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A COMPARISON OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE GRADUATES IN 1978 WITH THEIR PERCEPTIONS FIVE YEARS LATER IN 1983 REGARDING SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE CORE CURRICULUM PROGRAM AT SPRING ARBOR COLLEGE

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A COMPARISON OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE GRADUATES IN 1978 WITH THEIR PERCEPTIONS FIVE YEARS LATER IN 1983 REGARDING SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE CORE CURRICULUM PROGRAM AT SPRING ARBOR COLLEGE

by

Darrell Moore

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

A Comparison of the Perceptions of the Graduates in 1978 with Their Perceptions Five Years Later in 1983 Regarding Selected Aspects of the Core Curriculum Program at Spring Arbor College

by

Darrell Moore

This study was designed and carried out to determine the opinions of the Spring Arbor College class of 1978 regarding their academic preparation at Spring Arbor College; to assess the effectiveness of the core curriculum program in aiding the integration of faith, learning, and living; to obtain criticisms, suggestions, and recommendations for the improvement of the core program.

The research instrument developed by John M. Newby in 1972 was used to gather the data for the study. A variety of descriptive and inferential techniques were employed to analyze the data. The perceptions of the graduates in 1978 were compared with their perceptions five years later in 1983.

As a result of the data analysis, the researcher found that

There was no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding their general educational experience at Spring Arbor College.

There was no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the

graduates regarding the Christian Perspective in the Liberal Arts program at Spring Arbor College.

On the basis of the analysis, the following conclusions were drawn.

The graduates of Spring Arbor College in 1978 have not significantly modified the perceptions of their educational experience nor of the core curriculum.

The graduates perceived that they had achieved a moderately high level of success in accomplishing the goals of the Spring Arbor "concept," but they did not perceive that the core curriculum program had a significant impact on their integration of faith, learning and living.

The graduates were not well satisfied with their total college experience, nor with the core curriculum program.

The graduates perceived the core curriculum program as the weakest part of the general education program, and in need of restructuring.

The following recommendations were made:

That the evaluation of the core curriculum program include the following: a clear articulation of the goals of the college, actual results of course evaluations, faculty as well as student evaluations, and a periodic, systematic review of the alumni.

That special training be given to the faculty of the core courses to improve the instruction in the core sequence of courses, selecting with care the most capable faculty, with special attention given to their ability to assist the students in the integration of faith, learning and living.

To Donna, for without her dedication, sacrifice, and belief in me, this would not have transpired.

My appreciation is also extended to Dr. Richard Featherstone for his guidance and ability to pave the way. And to committee members Dr. Howard Hickey, Dr. Eldon Nonnamaker, and Dr. Charles McCracken for their cooperation and assistance.

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Twenty-five years ago in looking ahead to the decade of the sixties, David Riesman predicted that the small church college in the decade of the sixties must either change or perish (Riesman, 1958). At the opening of the decade of the seventies, when the small church college must have changed for most of them did not perish, the watchword for all institutions of higher education was "relevance" (Newby, 1972). As the decade of the eighties opened, when the economic picture was much more bleak than in 1958 when Riesman made his prediction, the clarion call was for "quality education" (Brann, 1979; Eddy, 1982; Mosley and Bucher, 1982; Sandin, 1982; Sanoff, 1980; and Simpson, 1980).

The contemporary demand for quality has been responded to in various ways. Many institutions are reexamining their curricula and giving special emphasis to a redefinition of general education, calling for a refocusing and a balance of academic disciplines versus career preparation (Conrad, 1980; "Issues in Higher Education," 1979). An increasing number of schools are instituting programs in general education and core curricula. This movement was given major impetus when Harvard University restructured its undergraduate curriculum in 1976. They were not the first to do so, but they created the largest wave (Henderson, 1981).

But there is no consenus on what constitutes a core program (Tobias, 1982). Some want to identify general education and core programs (e.g., Harvard University) and others want to distinguish between them (Gaff, 1979). The term "general education" functions somewhat like an "ink blot" onto which institutions and individuals project their own values, beliefs, and attitudes. Different philosophies of education produce different concepts of core and general education (Shulman, 1979).

While it is true that some seem to see general education and core as practically synonymous, it may be useful to distinguish between them (Sturgeon, 1978). Hartman (1977) identifies the core curriculum as those courses which are especially designed to achieve certain integrative purposes. The core is usually interdisciplinary and organized around a theme or issue (Gaff, 1983). It is that "cluster of subjects and classes that an institution of higher learning insists that all its students take together" (Boyer and Kaplan, 1977, p. 10). General education, on the other hand, refers to distribution requirements which specify a grouping of courses from which the students choose a few. These are intended to "round out" their education and give them breadth. The core curriculum concept is really a means for achieving in part the general educational goals of the institution (Shulman, 1979).

Current discussions on general education, liberal education, and core tend to be both exhilarating and frustrating. Underlying this schizophrenia is the reality of assumptions that the participants take to the discussion. On the one hand, there are "ways of thinking" devotees, who stress the importance of introducing students to the

diverse epistemology of modern learning. This approach raises questions like: How does a hard scientist think? How does a social scientist think? How does a humanist think? How does an artist think? (Bailey, 1977). On the other side of the discussion are the "areas of knowledge" devotees. A basic question here tends to be: "What is an educated person in the modern world?"

The "ways of thinking" perspective is illustrated by St. Joseph's College, where an eight course series has been developed as a core program. Entering freshmen begin by focusing on the contemporary world and its relevance to the past. They then move to a study of how the Ancient, Medieval and Modern periods developed their images of man, of nature and of God. The next two semesters offer views of mankind from different perspectives (Mohrman, 1977).

The Harvard experience is a good example of the areas of knowledge approach. The goal of the core curriculum is to encourage a critical appreciation of the major approaches to knowledge, so that students may acquire an understanding of what kinds of knowledge exist in certain important areas, how such knowledge is created, used, and what it might mean to them personally. The students should acquire basic literacy in the major forms of intellectual discourse (Harvard Report, June 1979).

The attention currently focused on general education and core curricula presupposes a liberal arts perspective on higher education. Liberal education has been the major thrust of American higher education from the colonial period to the mid-twentieth century (Bowen, 1980; Conrad, 1980). But in the middle of the twentieth century, "the mission of higher education has become muddled" (Boyer and Levine, 1981). In the last thirty-five years, three major waves of change have impacted

American higher education in significant ways. First, Sputnik produced a demand for excellence in the sciences and brought a new wave of honors programs. Second, during the sixties American higher education experimented with pass/fail, independent study, free universities, and the arts as the number of undergraduates exploded. Third, the seventies brought a profusion of non-traditional programs and even learning by credit card payments (Lockwood, 1982). As a result, liberal arts colleges increasingly abandoned their unique liberating goal of "education for life" for the "university college" model of educating for a job (Schurr, 1979).

The deterioration in educational quality which followed in the wake of this upheaval was subtle and not readily recognized. But even before Harvard's dramatic response, many educators had begun to take another look at the curriculum of their institutions. The pendulum began to swing, and is still in motion, but it has not fully swung. Changes in education cannot be rushed. The problems we face are not so much philosophical as practical. Changing a curriculum may be compared to moving a cemetery, the protests are loud and long. And departments will change only when their own survival is at stake (Bowen, 1980; Sanoff, 1980; Henderson, 1981).

The turmoil and change of the last three decades has certainly not left the small, private church related college unaffected. In matter of fact, the struggles of private colleges may be greater than those of the schools in the public sector. A variety of reasons may account for this. Inflationary demands increase the burden on faculty salaries, tuition, utilities and deferred maintenance. Increased federal pressures limit tax credits and impose sunset laws on charitable giving.

Some believe that the necessary focus on economic survival will inevitably erode the quality of educational programs. The changing relationships between the colleges and their supporting denominations diverts attention and creative effort from the educational process (Gyertson, 1981; Howe, 1979; Mosely, 1980; Sandin, 1982).

Survival of the small church-related college may entail numerous demands. The private college should understand its own character--this is the question of self-identity--(Bucher, 1982); should have a clear sense of mission (Mosely, 1980); should produce quality education programs (Sandin, 1982); should learn to manage decline (Howe, 1979); and should re-discover the art of dreaming (Gallin, 1980; Mosely and Bucher, 1982).

Writers have long observed that the American liberal arts college, almost unique in the history of education, may be the most adaptable and knowledgable of educational institutions in surviving through periods of rapid social and economic change (Howe, 1979; Sandin, 1982). "The present crisis concerns the ability of the religiously oriented colleges to maintain that level of educational effectiveness which the competitiveness of the times demands" (Sandin, 1982, p. 2).

