received the archival footage free of charge because it was for educational purposes, but they could also not use the same footage to raise money to make better videos. They worked on a shoe-string budget which did not allow them to source footage from commercial archivists.

And yet the videos came under criticism the same year they were introduced. Both faculty and students considered the videos to be worthless. The specific points on which the videos were criticized were:

1. The videos were produced with almost no money, and they could only be produced below the standards required in the capital-intensive video industry.
2. There was no apparent continuous thread connecting all the videos. Different people seemed to be thrown into the video production just to make sure that something was available by the time it was needed.
3. The same actors acted in several videos. The narrators, in particular, covered one video after another until the student viewers knew them too well.
4. Most of the videos were but televised lectures. If lecturing by a teacher was a dull method of teaching, lecturing by means of a talking head was worse.
5. The videos were too long. They left almost no time for discussion. Hence the main function of a TA became setting up and taking down video hard and software.
6. During a video showing, students were not able to do anything else but watch passively. Some students simply slept through the showing. (See commentary in the next chapter)

Animation for the videos was done by the Computer Center, also as a free service. The animation was mainly used in the introductory part, which included titles, teasers and compliments; and its purpose was to increase student interest by escalating experiential density. Of what value to the learning process this was is covered in the next chapter. Nor did the problems associated with these videos end with the final edit of a video. After the video was produced, the next problem was getting the teachers to use them effectively. Teachers' familiarity with electronic media usage varied from addiction to repulsion. To minimize this disparity, all faculty were put through an orientation course on such basics as how to operate a video machine by the WKAR production studio. The training helped the teachers to get over their psychological fear of electronic media, but many continued to view the media as an imposition and a dispensable luxury. The new problem that these teachers faced was how to share their teaching time with the media. Some even relegated their own roles to the mechanical teachers.

The situation was much better with T.A.s. They generally had greater exposure to the media, and were less intimidated by them. Those of them who had relatively little prior exposure to the electronic media quickly adjusted to the teaching new tools. A situation arose in which some Teaching Assistance became more adept at using the media than their faculty mentors. In some cases resentment was created between the two teachers, and the faculty advocated for the abolition of the teaching assistantships.

## **Teachers' Discomfort with the Video Program**

Many teachers were uncomfortable with the video program for the following reasons.

### **Time Management**

One problem teachers had with media usage was that they did not know how to share their time with the new teaching tools. The teachers did not have answers for the following questions:

- Should they let the media run through and then make their comments about what the media said?
- Should they pre-empt what the media was going to say and then switch on the media to confirm what they had said?
- How should the teachers react if they, for some reason, wanted to put things differently from what the media presented?

The crucial issue here was time management. Since the tapes were in the form of lectures by well selected experts, this put the classroom teacher in competition with them. He or she was hard put to find anything worth saying after the masters had their say, with the aid of media experts. In other words, any comment that the teacher made had to be equally good or better than the combined efforts of the subject experts, the narrator, and video producers with all the supplementary footage at their disposal. If the average teacher chose to end his or her lesson where the video ended, he or she cannot be blamed for it.

## **More Work for the Teacher**

What the classroom teacher also found out was that, rather than reduce his or her teaching load, the media actually increased it. It was no longer adequate for the teacher to rely on prior mastery of the subject he or she was teaching, but the teacher now also needed to study the contents of the media in advance so that he or she could blend his or her conclusions with those of the media. This usually meant long hours of previewing a video at home, and sometimes the frustration of failing to appreciate the media's reliance on visual effects rather than expository facts.

The media's intrinsic appeal to emotion is something that some teachers were not able to appreciate fully. They tended to equate the video with the lecturer, not realizing that a lecturer has the advantage of adjusting his or her emotions to existing circumstances. A video cannot do likewise.

## **Level of Difficulty**

Another problem which arose was that in the videos some teachers were not able to pitch the level of difficulty of their materials correctly. Not only were some teachers unable to use the same videos at different class levels, but some of them were just unfamiliar with electronic media usage as a whole subject. To make matters worse, the videos were produced by experts who had no knowledge of specific classroom situations.

Consequently, many classroom teachers tried to make up for their own shortcomings by overwhelming students with the depth of their own (the teachers') learning. The general tendency was for the teachers to speak far above the students' heads, thus making their subjects more difficult for the students. In some of the videos I watched, faculty members spoke as if they were defending their doctoral theses anew,

making many quotations and using terms like the following taken from the script of one of the videos “Cultural Contact”:

EXPRESSION	PAGE
evangelical zeal to defy Satan	Narrator’s introduction
massive depopulation	1
the Black Plague	1
syphilis ... transmuted out of yaws	8
syncretic religions	13

Such expressions, most of which came from the expert obviously, could easily be misunderstood by undergraduates because some of them were references to European history, and were not explained. The expert, apparently more concerned about showing off his expertise than disseminating knowledge, just assumed that his audience would understand the terms. The burden of explaining these terms was put on the classroom teacher’s head.

It was also obvious from the details given in the videos that a lot of time went into the preparation of the videos. Whereas a straight lecture involved only the teacher and the students, a taped lecture had many other cognitive and technical inputs which the undergraduate classroom teacher had to work hard to understand fully.

An example of how laboriously the faculty now had to prepare their lessons is the video “Cultural Contact” which is about the negative results of contact between Indians and Europeans in north America. It starts with a long introduction by the Narrator, followed by another long introduction by the guest lecturer, an expert in the field. The professor teaching the course, Cohen, is given the apparently easy task of bridging the expert’s

monotonous lecturer by asking convenient rhetorical questions like “So it is sort of inadvertent genocide” (p.9) and “The penultimate question I had for you was on the Christian missions ... What sort of success overall did the missionaries have in the 16th and 17th century with Indiana?” These questions could easily make Cohen appear stupid to his students because they were asked when the issues being discussed were already too clear. Obviously the only purpose of the questions was to break the monotony of the expert’s talking head so that students would not sleep through the video showing. According to one of my sources, this objective was not always achieved because a good number of students slept through the video showings.

What made the classroom teacher’s work harder, rather than easier is that the teacher was himself or herself reduced to a role in between a teacher and a student. Since the final version of the video was handled by other people than the teacher, this meant that the teacher must do the following:

- Study the video in advance in order to understand the way materials had been presented by the production experts, and to understand the significance of inserts included.
- To anticipate the questions that would come from the students and to prepare satisfactory answers for them.
- To find out how the video could fit into teaching time, allowing for the teacher’s own introduction and student’s questions.

After doing all this background work, the classroom teacher was only remunerated for actual teaching time. And yet some educators were arguing that general education faculty was being paid for enjoying videos with their students.



## **Positive Comments about the Videos**

Although there was overwhelming criticism about the video program, there were also some positive comments that were made about it. These were that:

- **Uniform approach:** The videos enabled teachers to make a uniform approach to the teaching of general education at the university. New teachers had something concrete to teach from, which was better than their being expected to use their creativity right from their first lessons.
- **Repeatability:** One big advantage of the videos was that they could be shown several times. Copies of the video were deposited in the main library for students to check out. This enabled students who might have missed class to catch up with the others. Seeing a video more than once also helped the slower students understand the materials better,
- **Creating records:** Aware that the videos would be permanent records in their departments, faculty strove to give their best in them. Hence they were challenged to do a lot of research around the subjects they were covering. In some cases promotion and tenure .

On the basis of the above factors, the teachers who enjoyed using the videos argued that teaching general education through the media was truly integrative because it forced teachers who were too comfortable with their respective disciplines to include technology. Thus students were being exposed to both the subject matter and the media.

## **The New Approach to Electronic Media Usage**

While the video program was receiving deserved and undeserved criticism from the academic community, there were some faculty who did not concentrate on revealing the inadequacies of the video program, but went on to look for alternatives to it. These faculty acknowledged the reasons why the video program did not satisfy all teaching objectives because of the following reasons:

1. The old videos were produced too cheaply to be of good quality. They were not much more than dull lectures on the television screen, in spite of the production gimmicks that were employed.
2. There was no continuous thread running through all the videos. Their consumers saw them as different pieces of data thrown together to fill up class time.
3. Each class was required to see three videos each week, which only confused the weaker students who needed more time to work on each video.
4. The videos were sometimes too long. Class time was 50 minutes. Although the materials were covered in 35 minutes, a lot of time was eaten up by introductions, teasers and compliments, which were not essentials to the students.

The positive-thinking faculty wanted to make the student less of a passive observer in the classroom situation, arguing that students learnt best when they were actively engaged in the teaching/learning process. To this end they introduced the following new ways of media usage.