Statement of the Problem

In 1963 Spring Arbor College expanded from a two-year junior college to a four-year liberal arts college. The curriculum of the new four-year program was developed by the faculty in a special study over months of intensive planning and work. The Christian Perspective in the Liberal Arts (hereafter referred to as CPLA) program was inaugurated in

the fall of 1963. Full accreditation by North Central Accrediting Association was awarded in the spring of 1967.

The first major evaluation of the CPLA program was carried out during the summer of 1970. This evaluation by the faculty, assisted by professional consultants, produced some major changes in the program. The original CPLA program focused on nine courses taken by all students. The new plan provided three core courses also to be taken by all students, plus two courses from each of the four divisions of the curriculum: Humanities, Natural Science, Philosophy and Religion, and Social Science. The same pattern has continued through the spring of 1983.

A study of the CPLA program for the years of 1965-1970 was completed by John Newby in 1972 as the basis for a doctoral dissertation for Michigan State University. Out of Newby's study an evaluation program for Spring Arbor College was developed, which, with minor changes, is in effect today. Each spring the graduating seniors are asked to evaluate selected aspects of their college experience.

There has been no major study of the collected data from these annual survey questionnaires.

Purposes for the Study

This study was carried out to compare the perceptions of the SAC class of 1978 with their perceptions five years later. The data compiled by the Office of Institutional Research in 1978 was matched against the same questionnaire administered five years later to the same class. The study was designed to accomplish the following purposes:

1. To assess the perceptions of the graduates concerning the core

curriculum program at SAC, and its effectiveness in aiding the integration of faith, learning and living;

2. To obtain criticisms, suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the core curriculum program;

3. To evaluate these data and use the results to suggest implications for the core curriculum program; and

4. To make suggestions concerning the improvement of the evaluation process currently employed by the college.

Design of the Study

The following questions were the focus of this study:

1. How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later regarding their educational experience at SAC?

To answer this question the following research hypotheses were tested:

Ho 1.: There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding their educational experience at SAC.

Ho 1.1.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their involvement in the study of the liberal arts.

Ho 1.2.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning.

Ho 1.3.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their critical participation in the affairs of the contemporary world.

Ho 1.4.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their outstanding experience at SAC.

Ho 1.5.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their identification of strengths and weaknesses in the SAC program.

2. How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later in 1983 regarding the CPLA Program at SAC?

To answer this question the following research hypotheses were tested:

Ho 2.: There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding the CPLA program at SAC.

Ho 2.1.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the development of a Christian perspective for learning.

Ho 2.2.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the CPLA courses as listed in question number 18.

Ho 2.3.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the adequacy of the core courses in providing a foundation for further study in the liberal arts.

Ho 2.4.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the core sequence of courses as listed in question number 20.

Ho 2.5.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their general attitude toward the CPLA Program.

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the core program as perceived by the graduates?

The following statistical procedures were employed: A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with appropriate F tests was used for purposes of comparison. A univariate analysis of variance was used to test the sub hypotheses. A chi square test was applied item by item to study relationships. Descriptive statistics were employed to show the ratings of the respondents on certain aspects of the SAC program.

Definition of Terms

Christian Perspective in the Liberal Arts.--The CPLA curriculum is a program of general education that is a common experience for all students at SAC. The purpose of the CPLA curriculum is:

> to bring together the knowledge of the liberal arts with the great moral issues confronting mankind as the basis for the Christian commitment . . . [It] is organized to facilitate the total learning process which begins with an understanding of ideas in the major fields of human learning, the ability to analyze issues that arise out of these ideas and the responsibility to integrate these ideas and issues with a Christian perspective (Spring Arbor College Catalog, 1970, p. 2).

Christian Perspective for Learning.--

> Christian higher education is a process of involvement in a community of scholars who investigate the areas of human knowledge from the perspective of the Christian world view. The prerequisite for this perspective is a commitment to the redeeming love of Jesus Christ in order that the mind and spirit may be freed for the life of learning and that the achieved knowledge may be integrated by the Christian commitment. From an enlightened reason and a regenerated love, the student. . .will align himself with the on-going responsibility of the Christian in modern society (McKenna, pp. 13-14).

General Education.--

In its broadest terms, general education is rooted in the liberal arts tradition and involves study of the basic liberal arts and sciences; stresses breadth and provides students with familiarity with various branches of human understanding as well as the methodologies and languages particular to different bodies of knowledge; strives to foster integration, synthesis, and connectedness of knowledge rather than discrete bits of specialized information; encourages the understanding and appreciation of one's heritage as well as respect for other peoples and cultures; includes an examination of values--both those relevant to current controversial issues and those implicit in a discipline's methodology; prizes a common educational experience for at least part of the college years; requires mastery of the linguistic, analytic, critical, and computational skills necessary for lifelong learning; and fosters the development of personal qualities, such as tolerance of ambiguity, empathy for persons with different values, and an expanded view of self (Gaff, 1983, pp. 7-8).

Liberal Arts.--

. . .the liberal arts are those which are appropriate to man as man, rather than to man in his special function as a worker or as a professional or even as a scholar. A man may be all of these things, but he is more basically man. It was Cicero who defined the liberal arts as those which are appropriate to humanity. If man is to be anything more than a half-human specialist or technician, if a man is to feel life whole and live it whole rather than piecemeal, if he is to think for himself rather than live secondhanded, the liberal arts are needed to educate the person (Holmes, 1975, pp. 35).

Liberal Education.--

A liberal education includes the liberal arts and general education: that is, competence in the intellectual arts and an introduction to our cultural heritage of the arts and sciences. Liberal education goes further toward a comprehensive understanding of the arts and sciences in depth and inclusiveness, and toward a higher degree of mastery in a selected area (Hong, 1956, p. 83).

Core Curriculum.--

Gaff (1983) defines a core curriculum as "a configuration of courses required of all students. Although the core may be a series of courses in certain academic disciplines, it is more commonly interdisciplinary and organized around a theme or issue" (p. 10). Boyer and Kaplan (1977) identify the core as "the coursework that

undergraduates pursue in common, the cluster of subjects and classes that an institution of higher learning insists that all its students take together" (p. 10).

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations: The study was limited by the validity and reliability of the instrument used in the study. The questionnaire was developed and validated by John Newby as the basis for a doctoral dissertation for Michigan State University in 1972 (Newby, 1972, pp. 9, 16-20).

Delimitations: The study was delimited to the perceptions of the graduates of the class of 1978 at SAC at the time of their graduation, and the perceptions of those same graduates five years later in 1983.

The study was delimited to the responses of graduates whose participation is self-selective.

The questionnaire administered by the Office of Institutional Research at SAC will provide the data needed.

The data of the study will be affected to the degree of the sincerity of response to the questionnaire administered.

Overview of the Study

Chapter II includes a selected review of the literature under the following headings: (1) Liberal Education and General Education, (2) Core Curriculum Programs, and (3) The Church-related College.

Chapter III describes the research methodology used to develop and analyze the study.

Chapter IV presents a review of the results of the questionnaires and an analysis of these results.

Chapter V will present discussions, conclusions and recommendations based in the findings of the study.

Possible Applications

The results of this study should point to some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Core Curriculum Program at SAC, and thus provide data for the improvement and strengthening of the program.

The study may also provide some insights into ways of strengthening the evaluation process currently employed by the Office of Institutional Research at SAC.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of selected literature and attempts to develop a theoretical framework in which to study selected aspects of the core curriculum program at Spring Arbor College. The chapter is subdivided under the following topics: (1) Liberal education and general education, (2) the core curriculum, and (3) the private church-related college.

Liberal Education and General Education

There are conflicting views in the literature about the meaning, identity, and the relation of liberal education and general education. Part of the confusion seems to be related to the apparent differences in the literature on the distinct meaning of the terms "liberal education" and "general education." Some authors want to make a distinction between "liberal" and "general" education, while others use the two ideas synonomously. Gaff (1983) observes that "much of the rhetoric about liberal and general education is vacuous and little more than petty pieties--ideas that lack connectedness to actions" (p. xiv). He then proceeds to use the ideas and the terms interchangably in his excellent study entitled General Education Today. A number of writers use both ideas, and seem to make some difference between them, but never point out what that difference is (Sandin, 1982).

Newby (1972) quotes Blackman (1969) in pointing out that general education differs from liberal education "only in that it has greater interest in the contemporary, the relevant, the world around us." Newby quotes Morse (1964) as declaring that

> . . .Liberal education is primarily concerned with a body of subject matter drawn largely from the Western cultural heritage. More importantly, liberal education implies an in-depth concentration on humanistic studies. The content of general education, on the other hand, is variable, drawn from many sources, and adjusted to the times and needs of the individual (p. 34).

However, the majority of contemporary writers in this area do not make any drastic distinction between "liberal" and "general" education. Therefore, this study will examine the literature in these areas together. The terms will be used interchangeably.

For the past two decades, liberal education has been in a state of confusion. It has been argued that the liberal arts no longer liberate, and that the liberal tradition itself is either dead or dying. Numerous reasons for this situation have been enumerated. Gaff (1983) places the responsibility squarely with the faculty.

> . . .The problem with general education is basically a problem with the faculty. Faculty specialization has fostered a narrowness of a vision; academic disciplines have worked against serious intellectual discussion among experts in different fields; the emphasis on cognitive rationality have all but purged values and feelings from our professional concern; the focus on academic respectability has turned faculty away from the fundamental, if messy, social and political problems facing our society, indeed, all of humanity; and the current period of retrenchment has pitted faculty against their colleagues and reduced much of the debate about the curriculum to self-serving statements and protective posturing (p. xv).

Conrad and Wyer (1980) see the problem as much more complex. The breadth of the recent debate reflects, at least in part, a confusion over the proper approach to the problem. In their excellent review of

the literature of recent scholarship in the area, they point out six different approaches to liberal education. The first is an anthology of essays, a collection of views from prominent spokespersons or specialists providing a state-of-the-art summary. Some of the most widely used anthologies are: Missions of the College Curriculum, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1977); General Education: Issues and Resources (The Project on General Education Models, 1980); Hook, Kurtz, and Todorovich, The Philosophy of the Curriculum: The Need for General Education (1975).

A second approach is the comprehensive handbook aimed at providing an integrated resource for curriculum planners and students of the curriculum. Representative of this approach are: Dressel, College and University Curriculum (1971); Mayhew and Ford, Changing the Curriculum (1973); Levine, Handbook on Undergraduate Curriculum (1978); Chickering, et al., Developing the College Curriculum (1977); and Conrad, The Undergraduate Curriculum (1978).

A third approach is the examination of national trends in undergraduate curricula. The pattern for this approach was the work of Dressel and Delisle, Undergraduate Curriculum Trends (1969). This focus has been pursued mainly under the auspices of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education.

A fourth approach focuses on the description (usually including some analysis) of innovations in liberal education. An outstanding earlier work in this area was Brick and McGrath, Innovation in Liberal Arts Colleges (1969). Other important works in this area are: Levine and Weingart, Reform of Undergraduate Education (1973); Grant and Riesman, The Perpetual Dream (1978).

A fifth approach concentrates on curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation. Early works of importance are: Dressel, College and University Curriculum (1971); Mayhew and Ford, Changing the Curriculum (1973). Three examples of recent scholarship deserve mention: Martorana and Kuhns, Managing Academic Change (1975); Lindquist, Strategies for Change (1978); and Conrad, The Undergraduate Curriculum: A Guide to Innovation and Reform (1978).

Curriculum evaluation has not received as much attention as design and implementation, but the following works are useful: Anderson and Ball, The Profession and Practice of Program Evaluation (1978); Dressel, Handbook of Academic Evaluation (1976); Miller, The Assessment of College Performance (1979).

A sixth approach includes historical and philosophical treatments of undergraduate education. Rudolph, Curriculum: A History of the American Undergraduate Course of Study Since 1636 (1977) is a history of undergraduate education in America. More attention has been given to the philosophy of liberal education. The classic in this area is Phoenix's Realms of Meaning (1964). In more recent years the following works have analyzed key philosophical issues confronting liberal education: Belknap, and Kuhns, Tradition and Innovation: General Education and the Reintegration of the University (1977); Brubacher, On the Philosophy of Higher Education (1977); Hirst, Knowledge and the Curriculum: A Collection of Philosophical Papers (1974); Schwab, Science, Curriculum, and Liberal Education (1978); and Wegener, Liberal Education and the Modern University (1978).

Much of the recent literature does not distinguish between liberal education and the total undergraduate curriculum, making it virtually

impossible to separate these elements. Some of the literature is extensively descriptive, often at the expense of sustained analysis. Yet the study of liberal education has begun to reflect a more scholarly approach; for in addition to description and historical narrative, attention has focused on analytical approaches to the design, analysis, evaluation, and the philosophical bases of liberal education.

Jerry Gaff's very helpful work, General Education Today (1983), carries the subtitle, A Critical Analysis of Controversies, Practices, and Reforms. Levine (1983) calls it the most complete discussion in print of the phenomenon of today's changing curricula, and the best hands-on guide to change in general education that he has seen. It is the best recent survey of the current state of general education in America. He traces the debate and reformulation of general education now in progress to three separate events in 1977. That year the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching published its volume on the curriculum and labeled general education "a disaster area." Harvard University's task force on the core curriculum issued a long-awaited report, and the faculty began to discuss proposals to strengthen undergraduate education. Third, the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Ernest L. Boyer and his assistant, Martin Kaplan, called for the creation of a core curriculum that would emphasize our common needs and thereby increase the chances of survival for the human species (Boyer and Kaplan, 1977).

These reports reinforced the concern for quality in higher education all across America. Conferences and workshops have been held to discuss issues; articles and books have been written to expound analyses and make proposals; projects have been initiated to solve

problems; programs have been inaugurated to assist reform; and funding programs have been established by private and public agencies to support improvements. These events indicate that a veritable movement to reformulate general education is taking place on the nation's campuses (p. 2).

Gaff contends that four distinct philosophical approaches to general education are at the heart of the current debate: idealism, progressivism, essentialism, and pragmatism. Although these differ in substantive ways, all strongly favor an approach to general education which:

> is rooted in the liberal tradition and involves study of the basic liberal arts and sciences;
> stresses breadth and provides students with familiarity with various branches of human understanding as well as the methodologies and languages particular to different bodies of knowledge;
> strives to foster integration, synthesis, and connectedness of knowledge rather than discrete bits of specialized information;
> encourages the understanding and appreciation of one's heritage as well as respect for other peoples and cultures;
> includes an examination of values--both those relavent to current controversial issues and those implicit in a discipline's methodology;
> prizes a common educational experience for at least part of the college years;
> requires the mastery of the linguistic, analytic, critical, and computational skills necessary for lifelong learning; and
> fosters the development of personal qualities, such as tolerance of ambiguity, empathy for persons with different values, and an expanded view of self (pp. 7-8).

This is an ideal, an ideal which Gaff declares has been tarnished in professional as well as in liberal education. He explains the collapse of the ideal in terms of the following failures: the lack of convincing rationale, the assortment of disconnected courses, the prevalence of superficial introductory surveys, the uninspired teaching by inferior faculty, the absence of strong advocates and role models in

the faculty, the pressure to master the latest techniques and larger amounts of specialized knowledge. It is not really surprising, then, that students choose their specialized courses first, and search for convenient liberal arts courses as fillers. In such a context, "general education becomes at best an empty slogan and at worst a series of barriers to overcome on the way to acquiring a college degree" (p. 29).

At the heart of the continuing debate is the enduring ideal of a broad general education that prepares students for their adult lives, whatever their specializations or vocation may be. This debate contains the clamour of many voices being raised, contributing very different views on fundamental issues. Concerned parties are determined to correct the drift toward illiteracy. Faculty members in various academic disciplines argue both from expert views and from personal interests. Critics contend that larger perspectives than those of disciplinarians or departments are needed to restore coherence to the curriculum. Employers in the business world as well as others discuss the usefulness of the liberal arts. Academic reformers monitor continued access and special programs for non-traditional students. And the students are conspicuous by their absence from the debate. Yet surveys show that students have important views about the purpose, form, substance, and methodology of general education, views which most institutions cannot afford to ignore (pp. 30-53).

A key event in the debate has been Harvard's institution of a general education program in the late 1970s. It has been praised, villified (O'Connell, 1979), and objectively evaluated (Wilson, 1978). This study will take a closer look at Harvard's plan under the section on the core curriculum.

While the focus of the current debate on general education is usually on formal curriculum, the changes which institutions are making in their underlying educational philosophies are far more important. A curricular philosophy is always a group product rather than the work of a single mind. It comes out of compromise and accommodation among several competing conceptions. Because these conceptions sometimes conflict with each other, actual practices more truly represent the philosophy of an institution than do any verbal statements. Cross (1975) declares that three curriculums co-exist at any school: the curriculum described in the catalog, the curriculum which the faculty teaches, and the curriculum which the students learn (cited in Gaff, p. 60). If the discrepancies between them are significant, then the institution's educational philosophy is reduced to empty rhetoric.

One approach to a curricular philosophy is to consider the general aims of education. The literature reveals, however, that there is no consensus concerning the aims of general education. Riley (1980) enumerates six competing goals of education: developing critical intelligence, preparing students for jobs, transforming society and its institutions, transmitting a body of classical knowledge, providing students with skills, and developing the "whole person." While a general consensus may be impossible, Riley argues that each institution can and must reach some consensus about goals, for "without a systematic review of the aims of education, colleges and universities will tend to reinstate mindlessly a 1950 model of general education" (p. 298).