### **Providing Quality Videos.**

Instead of relying on many videos that were produced unprofessionally for reasons already given, fewer videos were going to be produced. Unlike the old videos, the new videos would be produced professionally, with adequate funds. The content of the videos would no longer be strings of facts churned out through a talking head, but thought-provoking information designed to make students raise questions, hold discussions and explore further into the subject. The new videos were going to be made in such a way that the classroom teacher should not simply let a video run from beginning to end without interruption, but the teacher can show a section that supports a particular lesson that he or she may be teaching.

By the time of writing one such video had already been completed. Instead of relying on one expert lecturer, the video makes use of commercially produced excerpts from various sources, among them the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement. The video also draws from the film and video archives of various educational and commercial producers. The logic behind the use of pre-edited footage is that such footage simulates reality more closely, giving both the teacher and the student ample room to comment on the virtual reality. They no longer depend on the opinions of so-called experts, whose expertise is not always unquestionable.

The new videos also make extensive usage of the interview method, where several people are asked to give their opinions on the same subject matter. This creates a situation that is conducive of healthy discussion, and is an alternative to the system in the old videos where the narrator and the expert simply dished out facts to non-participating students. It also gives room to the teacher to summarize the discussions and invite students to comment on his own summary.

Although production of the new videos demands more money, the quality of the videos produced is viewed by the faculty concerned to be adequate value for money.

### **E-mail**

The use of e-mail in teaching is not new. It was introduced in IAH 201 on an experimental basis in 1992, and by the time of writing it was widespread at the university. When e-mail was introduced as a teaching tool in general education, e-mail groups of students each were formed. Each student was required to write ten e-mails each semester, commenting on the subject under study, and responding to comments from the

teacher and from other group members. The teaching method spread from IAH 201 and pervaded the whole university. By the time of writing so many students were using e-mail for class purposes that at certain times the e-mail system was getting jammed.

The fact that this method was voluntarily adopted by teachers outside IAH 201 proves that it is an effective way of using electronic media in the college classroom. Indeed, it seems ironic that the use of this teaching tool may have to be reduced because of its success. Attempts are now being made to shift from e-mail to the world-wide web, with its greater capacity for information access, the creation of cyber space and the endless number of web pages that can be accessed for data. It is hoped that when usage of the web is fully operational, students will have an endless store of data which they can use in their own assignments. All that the teacher will need to do is to adequately introduce a topic and set the students to expand their own knowledge of the subject by searching for information from various web pages. This enables each student to work at his or her own pace, a thing which the old video program did not allow.

### **Researching with Computer Disk**

In recent years Computer Disk (CD) was introduced as a teaching tool for IAH 201. The Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities and the Communications Technology Laboratory, a company attached to the MSU Computer Lab, teamed up to produce CD materials that, in addition to being used by the classroom teacher at Michigan State university, can be marketed nationally and even internationally. The basic concept behind this arrangement is to make educational media pay for themselves and

depend less on decisions by administrators who may not fully understand the media's financial requirements.

According to the Director of the Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities, the use of CD is likely to succeed where other educational media failed because of the following reasons:

1. It enables students to learn more than one things at a time. Among other things, students learn how to master technology and how to find the relationship between separate items of data.
2. It provides a means of teaching subject matter in a manner that provokes critical thinking. CD is not a linear subject, but more like a museum where a research searches for information that fits into his or her particular plan. They literally shop around for what they need and arrange their data in the way they want it.
3. Users of the CD do not come to the computer to answer other people's questions like they do with the videos. Rather, they come to find answers for their own questions. This means that the CD teachers students to think logically as they try to solve problems. Asking the right questions is, itself the best way to find the right answers.
4. The CD is a set of challenges for each student to respond to in a manner that suits his or her objectives.

In a walk through a CD program that I was taken through by one of my research subjects, I learnt that the medium is an inexhaustible source of data which can be used to address different subjects. The program is about the history of the American people's. It has a main menu from which programs and topics can be accessed. For example, the Global program covers the topics:

- Original Americans (Native Americans)
- Arrivals (mostly Europeans)
- Their destinations (places where they settled.)

A mouse click on any of these topics reveals information that can be used for different purposes by different researchers. The information is arranged in a systematic way for easy reference. For each of the peoples covered, the following sub topics are covered:

1. The people (their ethnic origins, objective conditions, interaction with other peoples and general characteristics)
2. Cities and what is found in them (residents, industrial, tourist and other attractions)
3. Cultural identity (how the people have transformed themselves in response to existing conditions and demands).
4. American pluralism (how Americans have absorbed people from other parts of the world to become a complex nation.
5. Cross-group comparison (how Americans compare with other people's of the world in specific things.)

The topics and sub-topics cover every aspect of American life from history to future prospects. It is up to an individual research (student in this case), to access the information he or she needs for a specific assignment, or even out of curiosity.

The response to the use of CD as a reaching tool has been mixed. While teachers tend to see the medium as the ultimate answer to their questions, student response is mixed. Students used to being lectured to tend to be overwhelmed by the boundless freedom that CD gives them. Too used to responding to straight commands, they do not know how to proceed in a situation where they are left to do what they want. Some, therefore, do almost nothing. Other students, however, enjoy their new-found freedom, and almost become addicted to the medium. To a large extent this depends on a student's prior exposure to computers. Students learning to use computers for the first time are the

ones who get overwhelmed by the CD's novelty, while those who have grown up using computers are the ones likely to get addicted to it, with all that addiction implies.

The fact that the problem of the classroom teacher's adjustment to varying teaching requirements remains unresolved after all the above methods have been used implies that the right approach to the basic problem has not yet been found. The basic problem is that the teacher is not adequately involved at the planning stage, and when he or she is dragged in at the end, he or she lacks commitment to the cause. In the next chapter I will suggest some ways in which this objective could be achieved.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **Chapter Summary**

This study examines the strategies that were used by the general education teacher at Michigan State University to meet the demands of an evolving curriculum. It traces how the teacher had to adjust to major shifts in policy as the university sought the best way to get general education established as a discipline. The study also shows what the teacher contributed to the evolving program. I started the study with the conviction that teachers contribute best to their educational institution's mission when they work in an enabling environment which allows some innovation in teaching. For the teacher to teach effectively, they also need to be guided by specific educational theories. Trying to teach in the absence of these theories can be compared to a football game played on an unmarked field. A lot of time will be wasted justifying too many moves made in gray areas to the extent that argument becomes the game's preoccupation. My initial observation suggested that this was partly true about the development of the general education program at Michigan State University.

In view of this I conducted a case study of the evolution of the general education program over 56 years. Through the inquiry I was able to get specific details about how the program developed; as well as the reasons why certain crucial decisions were made.



The chapter opens with a discussion of the theoretical framework of my study. It then proceeds to indicate the extent to which these theories were perceived to guide the development of general education at MSU between 1942 and 1998. In the light of this, I make recommendations on what could be done better. My final recommendations follow the pattern which I used in my data collection and analysis. That is:

- Implications for administration and governance
- Implications for faculty autonomy
- The significance of public accountability
- The place of ethics, equity and diversity
- Transferability

This pattern also enables me to summarize the views of various sectors of the community which considered themselves to have a vested interest in the developments.

### **Theories of Education That Inform the Study**

Research has proved that teaching is a game whose success depends on good team work rather than individual expertise. In a team every player works selflessly towards the common goal. Similarly in education teachers, students, administrators, parents and the general public ought to strive for the attainment of common objectives.

In an article entitled “Defending Freirean Intervention” published in the journal of Education Theory, Peter Roberts posits that effective teaching is the art of maintaining a balance between educational regulations and self-fulfillment. In this article Roberts was confirming Paulo Freire’s conclusion that education is a process of constant interaction

between the teacher and the students. Roberts explains the essence of the theory to be that education only becomes “humanizing” when “it is critical, dialogical and practical.” That is, learners learn best when they are given an opportunity analyze the authenticity of what they learn, discuss the subject with the teacher and get an opportunity for hands-on learning. Only when these conditions are present can education be fulfilling to both the learner and the teacher. This scenario mostly applies in colleges and universities where learners are adults who know what they want to get out of the education they are receiving. The gist of Roberts’ argument is that for college education to remain viable, there ought to be intervention to make sure that the right atmosphere for effective teaching and learning.

This gives rise to the question: Who is or are responsible for creating such an atmosphere? Lee Anderson argues that it is the teacher who must not only transform himself or herself to achieve his professional goals, but must also influence policy makers to help him or her achieve the goals. Especially where pedagogical innovation is involved, it is the imaginative teacher who should know what he or she wants to achieve. The teacher should also know how to enlist support to achieve those goals. Administrators, on the other hand, are facilitators and not innovators. Thus Anderson’s argument differs from the general conviction in higher education that administrators must take the lead in introducing pedagogical innovations and teachers must follow. If teachers allow this to happen, Anderson goes on to argue, then they have only themselves to blame when administrators put poisoned food in their dinner plates.

Anderson uses himself as an example to prove the authenticity of his theory.

Through practical experience he arrived at the following four concepts of college teaching and their influence on management:

- Performance, enactment and engagement: That college teachers must view themselves as active performers who lead by example and get involved in administrative matters.
- Industrial production: That the teachers must realize that they are part of a production process in which consumers expect concrete results. The industry is learning and the product is a well rounded graduate. While exercising his or her liberty as an innovator, therefore, the teacher must not forget that he or she is obliged to meet basic standards like getting students to pass.
- Professional practice: That the teacher must uphold the norms of the teaching profession, which can be summarized as contribution to human development and practicing teamwork.
- Professional calling: That the teacher must feel committed to the teaching profession, and not treat it merely as a source of his or her own livelihood.

Realizing that the above is not easily attainable, Anderson suggests some concrete ways in which teachers can strive for the ideals. He suggests that teachers must get involved in administrative committees and volunteer to provide essential services even for no payment, make sure that administrators order all essential teaching supplies in time, help in the recruitment of quality teachers and encourage the teachers to work as a team. The team spirit will thus be spread throughout the institution, and this will remove the dividing line between teachers and administrators.

### **The Question of Innovation**

Innovation entails creating and reviewing what has been created. This is especially true in cases where the structural changes being implemented require the use of

new courseware. For example, where a course changes from AMERICAN HISTORY to THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, the entire approach to the teaching of the course has to change accordingly. New books and materials have to be ordered and the teachers involved must create new teaching tools. Innovation also applies when a decision is made for the same course to be taught differently for one reason or another. Such reasons may include the availability of teachers with specific teaching skills, the attraction of new teaching tools or the demands of the educational market.

Gabriel Jacobs posits that courseware always needs to be evaluated by development teams, which must apply “formative and summative evaluation phases of courseware design, implementation and use” (p.3). He further asserts that it is lack of such systematic evaluation that often leads to the inefficient usage of available resources by college classroom teachers. Formative evaluation is the evaluation of courseware during its life cycle or while the courseware is still being created. For example, where videos are being introduced as teaching tools for a specific course, a development team must evaluate the whole process of creating the videos. This would involve such things as reducing course topics to video scripts, recruiting and rehearsing actors, selecting suitable footage from media libraries and at least observing the technical video production and post-production processes. Summative evaluation, on the other hand, is the terminal evaluation of teaching tools to determine the extent to which they met the purposes for which they were made. In the case of the videos mentioned above, this would be done by conducting surveys and interviews to get what the consumers of the product feel about it. Jacobs concludes that both forms of evaluation are essential, and dispensing with them only results in the misapplication of courseware.

Jacobs makes a distinction between evaluation and assessment. He says evaluation is a decision-making process involving the constant remodeling of the product, while assessment is the judgment of a product usually by people not involved in the production process. Hence evaluation is as much directed upon the producer as it is upon the product. One cannot succeed without the other, or the failure of one means the failure of the other.

For my study, I am inclined to give a simpler analogy by equating the production process to a driver driving a lorry full of valuables across difficult terrain from the one point to another. To ensure the safe delivery of the valuables, the driver evaluates every move he or she makes throughout the trip, and rejoices with everybody upon the safe delivery of the valuables. The end users or consumers of the valuables, however, are only interested in the safe arrival of the valuables, and are unlikely to be interested in the problems that the driver may have encountered on the trip. In this analogy the college classroom teacher is the driver, and other interested parties (notably educational administrators), are the consumers. What the end users should do is to give the driver freedom to use his or her discretion when he or she encounters problems in the process of delivering the goods.

This analogy is important for my study because it reflects the role of the teacher in the development of an innovative program. It enables me to assess whether or not the teacher played the role of the lorry driver or that of the end user.

## **Evaluating Evaluation**

To allow for proper evaluation of an innovative program, Jacobs suggests that the evaluating team must ask itself and find answers for the following critical questions:

1. Whether the evaluation is worth doing: That is whether all major inputs are in place. These include but are not limited to time, money, institutional attitudes and implementing personnel. It serves no purpose to initiate a program that requires formative evaluation if any of the major inputs are missing.
2. What the purpose of the evaluation is: That is predicting the expectations of the end users and determining how high they are. If the end users are not interested in elaborate planning, then there is no need for an elaborate evaluation of the production process either. Producing an elaborate evaluation in this case would be a matter of pedagogical self fulfillment which does not serve the interests of the consumer. An example of this would be the production of elaborate charts, graphs and other quantitative data analysis where only simple estimates would suffice.
3. Tools and processes are needed to carry out the evaluation satisfactorily: That is, consideration must be made on whether the process to be evaluated is real life or merely experimental, and adjusting the testing tools to that. The tools referred to are the following:
  - (a) Experiments or laboratory tests to determine the general characteristics of a production process. Experiments have no specific objectives and are mostly used for testing things rather than people.
  - (b) Learning tests or tests used by software designers using sample groups in order to determine the acceptability of a product before its mass production begins.
  - (c) Illuminative tests or tests based on observation and questionnaire. The purpose of such tests is to detect sensitivities among consumers which producers may not have been aware of during the production of a consumer item.
4. Case studies: These allow a combination of all the three testing methods above to be attempted in a single program.

In another article on the evaluation of educational software in the college classroom, Sigmar-Olaf Tergan gives what he considers to be a useful checklist for the

evaluation of the software that is designed for classroom usage. While acknowledging that the reliability, validity and effectiveness of computer-based evaluations may be adversely affected by various outlying variables, Tergan posits that evaluation checklists remain a *sine qua non* because they serve as a guideline on what to do and what to omit doing. The evaluation checklists:

- Provide a structured list of relevant criteria for the project at hand.
- They streamline activities, making it easy for implementors to check what has been covered and what remains to be covered.
- They give an impression of the producer's efficiency, which may be needed by consumers who want to have confidence in what the producer is producing.

Tergan's evaluation checklist comprises the following components:

1. Subject matter or content: What the material is about and how much is covered under the topic. All items covered under the topic must be relevant to the objective of the subject.
2. Learners: What level the learners are at, and what they are likely to get from a production.
3. Instructional methods: The methods used by the teacher to make the subject matter understandable and interesting to the students.
4. Technology/media: The level of complexity of the technology or the media used. In other words, does the technology not present problems of its own, which may be a distraction from the learning process?

### **The Effect of Class Size**

The issue of what effect class size has on the learning situation in college has been a subject of debate among educators. Some of the educators posit that large classes are more likely to be better organized, allow for more group work and minimize unhealthy

competition between individual students. A greater number of the educators, however, argue that a large class presents more problems for the teacher than does a small class. They give as their main reason the fact that learning should be learner-centered, and each learner should ideally have an opportunity to get direct assistance from the teacher. Where classes are too big, however, this becomes impossible, and the less aggressive learners tend to be ignored by the teacher, whose attention tends to be drawn by extroverts. Wilbert McKeachie sums up this argument when he says:

A group's utilization of resources is constrained by the simple facts that, (1) in large groups a smaller proportion of group members can participate orally, and (2) the larger the group, the less likely it is that a given person will feel free to volunteer. Because active thinking is so important to learning and retention of learning, constraints on oral participation are likely not only to induce passivity but also to be educationally harmful. (p.81)

McKeachie's comment referred to regular classes that are taught by lecturers using the lecture method only. If large classes hinder student participation in such classes, the scenario must be worse for cases like the IAH 201 video classes in which both students and teachers are reduced to passive viewers. A scene in which the only life comes from the video screen for nearly an hour is likely to be used by some students to catch up on lost sleep. In fact, the teaching assistants I spoke to during the 1998 T.A. Orientation Course indicated that many of their students slept through video showings, which made the T.A.s wonder why the students bothered to leave the comfort of their beds at all.



## **The Extent to which the Theories Were Perceived to Apply to General Education at Michigan State University**

The term “teacher” is used loosely in this study to mean anyone who takes instructional responsibility over a classroom of students, and whose function is the transfer of learning from self to the students using available means. In this research the term refers to university faculty, student Teaching Assistants and the various experts who were used in the production of lectures on video. The teachers were found:

- in the disciplines which hired them
- as students helpers of full time faculty
- as video characters

These teachers use different methods of teaching, according to their respective qualifications. Faculty members mainly use the lecture method, Teaching Assistance mainly use videos and video characters are cinematographic talking heads. Where appropriate specific terms were used to distinguish between the types of teachers, but in other cases the term was used loosely. This was done where there was no ambiguity as to who the term was referring to.