Another approach to curricular philosophy is to define the qualities possessed by an educated person (Bouwsma, 1975; Bowen, 1980; Dressel, 1979; Trilling, 1980). Unfortunately, curricula have

frequently been determined by the inertia of past practices, the interests of faculty, or other secondary issues. But on the positive side a significant result of this exercise is that it focuses on the student. Further, the preparation of such a description affirms the importance of general education, since virtually all such goals fall within its province.

A third approach to curricular philosophy is to develop what has been called "theories of the middle range," statements that relate ideas about general education to specific curricular practices. This process, at its best, produces a coherent set of curricular principles which enjoys a working consensus and maintains institutional integrity. It ensures that practices are consistent with stated philosophy (Gaff, p. 62).

The trend today is one that might be called practical idealism, for the focus of attention is the improvement of existing institutions and the education of a variety of students rather than the development of experimental colleges for special students attracted by a particular approach to education. Some of the significant principles that characterize the current philosophy of general education are the following:

> General education is compatible with specialization and is a necessary compliment to it.
> General education is a necessary part of professional education.
> Some knowledge is more important than other knowledge.
> Certain subjects should be required of every student.
> Academic standards are too low and must be raised.
> The course of study should possess a degree of coherence.
> Colleges should place more emphasis on common learning.
> General education is everyone's business.
> Strengthening undergraduate general education does not require abandoning research or graduate training.
> The general education program should be distinctive, reflecting the character of the institution.

> General education should incorporate recent advances in scholarship.
> Faculty development is essential to general education (p. 62-72).

The search for a new philosophy of general education is yielding a stronger agreement about the purposes and principles of general education today. The emerging conception of general education was expressed over a decade ago by Sanford (1967):

> Education aimed at developing the individual's potential as fully as possible is in the best sense general education. Introducing the students to a range of subjects and ideas, as in survey courses--sometimes called general education--is not the essential thing, though this may be a useful instrument of general education. Developing the generalist approach to inquiry, the synthetic function, is closer to the mark; and so is involvement in significant experiences with people and things. But this is by no means all. General education aims at development toward full humanity, and all the resources of a college should be organized to this end (cited in Gaff, 1983, p. 75).

Conrad and Wyer (1980) analyze various documents from one hundred representative institutions of higher education. From this study they distill seven major trends in liberal education. One of the most publicized of these trends has been the movement back to a required, integrated group of courses or experiences, designed to implement the ideals and goals of liberal or general education. This trend will be discussed in the section on the core curriculum later in this chapter.

A second trend has been the surge of interest in relating the outcomes of liberal education to curricular programs. This focus on outcomes is a new and intriguing element in the liberal arts tradition. The outcomes approach has assumed two basic forms. The first is to determine the overall effects of the college experience on graduates and society at large, and to seek to verify that colleges do achieve what is claimed in their catalogs. There is also a focus on the individual

student and his abilities as developed through the variety of college experiences and evaluated by written tests, oral examinations, testing by computer, and some self-examination. The outstanding work in this area is Howard Bowen's Investment in Learning (1977). Also important are Romney's Measures of Institutional Goal Achievement (1978), Wood and Davis' Designing and Evaluating Higher Education Curricula (1978), Trivett's Competency Programs in Higher Education (1975), as well as Conrad (1978), Chickering (1977), and Levine (1978).

The concern for educational outcomes is directly linked to the next major trend, the redefinition of liberal education in terms of process, and not simply content. In this century, John Dewey is the major proponent in education centered around the development of thinking skills and problem-solving. While major calls for curriculum reform after World War II emphasized the role of higher education in cultivating mental skills, it was not until the past decade that general education abandoned heritage and survey courses in favor of courses and experiences which were organized directly around thinking skills. This trend can be seen in examples of the development of thematic studies, competence programs, and problem-solving courses (Conrad and Wyer, 1980, p. 30). In his rationale for liberal education, Bennett (1977, p. 69) points out that, "the emphasis is now no longer on acquiring content and information, but on acquiring intellectual skills and abilities. The point is to develop conceptual sophistication and critical judgment."

The fourth trend is not so easy to label. The curriculum, especially the general education component, is being stretched beyond the traditional emphasis on reason and intellect. In the 1960s, the philosophy of "development of the whole person" gained substantial

ground, and by the middle of the 1970s had become the norm of liberal arts programs and institutions. But recently there has emerged a new approach which emphasizes a reexamination of intellect and reason themselves. This involves a broadening of the concept of reason to include the aesthetic, value, and pragmatic realms, and seeks to bypass our contemporary division between cognitive and affective, subjective and objective, theory and practice (Conrad and Wyer, 1980; Murchland, 1976). Some writers are calling for a rebirth of the humanities with emphasis on the aesthetic and intuitive (Coughlin, 1976; Mattfeld, 1975; and Morris, 1978), while others argue that the fine arts should be integrated into the liberal arts curriculum (Botstein, 1979; Foster and Burke, 1978).

A fifth major trend is the focus on the values for moral education. There is a growing consensus among students, administrators, faculty, and the general public that some form of value education should be a component of liberal education (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1977, pp. 240-241). The Association of American Colleges devoted one entire issue of its Forum for Liberal Education (Mohrman, 1978) to the concern for values, giving an overview of programs dealing with ethics and values. There has been a proliferation of articles, usually in the form of pleas, for moral education in the college and university setting (Callahan, 1978; Callahan and Bok, 1979; Middleburg, 1977; Monan, 1979; Splete, 1977). Also, a sizeable number of institutions have adopted programs in this area, including St. Olaf, St. Joseph's College, Washington and Lee, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Morehouse College, Boston University's College of Liberal Arts, and the University of California at San Francisco.

This concern for values has generally assumed one of two forms in tne curriculum. Some have concentrated on value postulates and underlying assumptions within the disciplines. Numerous courses and programs, especially those dealing with values in science and technology, have followed from this focus. Other programs have concentrated on the moral growth or education of the individual student. This approach to values education is often more radical in its departure from the traditional modes of narrowly defined intellectual inquiry. Of interest is the fact that the recent Harvard Curriculum Committee identified moral reasoning as an essential element intended to introduce students to important traditions of thought, to make them aware of the intricacies of ethical argument, and to help them come to grips with particular questions of choice and value (Conrad and Wyer, 1980, p. 33).

A sixth trend is the development of new relationships between the liberal arts and the professions. Historically, the liberal arts have been closely linked to the oldest professions of theology, medicine, and law. Currently, there is an uneasy truce between academic specialists, broadly humanistic faculty, and proponents of career education, each vying for more influence in the undergraduate curriculum. Conrad and Wyer quote Jerry Gaff (1980) as follows:

> A tremendous expansion of professional education has taken place in recent years in colleges and universities and has forced new definitions of relationships between liberal arts and the professions. This ascendency of career education within the academy has paralleled the trend toward professionalization of work throughout society. One logical result of these shifts is that liberal arts courses are increasingly tailored to the particular interests and concerns of various vocational groups (p. 33).

There is an increasing amount of literature focused on the close relationship, or the needed close relationship, between the liberal arts

and vocations (Bailey, 1977; Churchill, 1983; Cobb, 1983; Billiar, 1982).

The fact that students place a high value on career preparation while still in college does not mean that the specialized studies involved in their preparations are all that future employers should care about (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1977). The authors of this study go on to indicate several skills associated with liberal education that all employers "should" value, such as the ability to set and meet standards of ethical behavior, appreciation for local, national and foreign frames of reference, and ability to learn independently and rapidly. Levine (1978) declares that there is nothing intrinsic to general education that requires it to be impractical or unworldly. It is not inconsistent to place a greater emphasis on a sense of vocation in liberal education than has traditionally been done. The growth of professional education includes revision of the major and experimentation with internships and experimental learning. Professional education has found its own place in current liberal education (Conrad and Wyer, 1980).

A seventh major trend in liberal education is a focus on the "delivery system" of the curriculum: the degrees, credits, administrative structures, and calendar arrangements. Such structures as off-campus learning centers, separate administrative entities for general education, and flexible time schedules are no longer unique in educational institutions. For example, the focus on outcomes mentioned earlier in this section has been paralleled by a considerable amount of change in both degree and time structures, as well as the development of a core to the curriculum, has brought about new forms of timing and

credit for courses. Levine discusses curricular mechanisms which shorten and lengthen the time spent enrolled in college or university, as well as options allowing for greater variability and individuality in duration of time and in time contexts (day, evening, early morning, weekends, etc.; Levine, 1978, pp. 209-248).