In the early years general education classes were taught only by qualified faculty, but when the studies expanded to cover the whole university, Teaching Assistance were hired to help faculty with such routine work as the grading of assignments and tests. This trend continued until 1988 when CRUE introduced major changes in the teaching of general education at the university. From then on, classes were reduced to about 30 again, but this time, in the controversial IAH 201, the classes were taught through the media.

The teachers used various teaching methods to deliver their goods. The methods they used include, but are not limited to lecturing, class discussions, group projects, essays, research. In this study the lecture teaching method is considered the basic method of teaching, and others as innovations.

The use of Teaching Assistants seems to be the main cause of dissatisfaction among the faculty members I interview. 60% of them were against the employment of large numbers of teaching assistants, citing the following as their reasons for their opinions:

- Teaching Assistants are but students mainly interested in their own progress. They cannot devote a lot of time to the preparation of the lessons they are relegated to teach.
- Since the Teaching Assistants come from various academic backgrounds, it is not possible to determine the level of their general ability as class teachers.
- Teaching Assistants should assist. In IAH 201 they do far more than that. They are the effective teachers of the course.
- Students generally do not have as much confidence in fellow students as they do in faculty. If the students feel that their time is being wasted, they are not likely to apply themselves to their own studies adequately.
- In the rare case where a Teaching Assistant is more capable of teaching with electronic media than a professor, the professor is likely to be regarded as irrelevant by the students.

The long and short of this is that the faculty I interviewed are generally convinced that Teaching Assistants should never be used to replace faculty. However talented they may be, Teaching Assistants cannot have the same status as faculty in the opinions of the students they teach. Where some of the TAs take the same courses with their “students” this may lead to the latter losing confidence in the latter. For example, a Teaching

Assistant and one of his “students” may take the same course in English Literature and the “student” may even get better grades. In such a hypothetical case the “student” is likely to spread the word that the TA is not fit to teach them. It does not even matter that some of the teaching by TAs is not much more than playing videos.

Of the innovations, the use of electronic media to almost replace the teacher was the most radical of the changes. As the use of electronic media has greatly increased over the years, so too have the problems associated with it. Today media usage in the undergraduate classroom stands out as the remaining controversy among academics. Some are for it, others against.

### **Researcher’s Comments and Recommendations for MSU**

Through this study I have learnt that the innovative teaching of general education is a complex issue that defies simplistic solutions. In particular, I have learnt that electronic media have come to stay in the undergraduate classroom, and their use is bound to increase rather than decrease. What remains debatable is the extent to which electronic media should become an integral part of the undergraduate curriculum. What I give below are but summaries of what I have observed rather than an attempt on my part to solve problems that have dogged many educators for the better part of a century.

### **Implications for Administration and Governance**

The central administration at Michigan State University, through its enlightened leaders like President John Hannah and Dean Howard Rather, must be commended for pioneering the innovative teaching of general education in the undergraduate classroom

and for nurturing it in its formative years. Because of their foresight, the university will go down in history as a leader in introducing and sustaining formal studies in general education.

Unfortunately, MSU will also go down in history as an institution at which the apparent intransigence of central administration sometimes stifled the its teachers. The principles of collaboration and empowerment seem to have been ignored at times when they could have solved existing problems. From the comments that have been made about the role played by administration in the development of the general education program, it would appear that central administration was too keen to take a leading role even in matters that were purely academic. For instance, where surveys were used to determine what people thought, the administration ought to have taken the findings into consideration, instead of appearing to ignore them. In particular, CRUE is perceived to have been prone to bulldozing what it termed “recommendation”.

It would appear that what was needed was greater involvement of faculty in decision making at every stage. Administration could have made this possible by asking academic disciplines to initiate change rather than only to ratify change originating from administration. Considering the changes that are now being proposed by IAH independently of administration, there seems to be no doubt that had such a course been followed from the start, general education at the university would be more established than it is now.

## **Implications for Faculty Autonomy**

After the general education program was established, and in particular since 1979, a number of faculty have stood out as the most prominent supporters of the innovative program. Of these, Allan Fisher, Surjit Dulai and Elveira Wilbur gave the program many years of dedicated service, not only as teachers, but also carrying out essential administrative duties.

In general faculty at the university did a good job by always voicing concern about their own rights when it became apparent that the rights were being eroded by central administration. Faculty also needs to be commended for making necessary curriculum changes to ensure the continuation of the program. Perhaps where faculty could have done better was in taking the initiative in purely pedagogical issues. Instead they seemed to be content with things as they were until administration made a move in response to specific complaints. Then, it would appear, faculty would almost always find fault with the administrative decisions, but did not propose concrete alternatives. It also seems that faculty did not sustain its opposition to unpopular decisions, and it is possible that administration was aware that time would pacify them.

However, it is also difficult for the researcher to suggest what concrete measures faculty could have taken without jeopardizing the program as a whole. Given their commitment to the success of general education, it is possible that faculty kept hoping, though in vain, to change things gradually rather than rejecting change outrightly. Over half of my research subjects feel that this is where faculty lost their right to determine the general education curriculum. Subsequently, faculty could only watch as their curriculum was cut up into three centers.

## **Public Accountability**

Not much can be said on this issue except that the views of the public (parents, students and other concerned people), who are the consumers of the education, must be heeded. When change becomes necessary, it needs to be explained to these consumers adequately. In the history of general education at MSU, it seems that the public's conceptions and misconceptions were never formerly addressed.

## **Ethics, Equity and Diversity**

This issue only applies to the type of courses that are taught in the general education program, and how the courses are taught. When the Humanities department coordinated general education studies, concern was expressed about the program being too biased toward Western civilization. By the time the Humanities department was dissolved, however, it had introduced courses on other great world civilizations to neutralize the Western bias. The introduction of the controversial course IAH 201, *America and the World*, however, more misgivings were expressed about the course being biased in favor of one part of the world. The syllabus for this course is also viewed as suggesting that America is the world. In terms of history this seems to be a serious misunderstanding of world affairs.

The almost exclusive use of electronic media in IAH 201 also puts some students at disadvantage. Considering the diversity at Michigan State University, it should be clear that its freshmen come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some come from backgrounds where electronic media are not used in class at all, while the majority of American students literally grow up with the media. It is very likely that some foreign

freshmen's low grades in general education are attributable to their lack of familiarity with electronic media in their early days at MSU. If a class that I have recently observed is anything to go by, electronic media can even continue to be considered a hindrance to the acquisition of general education. In that class it seemed that everything that could go wrong with the equipment went wrong, including the T.A.'s failure to operate equipment to the wrong video having been supplied.

This suggests that general education is not, or should not be, synonymous with the understanding of electronic media. This suggests that the use of these media needs to be reconsidered if it is not to be allowed to become its own end.

### **An Alternative Proposal for General Education at MSU**

It appears that feelings against the current arrangement in general education are largely negative. In fact, I found it hard to draw any positive comments from the people who have been deeply involved in the molding of the program. They generally felt that the initial objectives of the program were overshadowed by administrative directives.

What seems to be needed is an alternative program that addresses the major issues of contention, which are professional autonomy for the teachers, and finding an alternative for the very prescriptive course IAH 201. To this end faculty in the three general education centers could come together and draw up a common curriculum that will be centrally coordinated. Such a center could teach basic academic skills like reading, writing, research methods and drafting grant proposals. It seems inevitable that the ideal center would have a Humanities and Fine Arts bias because these disciplines are primarily for enabling people to live fuller lives.

Finally, it appears that teachers prefer to be left to choose whether or not to teach with electronic media. Their current resistance to media usage seems to be partly an assertion of academic autonomy rather than a conviction of the media's ineffectiveness. Other details of the center should come from a task force established for the purpose.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR ZIMBABWE**

#### **Summary**

In this concluding chapter I have examined the extent to which the MSU model of teaching general education is applicable in Zimbabwe. My analysis was taken into consideration the different sizes and economic environments of the two education systems. I also took into consideration the fact that each institution of higher learning has some attributes which make it unique. Nevertheless, there are also basic similarities between all institutions of higher learning, which enables some comparison between them.

In this chapter I cover the results of the analysis I made, starting with the theoretical framework within which I made my comparison. I then make a direct comparison between the two educational systems, emphasizing how each determines how electronic media can be used by the teacher. In the last section I give my suggestions on how Zimbabwean higher education can benefit from MSU's experience.

#### **Theoretical Framework of My Conclusions**

My main objective in doing this research was to find a precedent in the use of electronic media in teaching arts and humanities at undergraduate level. The precedent would enable me to get first hand information on the institutional dynamics involved, and

particularly how the classroom teacher balanced professional autonomy with administrative requirements and public expectations. Since electronic media fall in the area of communication, I applied relevant communication theories to the data I collected.

### **The Input/Output Matrix (McGuire, 1985)**

The theory states that independent communication variables (inputs) have different impacts on dependent communication variables (outputs). In other words the information given by one source is received differently by different members of a targeted audience. Audience response is influenced by such outlying variables as personal disposition, illness, quality of media production and peer influence. Response by the audience to information output also tends to occur in a recognizable pattern as follows:

1. Prior Exposure: The extent to which each recipient knew the subject already.
2. Engagement: The degree to which the recipients empathize with what is being shown, or the emotion that the message arouses in the audience.
3. Application: The extent to which the recipient can apply the information received.
4. Consolidation: The extent to which the audience can deduce useful lessons from the information received.

While this theory was directed at information dissemination in media campaigns, it can also be applied to pedagogy. In the case of electronic media in the college classroom, this means that students will comprehend media messages differently unless a competent teacher is available to clear information blockages. In most cases this means that the teacher must both introduce and conclude a media showing, ensuring that students apply

appropriate focus to key points of the subject matter. According to this theory, therefore, general viewing of electronic media is inappropriate for classroom purposes.

### **The Cognitive Dissonance Theory**

Another theory that informed my findings regarding the use of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom is the cognitive dissonance theory (Perloff, 1993). The theory states that the relationship between any two cognitions can be consonant (in agreement), dissonant (in disagreement) or irrelevant (unrelated to the cognitive environment). In other words, two people may see the same subject similarly or differently, or the subject may be totally incomprehensible. Where the relationship is one of dissonance, many people try to play down the mutual disagreement by playing it down. They do this by:

1. Readjusting their original positions to be in line with the dominant factor in a group. In other words, they go with the most popular opinion, which is not necessarily the right one.
2. Redefining their own opinions by eliminating details so that they may be in general agreement with others.
3. Increasing alternatives, and ending up with a situation in which anything goes.

In short, the theory imputes that in many cases the media make people do things against their better judgment.

When applied to the use of electronic media in the undergraduate classroom this theory means that many learners will tend to accept information without questioning it, simply because the information is on video tape or on computer disc. This tends to be the case where the media come as finished products after all the impurities have been removed. For example, the information contained in media archives at Michigan State University

(films, computer files and videos) about Shaka Zulu, the legendary Bantu leader of South Africa, portrays him as an illegitimate and evil man who killed his own people for no reason. However, what African historians have now revealed is that Shaka fell out of favor with both the Portuguese and the British because he was stifling their plans to occupy his area. Hence these settlers demonized him with the help of Christian missionaries who subsequently described him as an epitome of the devil. These scholars also argue that Shaka's alleged illegitimacy only reflects Western misunderstanding of African culture. Unfortunately, the positive information on Shaka has not yet been included in the available data banks at the university. This means that any research done using the available data will continue to misrepresent Shaka Zulu.

The above case suggests that in the undergraduate classroom, students are likely to agree with professionally produced electronic media instead of doing independent research. Hence the media may become a limiting factor instead of an aid to undergraduate learning. As this is likely to be the case where the media are foreign produced, it suggests that such media may not be appropriate in many situations where they may be use. When students are bombarded with foreign media, their understanding of some essential topics gets distorted.

The study I carried out enabled me to examine the similarities and differences between media-based departments at Michigan State University and at the University of Zimbabwe. These are IAH at MSU and the Distance Education program (now the Zimbabwe Open University) at UZ. As bases for the comparison, I used the types, sizes and organizational models of the two institutions. I also took into consideration the degree of availability of electronic media in the two institutions.

The conclusions I made, which I have given as recommendations below, were influenced by those arrived at by Kantner, Gamson and London (1997) in their research on revitalizing general education. The researchers acknowledge that general education is, by nature, complex and not easy to define, and that this can present considerable difficulty to new teachers of the subject. They then go on to argue that this should not deter academics from taking positive steps to improve general education. Instead it should serve as a challenge to academics to keep looking for innovative ways to teach general education more effectively, using available teaching and learning tools.

Further arguing that it is, in fact, the nature of general education to spark off controversy, these researchers suggest that an institution must continuously seek to improve the teaching of the subject. Today this means using electronic media in any classroom. The researchers suggest that this issue be followed up according to the following guidelines.

1. **Meeting conflict with compromise** : Conflict is inevitable in all innovative teaching and learning situations. Therefore teachers have to be prepared to handle it professionally. In particular, they need to be equipped with the skills to neutralize conflict with compromise. This will foster greater collegiality among teachers. This is particularly important for Zimbabwe where college teachers come from different educational backgrounds.
2. **Adopting an open design of institutional administration**: The administration of some institutions in Zimbabwe is closed to teachers. This is a recipe for conflict between administrators and teachers (read professors). Zimbabwe's higher education needs to be transformed into a situation where teachers participate in decision making too. In particular, decisions about curriculums and teaching materials must be initiated by the teachers. Thus teachers will feel empowered to take more initiatives to increase the effectiveness of their teaching. Students must also be included in relevant committees where decisions affecting their studies are made. A situation where students will have to strike in order to be listened to on academic matters must be prevented.

3. Collaborative implementation of programs: Teachers at an institution should work as teams rather than as individuals. They should collaborate in attending to issues like the following:

- the drawing up of curriculums and syllabuses
- the procurement of needed teaching and learning resources
- the hiring of qualified staff and teaching assistants
- reviewing syllabuses and materials

Research has proved that when teachers work as a team they are more capable of foreseeing problems and preparing to solve them. Collectively, they are also more creative.

Lack of such collaboration will lead to duplication of services and the inefficient use of available resources. This is particularly important in Zimbabwe where technology like the electronic media is imported. On this point Kantner, Gamson and London (1997) also posit that reforming general education must always be assumed to take place in a time of scarcity. Educational planners must never make the mistake of assuming that resources will always be available and an institution will always be able to do what it chooses to do. A plan made on these grounds is more likely to crumble when resources run out and new demands are made upon the institution.

With the above in mind, I made a comparison between two similar situations at the University of Zimbabwe and at Michigan State University. The comparison enabled me to make more concrete recommendations on the use of electronic media in the Zimbabwean undergraduate classroom.

## **Cross Cultural Comparison**

Since the 1950s the issue of how much electronic media should be allowed into the American classroom has attracted widespread debate among educators at all levels of education all over the world. As I have already indicated, the question at that time was whether film and television should for anything other than general entertainment and information dissemination. By the 1970s the debate spread to include higher and vocational education. The main point of contention became its relevance to specific disciplines. The 1980s was a period of media expansion to include developing countries, and the 1990s are a period of the innovative use of electronic media.

In Zimbabwe today access to educational media and technology in colleges and universities varies from non-existent to extensive. This phenomenon has a historical background, as a result of which some institutions became privileged and others were underprivileged. The privileged institutions are former white or European institutions while the underprivileged ones are former black or African institutions.

In pre-independence Zimbabwe European education was run by the state, while African education was run by different churches, with some state support. The state-run institutions were better provided than the missionary ones. The only one university in the country, the University of Zimbabwe (formerly a college of the University of London), was the only multi-racial institution (Chikomba 1986), (Nyagura 1991).

At independence in 1980 the colleges that used to be run by various churches became state institutions because the churches could not cope with the massive expansion of the education system introduced by the new government. The government's priority was not improving already existing educational institutions, but rather the building of

new ones where none existed. This was in line with its policy of education for all by the year 2000 AD. Since many areas did not have any schools, it took the government at least a decade to establish a mass education system, with all the costs it entailed. By 1991 there was still only one university in the country, but its size and complexity had greatly increased. In 1997, a committee had to be set up by the Ministry of Education and Technology to examine the functioning of higher education; including the use of technology. However, these are long-term plans whose results will only be seen in future years.

Dorsey, Matshazi and Nyagura have the following to say about the state of higher education in the country:

In 1980 there were 2200 students enrolled in the nation's only university. A decade later, student numbers had more than trebled to 9017. To meet the needs of a young, developing country, a number of new degrees and diplomas were introduced and the university expanded from 6 to 10 faculties. (p. 17)

This mushrooming of academic disciplines and student numbers had serious implications for the way teaching was to be done. Gone were the days when a professor was retained to teach only five students throughout the year, and also gone was the time when especially qualified teachers plied between the University of London and its overseas college, which was now the autonomous University of Zimbabwe. Finding alternative ways of teaching became an imperative rather than a choice

One measure that is being taken to meet this objective is the introduction of electronic media to all the colleges and universities. At the university of Zimbabwe and at some technical colleges like the Harare Polytechnic, special departments have been



established to attend to the issue of using electronic media in the college classroom. The problem here is that some of the media equipment is purchased with short term donor funds. When the funds run dry, they always leave a worse problem than they set out to solve, having created expectations which cannot be met. In some cases the donors also unload their obsolete media on consumers that are only too keen to accept anything foreign. But using these media usually proves a major problem in practice.