The tremendous amount of activity today virtually guarantees that general education will be different in the future than it is today. It is up to us to make sure that our versions offer enduring benefits for a generation of students. It will be at least a decade, perhaps longer, before we get the opportunity again (Gaff, 1979).

In summary, this section began with a discussion of the terminology of liberal and general education, and the confusion that exists in the debate concerning these emphases. This was followed by a discussion of certain curricular philosophies, expressed in six different approaches to liberal education. Seven major trends were then discussed, and this section was concluded with some comments on the continuing debate.

Core Curriculum Programs

The concept of the core curriculum has "returned from exile" (Reeves, 1980), imposed during the turbulent sixties, and once again figures in the discussion of curricular development.

Gaff (1983) defines a core curriculum as "a configuration of courses required of all students. Although the core may be a series of courses in a series of academic disciplines, it is more commonly interdisciplinary and organized around a theme or issue" (p. 10). Boyer and Kaplan (1977) identify the core as "the course work that undergraduate students pursue in common, the cluster of subjects and

classes that an institution of higher learning insists that all its students take together" (p. 10).

In the current literature on liberal education there is no consensus on what constitutes a core program (Tobias, 1982). Some would identify general education and core programs (i.e., Harvard University) and others would distinguish between them (Gaff, 1979). Different philosophies of education produce different concepts of core programs (Shulman, 1979). While it is true that some writers seem to equate general education and core and make them practically synonymous, it is useful to distinguish between them (Sturgeon, 1978). Hartman (1977) identifies the core curriculum as those courses which are especially designed to achieve certain integrative purposes. The core is usually interdisciplinary and organized around a theme or issue (Gaff, 1983). Vars (1982) sees "core curriculum" as a "generic term for educational experiences that are common to all students" (p. 223). In this sense, required courses constitute the "core of the curriculum." However, in the strict curricular sense, the term refers to a "design that departs significantly from any arrangement of conventional course content" (Ibid.).

While the language of the debate varies from group to group, and usage is by no means consistent. "The notions of general education, core curriculum, common core, and common curriculum are closely linked" (Hughes, 1982, p. 586). This usage is illustrated by the writing of Ernest Boyer, one of the most widely quoted authorities in the current discussion (Boyer, 1977, 1980, 1981, 1982).

Reeves (1980) reminds us that two major points appear repeatedly in the discussions involving the core curriculum: 1) a certain number of

courses must be required, and 2) the required courses must be integrated. The movement back toward a required and integrated set of courses or experiences, which are usually designed to implement the ideals and goals of liberal or general education, is one of the major and most publicized trends in liberal education today (Conrad and Wyer, 1980). This swinging of the pendulum is not new to education. Levine (1978) reports that there is "a sizeable and still-growing body of literature that indicates that colleges tend to move across the continuum from core curricula to free electives and back in pendular fashion" (p. 14). This recent swell of interest in core programs, whether it is regarded as the dawning of a new day for liberal education or simply another twist in its "death struggle," is historically typical and to be expected. A number of causes have been credited with this renewed interest in core programs; among them, the dramatic increase in number and diversity of students, the contemporary explosion of knowledge, the pluralistic and democratic structure of American society, and the increased concern for human rights and ethical behavior. Conrad and Wyer (1980) state that "the new programs ultimately seek their rationale not solely from modern day realities but in some vision or ideals of the educated person and the learning community" (p. 26).

While the current swing of the pendulum "back to basics" has been given much attention in the national press, Arden (1979) points out that not all the centers of academic power have joined the movement. Brown University, Columbia and Michigan have not followed the example of Harvard, Berkeley and Stanford. Those who have resisted have various reasons for doing so. One danger the movement faces is that it could lead to a sentimentalized version of the past and invite a return to a

disaster area in our cultural history. Another reason some have been wary of "a return to basics" is that it may disappoint those who are expecting to find a panacea for all educational ills. Restoration of a core curriculum ought not to take the form of a simplistic imitation of the 1950s and early 1960s. The old system was not working that well anyway. Therefore, writes Arden, we should insist upon a difference between seeking ways to improve the curriculum and merely retreating to a sentimentalized past. If a core curriculum is a high priority, we should ask what we want to accomplish with it, and how to go about achieving the objectives in a reasonable and responsible way. He then discusses some general rules for the development of a core curriculum. The first is: "The core cannot stand alone in splendid isolation; rather, it must be reinforced by the other components of the total curriculum" (p. 148). If a school has a rigid curriculum, a core that includes a few courses in fields such as history and literature will not liberalize the program sufficiently to make much of a difference in the final outcomes. Rule number two is that we must ask about proportions. "How much of the four-year experience should be devoted to this part of the curriculum"? (Ibid.). Arden argues that not over approximately one-fourth of the college program be given to general education.

A third characteristic of the core should be its "vertical extension through the four years of undergraduate study" (p. 149). It should permeate all four years of the college experience.

One other "shared experience" that ought to be included is the study of human value systems. The objective of value study should be to raise the right questions, to indicate the crucial significance of those questions in human existence, and to consider the need for people to

think systematically about why some decisions are better than others. We must "be wary of thinking that the core alone can take care of the moral dimension. And the program should be organized so that all departments will contribute to the implementation of the core curriculum" (Ibid.).

The basic questions which should be asked in the development of a core curriculum arise out of the institutional context. That is, the core courses are more closely tied to the mission of the institution than are the other courses in the curriculum. What experiences, accomplishments, or appreciations does the institution feel are essential for its graduates? What qualities must one have to receive a degree? What student accomplishments are necessary to achieve the institution's educational purposes? Hartman (1979) says that one might develop a list of essential characteristics of a liberally educated person and then build a curriculum which would dramatically increase the likelihood that the student would develop just those characteristics. Or, he continues, one might take a different approach and accept or develop some model of student growth and have as a goal moving students further along the dimensions described by that model. The crucial issue is that the curriculum is a statement of goals by the institution. Independently of other statements or utterances, it represents a concrete and daily commitment which students understand and confront.

Vars (1982) makes a distinction between an "unstructured core" and a "structured core." The difference between these two is the degree to which curricular experiences are determined in advance. In a structured core program, the faculty anticipates problem areas or centers of experience in which student concerns are likely to cluster. Within

these broad areas the students and faculty of each class plan and carry out the learning experiences which seem most appropriate to that course. In the unstructured core, the faculty and students are free to examine any issue or problem acceptable to the group. Of course, the teacher is expected to insure that the issue is relevant to most of the students, morally and educationally sound, and that adequate resources are available for their study.

Galambos (1979) discusses the difficulties which arise in disagreement over basic directions. Approaches in dealing with the content of core programs range all the way from a required reading of the "great books" at St. John's College, to emphasis on developing a set of competencies, including the basics in writing and speaking, as at Mars Hill College and Bowling Green University.

If a search for commonness is deemed essential to liberal education, the problem remains one of how to provide it. Survey courses, or overviews of broad academic areas, such as humanities, social sciences, natural science, represent one approach which has been widely used in developing a core curriculum. The contemporary civilization course of Columbia University and the general course in the study of contemporary society of the University of Chicago are widely known examples of this approach. The fact that they were staffed by senior scholars may account for their renown, a pleasant circumstance not always attainable within traditional departmental structures (Galambos, 1979).

The most common approach to covering the content of a core program is a set of required courses, based on distinctive ways of thinking, from which the students choose options. The most famous example of this

approach is Harvard University, which allows the student to choose 10 courses from a possible 80 to 100 courses. The courses have been chosen because of distinctive ways of thinking that are identifiable and important. The different areas of the core curriculum are linked by a common question: How do we gain and apply knowledge and understanding of the universe, of society, and of ourselves? (Harvard Report, 1979). The underlying purpose of the core is to set a minimum standard of intellectual breadth for the students. However, the core is not meant to stand alone. The core requirements will absorb approximately one year of the students' college program. Concentration requirements will involve two years of academic activities, leaving approximately one year for electives. Conjoined with these electives and the work in the field of concentration, the core is intended to provide a solid and shared base of general and liberal education for all Harvard students.

The report takes care to point out what is <u>not</u> intended in the core curriculum. It is not an identical set of courses for all students, nor an even handed introduction to all fields of knowledge. It is not a loose distribution requirement among departmental courses. Finally, it is not intended as a model for higher education in general.

The Harvard core program establishes requirement in five different areas: literature and the arts, historical study, social analysis and moral reasoning, science, and foreign cultures. Other non-concentration requirements include writing, foreign language, and mathematics.

The Harvard approach has not been universally acclaimed. O'Connell (1978) argues that the Harvard action has been very superficial, and that the crucial questions, about the role of the university in maintaining any quality and about the desired ends of an undergraduate

education, are left untouched. He says the only notable fact about the Harvard action is the narrowness of their reflections. O'Connell has interesting insights into the students of the sixties contrasted and compared with the students of the seventies and eighties. He lays most of the blame for lack of reform in education today on departments. "Departmental power sustains the inertia afflicting Harvard and other universities. The deliberations at Harvard failed from the beginning to examine departmental majors, the primary determinant of the undergraduate curriculum" (p. 65).