Because no infrastructure exists to guide the donors as to what is useful to donate and what is not, some donors inevitably give more than others. This creates discrepancies between institutions in the same country. Referring to the colonial education system where the media were only available to urban (mostly white) schools, Kedmon Hungwe says,

The structure described above seemed to work well in an undemocratic colonial state where the government imposed strict controls on the growth of black education. With the end of the war, and the restoration of democracy, the number of schools rose rapidly. (p.69)

Unfortunately, this desire to improve the situation has remained largely unfulfilled because of financial and other constraints.

On the eve of Zimbabwe's independence, the Prime Minister of the new state, Robert Mugabe (1981) announced that the country's education system was in need of reform., which would make it relevant for the new environment. He said,

We insist that if the African university has hitherto, for whatever reason, hovered in the outer space of foreign ideas and practices, it should now effect a re-entry into the African atmosphere and, if I may change the metaphor, plant its feet firmly on our African soil. In particular, we insist that our own University shall convert itself from a University in Zimbabwe, into a genuine, authentic, University of Zimbabwe. (p.6).

From this policy statement by the head of state, it becomes clear that change in the approach to higher education has always been on the nation's educational agenda. What has remained lacking is a specific strategy for implementing the policy, a task which rests on the shoulders of academics.

On the issue of how much one institution can learn from another, I compared the views of two researchers, Robert Birnbaum (1988), an American, and Bernard Gatawa (1990), a Zimbabwean. The comparison revealed to me that while the two researchers were primarily concerned with the uniqueness of their own situations, they also revealed some interesting similarities on the administration of higher education. They agree on the following critical points:

- That institutions of learning are complex and dynamic systems which do not compare directly with businesses enterprises in the way they are administered.
- That, at the same time, the institutions are like machines which can only function properly if all their parts are sound.
- That the social context of an institution is as essential in curriculum development as the institution's mission is.
- That the history of an institution is the foundation on which its present and its future rest. Where the two researchers seem to differ is on the role that the teacher must play in curriculum development.

However, the two researchers differ on the role that the classroom teacher should play. Whereas Birnbaum seems to say that the teacher's role is to understand the system that he or she will work in so as to be able to meet its demands, Gatawa gives a pivotal role to the teacher. In other words, Birnbaum says the teacher should be a good team player, and Gatawa says the teacher should be granted more autonomy to make

independent decisions. Birnbaum argues that an institution's educational system stands or falls depending on the extent to which the teacher is involved in policy making; and Gatawa has the following to say on the issue of teacher involvement in curriculum development and implementation,

The role of teachers as curriculum implementors gives them a significant influence on curriculum decisions. Their attitudes, quality of training and preparedness to implement a given curriculum are important variables in curriculum decision making. It is common knowledge that curricula which are planned and developed without the participation of teachers are usually ineffective. The success or otherwise of curriculum initiatives depends on teachers at the chalk-face. To avoid what has been called 'innovation without change', teachers must not only be consulted on many curriculum decisions, they must be significantly involved and assisted to acquire the necessary skills and attitudes through in-service programs. (p.18)

This divergence of opinion between the two researchers reflects their different cultural environments. Despite the fact that Birnbaum is discussing higher education only and Gatawa is discussing his entire education system, their different cultural climates are the main reason for their disagreement. Birnbaum is dealing with an education system that is well established and whose goals he is comfortable with. Gatawa, on the other hand is dealing with an education system that has taken too long to emerge from its colonial legacy. He is indirectly advocating for the whole system to be replaced by one in which the teacher's status is higher than in the current one.

It is with the same conviction that I also approached the subject. My initial impression was that it was in Zimbabwe rather than in the U.S. where teachers were denied the opportunity for decision making in curriculum development. I thought that in the U.S. in general, and especially at institutions of higher education like Michigan State University, teachers were centrally involved in decision making concerning teaching.

In view of the above findings, I proceeded to compare the MSU model of teaching general.

### **Researcher's Recommendations on the Use of Electronic Media in Zimbabwe's Colleges and Universities**

My research has led me to the conclusion that a teaching program developed at one university cannot be applied at another university without major modification. This conclusion also confirms my earlier misgivings about the Kenyan teaching modules being used in Zimbabwe. To arrive at the recommendations below I used Kantner, Gamson and London's (1997) framework of handling institutional dynamics.

#### **Meeting Conflict with Compromise**

Due to the historical discrepancies already described, a situation of conflict is likely to arise in Zimbabwean colleges and universities when electronic media are incorporated into their curricula. The incorporation must, therefore, be done with teachers taking the leading role. The teachers themselves must move cautiously, bearing in mind that their decisions will have ripple effects on their respective institutions and the general public.

Innovative teachers must always be aware that the media are still considered by many to be more of an expensive inconvenience than useful teaching tools.

Nearly twenty years after independence, Zimbabwe's higher education remains very conservative in its teaching methods. Attempts to revitalize the education are still few, and their impact is yet to be felt across the nation. In most cases lecturing remains

the main form of teaching, students are still expected to take notes and peruse them, and electronic media remain rare.

At the University of Zimbabwe, the avenue most likely to adopt the use of modern technology is the Distance Education program, which has recently developed into the Zimbabwe Open University. By its nature this program has to use electronic media to ensure the fast and efficient dissemination of learning materials all over the country. Basing my conclusions on my findings about the IAH program at Michigan State University, I recommend the following for the Zimbabwe Open University.

### **Establishing a Permanent Media Unit**

The program should establish its own media unit which services all its disciplines. The staff of the unit should include electronic technicians, educational policy makers and curriculum developers. An ideal situation would be where individuals possessing all the above skills are recruited. This would minimize conflict of interests between individuals from different disciplines. The unit would operate as follows:

- (a) Creating archives and data banks relevant for the various departments it services. This would include establishing links with other relevant departments at the university and elsewhere.
- (b) Writing film and video scripts on which to base the production of essential documentaries. The unit should make both the scripts and the films and videos available to the teachers.
- (c) Using teachers and their classes to produce all required materials.
- (d) Giving periodical orientation to both teachers and students in all aspects of media usage.
- (e) Adapting any foreign media to the Zimbabwean cultural environment.

## **Providing Training in Media**

To ensure that its teachers will cope with the media usage suggested below, the center must do the following:

- (a) Ensure that media training is included in its own teacher orientation program.
- (b) Equip its centers with essential electronic hardware and software.

The unit must ensure that the media used tally with other teaching and learning materials. In fact, the ideal thing is that no media be used at all without accompanying literature. In this way the media and the literature will complement each other rather than be mutually exclusive.

In general, teachers must be allowed to continue with lecturing, only bringing in the media where they feel comfortable to do so. Although all teachers should be trained in media usage, the actual usage must be left optional. This approach will reassure the teachers that the media are not designed to replace them, but to help them. Constant use of the media will gradually make the teachers comfortable with them.

## **Adopting an Open Design of Institutional Administration**

I will use the situation at the University of Zimbabwe regarding media usage as a context for this recommendation. A practice which is far too common at the university, itself a legacy of colonial education, is that each department guards its operations jealously from outsiders. The degree of intellectual inbreeding that results is considerable, especially in departments where leading professors are working with some of their own students. In such departments innovative teaching is often resisted just because it is not yet tried and tested.

This is also true with regard to the university's administration, which often seems to operate independently from other sectors of the institution. The administration, represented by the University Council and the Vice Chancellor's office, has on many occasions been accused by other sectors to make decisions which are difficult for them to implement. This syndrome pervades other sectors of the university like Registry, the Bursar's department, the Library, Student Affairs and associate colleges and universities. Taking the cue from the university's central administration, these branches also tend to regard decision making as exclusive to a privileged few. Indeed, the conflict which has sometimes arisen between the sectors, of the university was a result of this lack of openness between them. In the university's recent history, it was usually at the stage of crisis management that the sectors have had to interact with each other, and by that time they had already lost each other's good will.

Such a situation can only spell disaster for issues like the incorporation of electronic media into the curriculum. As happened at Michigan State University, decisions which are too difficult to revoke are likely to be made. Successful media usage depends on full collaboration between teachers, administrators and students.

### **Toward Self Reliance in the Provision of Electronic Media for Zimbabwe's Higher Education**

My study has indicated that, while the need for media usage in the undergraduate classroom is established, the rate at which the media should be incorporated is not. There is still a tendency for the role of modern electronic media in the undergraduate classroom to be overrated. Because the media are capable of being put to a variety of uses, some

educators get the wrong impression that these media will become the teachers of the 21st century.

My informal contacts with Zimbabwean educators suggests that the Zimbabweans are even more likely to hold this misconception. Despite the fact that exposure to basic electronic media is still very limited in the country, the majority of those I contacted indicated that all their problems will be solved by any electronic media they may get from unspecified donors. The educators seem to be unaware of the harm that has already been caused to theater and film in Zimbabwe by foreign donors who were more interested in promoting their own foreign values than Zimbabwe's. A case in point is the funding of street "protest" theater which only lasted as far as sponsorship money from foreign sources was freely available.

This suggests to me that there is a great danger that the University of Zimbabwe's higher education may similarly adopt inappropriate media just because they are freely available. This danger is increased by the readiness of foreign media producers to dump their own unwanted media products on developing countries like Zimbabwe. Any media adopted on such terms can only be counterproductive. First, the teachers will lack essential knowledge on communication through the media, secondly, the foreign technology is most likely to be inappropriate to Zimbabwe, and thirdly, the problem of equitable distribution of the media is likely to remain unresolved for a long time. What seems to lie within Zimbabwe's capability is that it develops its own media that are inkeeping with its own political, cultural and educational principles. This also means that Zimbabwe needs to learn how to start small and grow big in time.



In view of the above, I think that Zimbabwe needs to concentrate on the use of video in the undergraduate classroom. My reasons for making this suggestion are:

- Video has been successfully used as a teaching tool for a sufficiently long time for it to be adapted to different situations.
- Modern cinematographic technology has made video more available and user-friendly than either film or the computer.
- Video can be easily duplicated to enable it to serve a greater number of people.
- Teachers and students can participate in the production of their own videos.

For the above to be realized, media usage should be built into the higher education teacher training program. The training should cover the following topics:

- (a) **Principles of motion picture:** That motion picture is but an artistic simulation of reality, and not always reality itself. Motion picture is, therefore, not objective, but is a rendering of the producer's rhetoric. The classroom teacher should be free to disagree with any or all of the rhetoric.
- (b) **Film/video criticism:** That the quality of finished electronic media productions (like educational videos) can be determined according to specific cinematographic criteria. These are the story line, characterization, editing (e.g. lighting, sound effects and experiential densities) and structure. This knowledge is needed to enable the teacher to know exactly what she or he wants to use, and what effect it is likely to have on the audience.
- (b) **Cinematography:** That is an understanding of the film/video machine itself. The teacher needs to understand the hardware he or she uses and how it processes light (images) from the camera to the projector to the screen. Even video is based on this principle. Knowledge of the three-part film/video machine will enable the teacher to know what can go wrong and what needs to be done.
- (c) **Media adaptation:** That is how electronic media are often based on other disciplines like literature, history and music. Since the teacher needs to use both texts and videos, he or she needs to understand that adaptation is always a reduction process. A lot is always lost when one medium is subjected to the principles of another. This knowledge will enable the teacher to explain why, for example, a video does not cover all the details in a textbook.

The above will require adequate planning time to get established. It is, therefore, essential for a commission of knowledgeable people to be set up to determine the parameters on which the media will be integrated into the undergraduate curriculum, and how suitable electronic media will be produced and equitably distributed. Needless to say, a substantial amount of money will have to be invested in this essential project because electronic media have to be bought and constantly renewed.

## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**

**INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT**

## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

To collect the data I needed, I first identified the people who were most likely to have the data. I then phoned each of the people to explain what I needed. The telephone conversations served as preliminary interviews because they enabled me to tailor my interview instrument to particular subjects. The basic instrument itself is given below.

My study examines how the undergraduate classroom teacher adjusted to policy and pedagogical demands during the evolution of the general education program at Michigan State University, between 1942 and 1988. Since this adjustment partly involved the use of electronic media, I am also interested on the extent to which these media were incorporated into the university curriculum. To this end I am studying the Center for Integrative studies in Arts and Humanities (IAH) at MSU to find out the following:

- The history of general education at MSU.
- How teachers were recruited and what in-service training they received.
- The establishment of IAH and its implications for the general education curriculum.
- What adjustments the instructors had to make in the light of major policy changes
- The extent to which the IAH Center works in conjunction with other departments
- How electronic media were and continue to be used in the classroom

As per our telephone conversation of ..... I have identified you as a person who can give me specific information relating to my inquiry. I am here to follow up on our telephone conversation, and to ask you more pointed questions regarding the above.

**1. Your related experience:** Please tell me what your experience in the development of the general education program at Michigan State University.

- (a) When did you join the program?
- (b) From which academic discipline
- (c) What attracted you to general education.
- (d) What tools did you use in teaching your general education course(s)?

**2. The history of general education at MSU.**

- (a) Which do you consider the three biggest landmarks in the history of the teaching and learning of general education at MSU?
- (b) Can you name any three people who have had the strongest influence on the evolution of general education at MSU.

(c) Of the following teaching methods, which do you consider to be the most commonly used by teachers:

- \_\_\_\_ Lecturing
- \_\_\_\_ Group discussion
- \_\_\_\_ Question and answer
- \_\_\_\_ Watching videos
- \_\_\_\_ Using the internet
- \_\_\_\_ Using CD-ROM

(d) Why do you think this method is used more commonly than others?

(e) Which of the following ratings do you give to the average Teaching Assistant (T. A.) helping with the teaching of general education at MSU:

\_\_\_\_ Indispensable, \_\_\_\_ Very helpful, \_\_\_\_ Helpful, \_\_\_\_ Unhelpful

### **3. The administration of the general education program**

(a) Of the following bodies of people, which one do you consider to be most responsible for making changes in the general education program at MSU:

- \_\_\_\_ classroom teachers (including T.A.s)
- \_\_\_\_ the Board of Trustees
- \_\_\_\_ Academic Council
- \_\_\_\_ CRUE
- \_\_\_\_ UCGE
- \_\_\_\_ Directors of the Centers for integrative studies
- \_\_\_\_ Students
- \_\_\_\_ the public media

### **4. How would you classify the administration of the general education program?**

- \_\_\_\_ democratic (involves teachers and students too)
- \_\_\_\_ undemocratic (makes changes without adequate consultation)
- \_\_\_\_ it depends on circumstances

### **5. The teaching of general education**

(a) What do you consider to be the basic qualifications for a general education teacher at MSU?

- \_\_\_\_ excellent (as good as faculty)
- \_\_\_\_ very good (almost as good as faculty)
- \_\_\_\_ good (helpful and dependable)
- \_\_\_\_ satisfactory (works well under supervision)
- \_\_\_\_ mediocre (does not serve a useful purpose)

(b) To your knowledge, has the teaching of general education had to change at any time in line with policy change?

**6. IAH 201: How would you assess the popularity the course IAH 201 among teachers?**

- \_\_\_\_ very popular
- \_\_\_\_ popular
- \_\_\_\_ unpopular
- \_\_\_\_ balanced
- \_\_\_\_ I am not sure

**7. How do students like the course IAH 201?**

- \_\_\_\_ it's their favorite course
- \_\_\_\_ it's not their favorite
- \_\_\_\_ I don't know

**8. Recommendation: What suggestions would you give to improve the following things regarding the teaching and learning of general education at MSU? Give brief reasons for your answers.**

(a) interaction between teachers and administrators.

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(b) teacher recruitment and preparation

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(c) curriculum content

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d) use of electronic media.

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(e) student participation

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I did not give the above questions to my subjects as a questionnaire. What I did was to give them copies, but I did the scoring myself as I interviewed them. In most cases the actual interview did not follow the above order because my interviewees were eager to tell me specific things that were of particular interest to them. These things included actual incidents of what had happened or what people were saying about some controversial issues. On two occasions I greatly benefited when my interviewees took time to explain technical aspects of the data they were giving me.