Sheridan (1982) points out that the key problems that curricular reform at Harvard faced were the lack of any perceptable underlying principles and the indifference of a large part of the senior faculty to teaching in the undergraduate elective liberal arts component. Faculty opposition to the core concept arose from disbelief that there might be a set of intellectual experiences that every educated person should have. Another faculty objection was a practical one, namely that a set of core requirements would discourage the brightest high school students from applying to Harvard, and that transfer students could not be required to take the same general education core yet would, nonetheless, receive a Harvard degree (Keller, 1982).

A variation of the Harvard approach is to identify a set of courses which provide exposure to various methods of inquiry. In the humanities, the student explores the realm of ideas and values. In the sciences, the student focuses on description, measurement, and laboratory testing. Social sciences may combine both approaches as, with an historical event, the student acquires facts but also learns to analyze their function. A student acquainted with different analytical

styles through a general education curriculum should be more adequately prepared to pursue his own continuing self-education. And that, after all, is the ultimate goal of a liberal education (Galambos, 1979).

In a majority of liberal arts colleges today, the equivalent of the core component of the curriculum is the distribution requirement: a numerical formula stating that students take at least two courses in each of the major areas of knowledge--humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. But such a loose sampling of departmental courses is not likely to foster the intellectual breadth that is part of what liberal education is all about. Yet an even handed introduction to all fields of learning is no longer possible in contemporary education. What is needed is a coherent principle that directs students specifically and selectively to the knowledge, skills, and habits of thought that, at least in the view of the faculty, seem to be of general and lasting value (Debate, 1979.)[1]

The goal of the Harvard faculty was to establish a standard of liberal learning to be met by all students. This standard does not imply the need to take an identical set of courses, nor master a single set of great books. The faculty concluded that:

> Our goal is to encourage a critical appreciation of and informed acquaintance with the major approaches to knowledge, not in abstract, but substantive terms, so that students have an understanding of what kinds of knowledge exist in certain important areas, how such knowledge is acquired, how it is used, and what it might mean to them personally. We seek, in other words, to have students acquire basic literacy in major forms of intellectual discourse (Ibid., p. 54).

Henry Winkler (Debate, 1979) is critical of the direction taken by Harvard. He believes the new core curriculum is important, if only

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[1]This is a reference to The Great Core Curriculum Debate, 1979.

because of the public relations value of anything that comes out of the greatest of American universities, but he feels that it may be important only for that reason. Most institutions of higher education are again seeking greater curricular coherence in undergraduate education and in a definition of what we mean by an educated person. But some never quite retreated into the chaos of the cafeteria style of free election that characterized the late 1950s and the 1960s. He is sympathetic to the point of view expressed in Harvard's definition of a core, but "troubled about the almost unlimited choice mandated by the Harvard faculty, so that in reality (with some differences, of course) we have a return to older distribution requirements much more loosely structured than in many other institutions" (p. 57).

Louis Benezet (Debate, 1979) is critical of Harvard's program for a variety of reasons. The first is the confusion that has been generated over the fact that most of the publicity has described this as a different or new kind of general education. This is confusing because it is focused on the wrong issue, mainly, what knowledge is of most worth and who should be worthy to have it. The real question is: How do people become educated and what must be expected of them? He sees this as the greatest lack in the curriculum proposals from Harvard. There is confusion about what is to be taught, what is to be taken by the students, and what the students are expected to do to make the most of their study.

Much of Benezet's opposition is grounded in a bias against general education itself. But it is included here because it is expressive of an attitude toward core programs that is expressed in much of the literature. The debate about general education

> suggests that some students are not fit to take the rigorous stuff that enables a professor to replicate himself in his students--the ultimate good. General education also implies that any professor should be ready to take a crack at anything. Obviously, that is anti-intellectual. It implies that college professors should try to teach almost any subject within reasonable distance of their own competence, whatever that may be. And this, in itself, implies a sort of mea culpa about specialization and expertise. Needless to say, that is not a favorite faculty pose. Thus, these questions remain to be resolved before we can expect a program, whether you call it liberal education or general education, to make real changes in what happens dynamically within a college or university curriculum. If a faculty of Harvard's eminence is to change attitudes toward general education among the students, as well as among the public, I doubt that this will be brought about by official direction committees (whether chaired by the Dean or by his surrogates) that set out to advise academic department. . . .To get out of this trap I suggest that we might look at several things: To begin with, when a program is written by fifty people, you don't have a camel, you have a whole circus. And somebody has to face the fact that if general education is to be more than the glorification of one's own specialty, faculty development for general education is required. You've got to convince faculty that there are other ways of approaching subject matter than the particular niche from which they come (p. 60-61).

Benezet has one other criticism of Harvard's program. It seems to be bound by a teacher-centered idea that knowledge and understanding are issued from a professor's mouth or from a laboratory report or from a textual reference. He asks: "Is this truly knowledge, or is it material from which the students' knowledge and understanding gradually emerge as he or she processes this material on the basis of personal experience and emotions and needs?" (Ibid.).

Frederick Rudolph writes:

> Flexibility, uncertainty, mystery, unexpected revelations, love, intuition confirmed by experience, consciousness of one's vulnerability as a human being: this, I suspect we will all agree, is what liberal learning is about. Liberal learning is a style, not a formula. Its goals are not new. Surely it's a good idea to know how to venture into the street and to get to the other side alive and to know how to converse on reasonably equal terms with a computer. It's surely a good idea to be able to confront a word and know what it means and to employ it with grace and clarity and perhaps even push it

> toward new meaning; and to understand that one is a product of the past, a creature of the future, and, at the same time, to recognize oneself as a unique expression of the experience of being human; to be reminded that, while thinking places great demands on the mind and body and makes possible an orderly world, it is but one of the processes that define a human being. It is important to acknowledge that one is born, wherever that may be, in the provinces and that life is an endless challenge to move beyond that particular province, and to live with imagination, wonder, and a delight in the possibilities that adhere in being human. . .liberal learning should prepare us to know a good man or a good woman when we see one (Debate, 1979, pp. 66-67).

He then raises the kinds of questions that concern many educators about Harvard's core program. Does the curriculum pay enough attention to the creative capacities and aesthetic values of what it means to be human? Does American academic style place too much emphasis on teaching and not enough on learning? Has television reared a generation of students whose judgments are shaped by values of entertainment, salesmanship, and promotion and, if so, what do we need to do about it? Is academic leadership so preoccupied in an unacknowledged warfare with government over things like accounting practices, admissions, hiring, tenure, sidewalks, and elevators that the essential nature of enterprise of higher education is being neglected?

Ilja Wachs (Debate, 1979) is concerned by the absence of any thought about students that transcends the curricular level in Harvard's program. She sees no input of students in the document. She sees no imagination of the particular current cultural and human circumstances under which they come to college.

> There is no imagination, for example, that at this point most middle class students come to college with an inordinate degree of anxiety about a shrinking marketplace and deal with the subject of their courses instrumentally rather than directly as a consequence of that anxiety. I wonder, in general, whether curricular reform, seen as the major instrument by which institutions of higher education make positive changes, may not to some extent be a diversion. I,

> too, have known many men and women who have graduated from Harvard. . .when they consistently voice some feeling of being lost, I am not sure that it comes from an incoherent Chinese menu curriculum. It seems to me to arise because the institution has not fully adopted the ethos of vital concrete teaching where an imagination of student needs and of student potentialities and possibilities is its real function (p. 72).

Many educators feel that Harvard is much too unstructured, that it has more characteristics of the distribution model than it does of the core. They would agree that while there is much divergence as to the means of core curriculum models, they should share a common vision of general education as an intended and focused entity, not as anarchical. Boyer and Kaplan (1977) state it succinctly, as follows:

> No single course of study will succeed while all others fail. But to reject a rigid sequence does not mean that a grab bag of electives is the answer, that any academic sequence is as good as any other. General education that focuses on what is shared will not be achieved by accident. To weave such a program into the fabric of the college, priorities must be fixed and academic guideposts set in place (p. 58).

Travis, et. al. (1978) argue that simply prescribing a set of courses without first specifying the learning outcomes of those courses leaves general education prey to the same forces responsible for its present decline.