## **APPENDIX B**

### **EXPANSION OF EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE**

## APPENDIX B

### EXPANSION OF EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

YEAR	NO. of SCHOOLS	TOTAL ENROLMENT
1979	177	66 215
1980	197	74 321
1981	694	148 690
1982	738	227 647
1983	790	316 438
1984	1 182	416 413
1985	1 215	482 000
1986	1 276	537 427
1987	1 395	604 652
1988	1 484	641 005
1989	1 502	695 612

*(Adapted from Education in Zimbabwe, by Moyo, Ngwata. Colclough and Lofstedt, 1990, p 75))*

By 1989 the expansion in secondary school enrollment began to affect higher education. The University of Zimbabwe, where I work, was the only university in the country. Its intake also jumped up as follows:

**UZ enrollment**

<b><u>YEAR</u></b>	<b><u>ENROLMENT</u></b>
1979	1941
1989	9000
1999	25 000 (expected in August

The university had 15 teacher training and vocational training colleges. Their enrollments also increased phenomenally. By 1992 enrollment in the existing institutions of higher education had reached its maximum. Alternatives had to be found. These came in the following forms:

## **APPENDIX C**

### **GROWTH OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE (1984-1988)**

## APPENDIX C

### GROWTH OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE (1984-1988)

Besides the University of Zimbabwe, by 1988 Zimbabwe had 8 technical colleges. Each of the colleges offered a range of courses related to the needs of the country. There were also several privately owned colleges, which were monitored by the eight colleges on behalf of the University. The table below shows the rise in the intakes of students between 1984 and 1988.

#### Total college Student Enrollments

DISCIPLINES	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
1. Automotive Engineering	156	198	632	590	660
2. Civil Engineering	692	635	471	951	587
3. Electrical Engineering	885	779	698	998	801
4. Mechanical Engineering	1168	1013	82	1322	1422
5. Food Technology	6	5	5	56	56
6. Printing Graphic Arts	136	137	154	127	159
7. Science Technology	557	657	673	458	729
8. Business Education	849	5804	2747	2783	6191
9. Computer Studies	30	37	16	10	109
10. Library & Information Science	28	28	64	27	113
11. Hotel and Catering	34	56	102	110	180
12. Cooperatives	0	0	0	0	10
13. Mass Communication	42	20	3	79	159
TOTAL					

*(Adapted from Colclough, et al. Table 4:7 (p. 55), Education in Zimbabwe: Issues of Quantity and quality, SIDA, December 1990.)*

A possible cause for the significant fluctuation in the number of enrollments is shortage of teachers. It would appear that this problem had been partially solved by 1988.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **THE BASIC COLLEGE CURRICULUM AT MSU**

## **APPENDIX D**

### **THE BASIC COLLEGE CURRICULUM AT MSU**

When the General College changed to the Basic College in 1944, its syllabus had the following courses and course combinations.

#### The sources

The following is the list of all the courses that were offered:

1. Written and Spoken English
2. Biological Sciences
3. Physical Sciences
4. Effective Living
5. Social Science
6. History of Civilization
7. Literature and Fine Arts

#### Course combinations

These were also the same courses offered in the General College. The only difference was in the subject combinations that a student was allowed. While the General College allowed any combinations to be made by a student, the Basic College introduced the element of a core course which every student had to take in the first place and then add the other combinations to it. The courses were taken as follows:

- Written and Spoken English (the core course)
- One of the two Natural Sciences
- One of the two Social Sciences
- Either History or Literature and Fine Arts
- One of the three courses not already taken

#### Criticism of the arrangement

This arrangement was criticized for the following three reasons:

- The change was viewed as cosmetic by staff
- The subject Effective Living was considered unacademic
- The title Written and Spoken English was considered to be imprecise

## **APPENDIX E**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES ESTABLISHES THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL EDUCATION (UCGE)**



## **APPENDIX E**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES ESTABLISHES THE UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL EDUCATION (UCGE)**

The resolution on general education was the fourth item under “Other Items for Action” on the Board of Trustee’s agenda of April 26-27, 1979. The following is an extract from the resolution:

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the M.S.U. Board of Trustees affirms its commitment to general education at Michigan State University as defined by the Academic Council in accepting the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on General Education criteria on February 6, 1973; further, the Board of Trustees affirms its support of Provost Winder’s recommendation to establish a University Committee on General Education as a standing committee of the Academic Council.

Further, the Board of Trustees urges the Academic Governance System to consider promptly Provost Winder’s proposal to revise the policy on general education as provided in the reorganizational proposal that the 1972 general education policy be modified to place responsibility for general education with the Colleges of Arts and Letters, Natural Science, and Social Science and with primary responsibility for general education courses assigned to the four general education departments in the Colleges of Arts and Letters, Natural Science and Social Science.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees within one year and at appropriate times thereafter devote a Thursday evening briefing session to the general education program of the university. The briefing shall include a report of the Provost and a report of the University Committee on General Education concerning general education policy and enrollment patterns and information on the activities of the Departments of American Thought and Language, Natural Science, Social Science and Humanities.

Throughout the report, no reference is made to general education faculty at all. The report just contains resolutions made by administration for teachers to abide by. It also reflects the top-heaviness of the administration in this issue. This is an issue for which the M.S.U. administration has been heavily criticized on by faculty at the university.

## **APPENDIX F**

### **THE 1988 CRUE LANDMARK RECOMMENDATIONS**

## APPENDIX F

### THE 1988 CRUE LANDMARK RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1988 CRUE made sweeping recommendations regarding the teaching and learning of general education at Michigan State University. Following are the highlights and essential details of the highly prescriptive recommendations:

#### **Highlights:**

- Recommended schools of Integrative Studies, one in each of the three core colleges. (Humanities, Natural Science, Social Science).
- Faculty may or may not belong to an academic unit of the college that houses the school. Members of current general education departments may become members of these schools or request assignment in other units.
- New faculty may be hired with a full or part time affiliation with a school, provided such new faculty have academic unit affiliation other than school.
- An extended period of transition will be necessary to develop the proposed program. Perhaps .... wise to present newly developed courses initially as options.

#### **Essential details**

1. A University Center of Integrative Studies was going to be established. The center would have the following functions:
  - Monitoring and oversight of all core courses to ensure that the courses run according in accordance with core curricular principles.
  - Developing, administering and staffing all the general education courses.
  - Establishing a research program that will create supporting programs and the core curriculum.
  - Develop programs that support the improvement of undergraduate teaching.
  - Providing the funds needed to run the program.
2. The Center would have a “separately reporting Director, a budget, an advisory committee and an executive committee.”
  - The Director would report to the Office of the Provost .
  - Schools had the responsibility of developing courses and inviting teachers to use them.
3. The three schools operating under this Center would be named according to the skills they taught. The schools would be.
  - Independent from each other
  - Broad based
  - Collaborative in the way they operated.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **IAH 201, AMERICA AND THE WORLD**

**APPENDIX G**  
**IAH 201, AMERICA AND THE WORLD**

The materials FOR THIS COURSE are divided into the following general topics:

TOPIC NUMBER	SUBJECT	PAGES	
		From	To
1	General Introduction to IAH 201, MERICA and the WORLD, Course description Course objectives, Where to get help	1	30
2	AMERICA AND THE EVE OF UROPEAN CONTACT, Origin of Indian corn, Other American Indian accounts	31	68
3	EUROPEAN VIEW OF THE WORLD Mainly the views of some Spaniards about America	69	93
4.	CULTURAL CONTACT On voyages to the New World and getting into contact with the native people.	101	130
5	LATIN AMERICA: BEFORE AND AFTER EUROPEAN CONTACT Aspects of the early history of Latin America.	145	174
6	EARLY NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES Articles on the experiences of some former slaves, and how slavery dehumanized them	175	204
7 omitted			
8	RELIGION AND LITERATURE IN THE 18TH CENTURY BRITISH COLONIAL SOCIETY Emotional articles on religion and literature	205	233
9	THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION Articles and poems on the racial issues that eventually led to the American Civil War.	235	290
10	DIPLOMACY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION The writings of Thomas Paine and others on the need to fight and die in defense of liberty and human dignity	291	322
11	THE NEW REPUBLIC Articles on life in the American Republic,	323	360

	following the American Declaration of Independence		
12	<b>WESTERN EXPANSION</b> Articles justifying the westward expansion into the territory of the native Americans.	361	410
13	<b>AMERICA AWAKENING</b> Articles on how Americans came to realize their human rights.	411	452
14	<b>THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND AMERICA</b> Articles on how the Industrial Revolution reduced people to slave conditions. Hence their flocking to the New World in quest of greener pastures.	453	488
15	<b>PLANTATION LIFE AND SLAVERY</b> Articles on the ethics of maintaining slavery in the American states.	489	524
16	<b>THE CIVIL WAR AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN</b> Passages about the events leading to the outbreak of the American Civil War, and the role played by Lincoln.	525	564
17	<b>THE DIPLOMACY OF THE CIVIL WAR</b> Some views about the rationale of the American Civil War	565	586
18	<b>RECONSTRUCTION</b> Passages on renewed American nationalism following the Civil War	587	615

The information above is recorded on video tapes which are played to the students by Teaching Assistants.

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