> By concentrating on outcomes or competencies, faculty members must look afresh at their discipline. Their task ceases to be one of transmitting as much as possible of what they know in ten to sixteen weeks. Instead, the task becomes one of determining what behavior they want students to display upon completion of their courses, and upon determining that, developing and evaluating their curricula accordingly. Consequently, the academic community's attention focuses on ends, not means, with learning outcomes representing the goals of education, and the material to be covered merely the vehicle for their attainment. In this way, the outcomes approach avoids the question that has led to general education's current disarray: what material should be covered? By making the necessity to conceive an answer to this question a secondary concern--an issue of means, not ends--the outcomes approach transcends the dilemmas confounding our efforts to identify a core curriculum (Travis et al, 1978, pp. 438-439).

To think in terms of learning outcomes, Travis believes, has some distinct advantages. It allows the institution to regain control over its general education offerings, while avoiding wasted effort in endless debate over what material is to be covered. Those outcomes are accepted by the institution, when those outcomes become the bases of the courses developed, when measures are developed that evaluate student achievement of those outcomes, when clusterings of measures become apparent, and when courses are developed that help students attain the outcomes stated by those measures, then faculty discussion about an optimal set of curricular offerings becomes realistic. And, as a result, learning outcomes which are unique to the institution's mission will have the major bearing on our curricular deliberations.

Another advantage of focusing on outcomes is that it assists in establishing fundamental dispositions that can lead to a genuine combination of a "praxis and action." To give careful attention to outcomes or competencies, shifts the focus of liberal or general education from a traditional emphasis on the intellectual virtues to an emphasis on what Aristotle called practical wisdom. This emphasis leads away from the direction of "knowledge for its own sake," to an emphasis on liberal arts education as a political concept. For the ancients, liberal education was not, as we moderns sometimes put it, an education that liberates. It was an education with a very practical goal in mind, "knowing how to govern like a free man and how to obey like a free man" (O'Neill, 1984, p. 6). While it is true that the same curriculum may be both an exercise in self expression and a preparation for leadership, O'Neill believes that "it is much more common for faculty and students to pursue private purposes of self fulfillment in these studies to the

neglect of the public purpose to which a liberal education should aim. Indeed, and worse yet, there is a tendency to define a liberal arts education not by its purpose but by its subject matter--thus, not only do we lose track of ends, we confuse means with ends" (Ibid.).

An intriguing model of the learning-outcomes approach is the program at Bowling Green State University. The model has eleven objectives, which include five essential skills, five functional understandings, and a capstone experience. At the heart of the model is the development of essential skills in (1) problem solving and critical thinking; (2) reading and writing; (3) computation and mathematics; (4) listening and speaking; and (5) decision making and values conflict resolution. The five functional understandings are: (1) literature, the fine arts, and the humanities; (2) the natural sciences and technology; (3) the social and behavioral sciences; (4) cultures other than our own; and (5) personal development including physical fitness. The eleventh and final objective is a general educational capstone, integrating the essential skills with the functional understandings of the liberal arts. The model seeks to accomplish this by "having the students demonstrate their ability to effect a function synthesis of their general education through an analytical study of a given problem, issue, or question, that has ramifications in several areas of the liberal arts" (Travis, p. 445).

A third contemporary approach in the core curriculum reform movement is to establish a set of interdisciplinary courses to be taken by all students. "No general core curriculum worth its salt will succeed," writes Robert Marshak (Debate, 1979, p. 66), "without pooling disciplinary faculty talents to hack out the interdisciplinary wisdoms

illustrate basic methodologies, conceptual frameworks, and value systems of the major areas of human knowledge."

Galambos (1979) believes that the most successful approaches to general education have emphasized an interdisciplinary focus. Typically this approach has taken the form of broad surveys. History, art, literature, and even science have been presented within the context of an historical period or a current issue. The goal of this approach is to produce a dynamic interaction between the disciplines, giving more meaning to each subject than if studied in a vacuum.

This approach is a reaction to the kind of atomistic education which leaves the student exposed to a smattering of various disciplines without providing the connections between them. Galambos writes that

> interdisciplinary general education is not just an ideal to produce a sophisticated individual who can enjoy "the good life." In one sense it constitutes the ultimate preparation for work. Business and government are crying for synthesizers who can walk interdisciplinary bridges to solve problems.
>
> In this sense, if liberal arts colleges succeed in their mission of preparing students who see and apply connections between fields, their graduates should be the most sought after instead of the last to be recruited (p. 5).

Reeves (1980) believes that interdisciplinary study, as an educational experiment, addresses itself to the production of a coherent set of required courses. In this sense, the core is not simply a collection of autonomous parts, but an integrated whole. In order to develop the best possible course, each faculty member's work demands the use of ideas, concepts, materials, or information from one or more disciplines. Such a course is usually directed to a specific goal or mission, in harmony with the mission of the institution. The establishment of a specific goal or mission with respect to an

integrated, required core is essential if the courses are to be an important part of undergraduate general education.

If faculty are to become liberally educated by teaching across disciplinary boundaries, two conditions are necessary, according to Cadwallader (1982). First, the faculty member must make a commitment to learn to teach across the entire curriculum. Second, the faculty members must meet regularly, at least weekly, to discuss the books and ideas to be explored with the students. "Good books, significant issues, and real faculty seminars will liberally educate narrowly trained faculty" (p. 413).

The development of interdisciplinary courses in a learning community means that both faculty and students can and will work together; there will be coherence and integration. There will be a thread of consistency running through the curriculum, and the intellectual work they do together will have a direction relevant to the lives of both the teachers and the students. This approach may be the most effective way to develop a coherent curriculum. The development of interdisciplinary courses is one way of assisting the students in "seeing the connectedness of things," to use Boyer's phraseology (1982). Boyer quotes Mark Van Doren as follows:

> The connectedness of things is what the educator contemplates to the limit of his capacity. No human capacity is great enough to permit a vision of the world as simple, but if the educator does not aim at the vision no one else will and the consequences are dire when no one else does. . . .The student who can begin early in life to think of things as connected, even if he revises his view with every succeeding year, has begun the life of learning (p. 584).

"Seeing 'the connectedness of things' is the goal of common learning" (Ibid.).

But the interdisciplinary approach is not without its difficulties. Galambos (1979) points out the following problems. The first is the inability of the faculty to respond. The very best of interdisciplinary plans may falter when applied by faculty who were nurtured in narrow specialization and whose allegience is to their own departments. Faculty who participate in successful interdisciplinary courses must be committed to their value as well as well acquainted with more than one discipline. They should probably also have experience in this type of teaching.

Another problem relating to the interdisciplinary approach for giving breadth to the curriculum concerns the timing of general education courses. Appreciation for seeing the connections between subjects is largely a function of maturity, Galambos believes. The breadth component might have more meaning at upper rather than lower division levels. Yet the pattern with most curriculum development is to fill the upper division with courses in the major, on the assumption that the breadth requirements have been met by lower division courses.

Vars (1982) lists the following advantages and limitations of interdisciplinary courses.

Advantages

1. Students are given direct assistance in integrating content from two or more disciplines.
2. Reinforcement of concepts common to the combined disciplines is specifically provided.
3. Both gaps and unnecessary duplication are eliminated.
4. Interdisciplinary scholarship is demonstrated.
5. Instructors ordinarily retain their identity with a particular discipline or department, depending upon the degree of fusion.
6. The extensive joint planning required is an unparalleled opportunity for faculty professional growth, enhancing the scholarly competence of each faculty member.
7. The process of working together may build strong bridges among departments and schools.

8. Sharing often goes beyond curriculum to include teaching methods, so that instruction may be enhanced both in the combined course and in all other courses taught by the staff members involved.

Limitations

1. Designing a combined course takes even more planning time than correlating two or more existing courses.
2. Additional time is required if the course is team-taught, two or more instructors participating in each class. This practice obviously increases the cost of instruction, also. Moreover, the presence of additional faculty in the classroom may interfere with instructor/student rapport. Students may get mixed signals from the staff and not know who is really "in charge."
3. If, on the other hand, staff members take turns teaching the combined course, those not teaching a particular day tend to lose touch with the progress of the class.
4. Likewise, instructors of a combined course may find themselves out of their depth in an unfamiliar field. To avoid this, an instructor may stick closely to one field, giving only minimal attention to the other. Thus, American studies may turn out to be mostly literature or mostly history, depending upon the background of each instructor.
5. Staff differences are thrown into even sharper focus by the requirements of designing a combined course.
6. The necessity od arpiving at a new course structure inevitably blurs the identity of each discipline and alters its structural integrity.
7. Ulless a new interdisciplinary department or school is created, the problem of who "owns" the new courses may provoke rivalry among departments.
8. Grading a combined course presents some problems. Should each component be graded separately, or should there be one mark for the combined course? Similarly, should course credits be divided among the original departments or maintained as an entity in some interdisciplinary category?
9. The content of the course may not be obvious from its title, creating some difficulties for students who transfer or apply for graduate school.
10. The faculty reward structure usually revolves around specialized research and scholarship. Teaching interdisciplinary courses may detract from this (pp. 220-221).

Regardless of which approach one takes to the development of a core curriculum, three crucial ingredients need to be present if the program is successful. The first is a "shared vision." Boyer (1980) writes

that for 350 years, education in America was driven by a vision of coherence.

> Every curriculum that prevailed from the founding of Harvard in 1636 until the Revolution was based upon the vision of a shared social structure, a common view as to how all young minds should be trained, and the common belief in God and the afterlife, the church, and the rights and wrongs that should govern life. The values of community, the church, and the educational enterprise were completely interlocked (p. 277).

The move to the free elective system was also rooted in a widely shared vision, a belief in our right to be independent and unique. But general education failed largely because the commonality of self triumphed over the commonality of substance. Radical individualism offered a more powerful and accurate image of time.

Today, Boyer believes, the only thing we seem to have in common is our differences. "There is no widely shared vision, and there is no agreement about what it means to be an educated person. On many campuses required courses have been dropped, and the ones which remain reveal a staggering incoherence of purpose" (p. 278).

While Boyer argues for a common core of learning, he also argues that

> diversity in education is absolutely crucial. . . .However, in education, as in life itself, we must find ways to affirm both our independence and our interdependence, and to achieve a fusion of these two essential goals <u>every institution must have a clearly thought out purpose of its own</u>. (Emphasis mine.) Indeed, I suspect that in the days ahead, higher education's greatest challenge may not be budgets, enrollments, or leaking roofs, but the shaping of educational goals that go beyond the interest of individuals--isolated students. And I suspect that if such transcendent goals are not identified, our campuses increasingly will become academic supermarkets--places where students come in, shop around, and leave at Commencement time with few questions asked about what it means to have a balanced intellectual diet. We will train individuals, rather than educate people, and we will compete increasingly with narrowly focused, industry-sponsored institutions (pp. 278-279).

Travis (1978) writes that while core curriculum models may diverge as to means, they share a common vision of general education as an intended, rather than an anarchical entity. Boyer and Kaplan (1977) write:

> No single course of study will succeed while all others fail. But to reject a rigid sequence does not mean that a grab bag of electives is the answer, that any academic sequence is as good as any other. General education that focuses on what is shared will not be achieved by accident. To weave such a program into the fabric of the college, priorities must be fixed and academic guideposts set in place (p. 438).

Lockwood (1978) argues the importance of a shared vision in the following way:

> Rather than reflecting a widely shared conviction about the proper contents and goals of liberal learning, the movement back to general education may be a defensive reaction to public criticisms and the academies' own uncertanties. The image of an uneasy conscience defending itself may seem unfair, but it is probably accurate. The desire to strengthen the liberal arts is an essential preoccupation of educators. However, in the absence of shared assumptions (emphasis mine) about what is important, curricular reform will result in little more than tinkering or it will degenerate into a process of academic log-rolling, with each discipline guided more by the desire to maintain or increase enrollments than by any educational ideal. The resulting curriculum's only virtue may be that it represents the lowest common denominator politically (p. 2).

Hartman (1977) declares that "a core curriculum reinforces the need for all aspects of the institution to work together toward common purposes and goals" (p. 8).

The second crucial ingredient for a successful core curriculum program is "shared values." Shulman (1979) believes that as a correlate to the question of shared vision or institutional mission, educators "also have to consider whether proposed changes are compatible with the campus traditions and values" (p. 4). Boyer (1982) is convinced that a study of the personal and social significance of shared values ought to

be the very capstone to common learning. In the normal general education program, the students examine the distinctions made between beliefs and "facts," and how values are formed, transmitted, and revised. They should also examine the values currently held in our society, looking at the ways our values are socially enforced, and how different societies react to unpopular beliefs. It is his belief that general education should introduce all students to the powerful role political ideologies, and particularly religion, have played in shaping the convictions of individuals and societies throughout history.

Boyer argues that each student should learn to identify the premises inherent in his or her own beliefs, learn how to make responsible decisions, and engage in frank and searching discussion of the crucial, ethical and moral choices that confront contemporary society. In each of our shared experiences, moral and ethical choices must be made. The student should be led to grapple with the following questions: How can messages be conveyed honestly and effectively? How can institutions serve the needs of both the individual and the group? On what basis is a vocation selected or rejected? Where should the line be drawn between conservation and exploitation of natural resources? A common learning curriculum must not side-step the ethical and moral issues.

In his essay, "A Call for Common Learning" (1982), Boyer argues that all students should explore values and beliefs.

> Education, by its very nature, is value laden. Any institution committed to enquiry into the human experience must inevitably confront questions of purpose. The refusal to face those issues openly and directly is, itself, a moral decision with far reaching implications. . . .education's primary mission is to develop within each student the capacity to judge wisely in matters of life and conduct (pp. 9-10).

Boyer argues that his call for common learning is not meant to suggest a program of indoctrination, nor a prescription for a rigid code of conduct for all students. Colleges should seek rather to

> create a climate in which the values of the individual and the ethical and moral choices confronting society can be thoughtfully examined. The aim is not only to prepare the young for productive careers, but to enable them to live lives of dignity and purposes not only to generate new knowledge, but to channel that knowledge to humane ends; not merely to increase participation at the polls, but to help shape a citizenry that can weigh decisions wisely and more effectively promote the public good (pp. 10-11).

The third crucial ingredient in a successful core curriculum program is "shared experiences." Boyer (1982b) writes that organizing the curriculum around shared experiences is an important way of helping students understand that they are members of the human community. The present generation has grown up in a fractured, atomized, world in which the call for individual gratification is loud and clear while social claims are extremely weak.

Students are highly individualistic, geared toward training for jobs, optimistic about their own futures which include good jobs, money, and things, but they are pessimistic about the future of their world. As a result, they are more committed to their own personal futures than to the future we face together. Boyer is convinced that, as a global society, we cannot afford a generation of students that fails to see or care about connections, about relationships, about the condition of our shrinking world. The mission of general education is to lead students into an understanding that they are not only autonomous individuals, but are also members of a human community to which they are accountable. "In calling for a reaffirmation of general education, the aim is to help restore the balance. By focusing on those experiences that knit

isolated individuals into a community, general education can have a purpose of its own" (p. 582).

Arden (1979) argues that a set of experiences somewhat in common does not necessarily mean a specific set of courses that everyone has to take. There are all manner of "experiences in common," and some of them may be more vital than merely taking the same courses. "The core cannot stand alone in splendid isolation; rather, it must be reinforced by the other components of the total curriculum" (p. 148). A program that simply includes a few courses in fields such as history and literature will neither liberalize the curriculum nor liberate the student sufficiently to make much of a difference in our world.

Boyer (1982a, 1982b) is more specific than most other writers in describing the kinds of experiences students should have in common. These "experiences in common" should include the following: the shared use of symbols, shared membership in groups and institutions, shared producing and consuming, a shared relationship with nature, a shared sense of time, and shared values and beliefs.

While not being this specific in identifying experiences students should have in common, there is a recognition in the literature in the importance of shared experience (Cadwallader, 1982; Reeves, 1980; Gaff, 1979; Hartman, 1977; Mohrman, 1977; and Patterson, 1981).

Proponents of core curriculum programs point out a number of advantages that accrue from the development and operation of this approach to liberal education. Conrad (1978) believes that a core program may increase the likelihood that students will have a unified undergraduate experience that is explicitly based upon the shared conceptions of the purposes of general education. This strengthens the

educational program of the college not only by improving the educational experience of current students, but it also makes the curricular program and mission of the college easier to interpret to prospective students. He also believes that the establishment of core curricula to serve preferred goals will help institutions develop clear criteria by which to evaluate programs and student performance. In a time when voices everywhere are calling for academic "accountability," core curricula can provide institutions with both the substance and method of response. Vars (1982) describes a number of advantages of a core curriculum which is based directly on student needs, problems, and concerns, and involves students directly in designing, carrying out, and evaluating their learning experiences.

1. Student motivation is enhanced, since they have direct input into the content, structure, methodology, and evaluation of the educational experience. What they learn is more likely to result in actual changes in behavior.
2. Students learn integrative thinking by doing it under the guidance of an adult who is also grappling with concepts and skills outside his or her original field of expertise. Modeling is supplemented with first hand experience.
3. Students learn how the various disciplines contribute to the solution of real human problems and therefore have more respect for the traditional fields of study. This carries over into their study of other courses, including those in their major.
4. The instructor is challenged to grow in breadth of scholarship as well as depth in the skills of group work and problem solving (p. 223-224).

A number of voices have been raised "in opposition to core curriculum," to use the title of a book by Hall and Kevles (1982). The book is a collection of essays on the educational objectives of general education which, as the title suggests, are very critical of the core program movement. Kaplan (1982) censures the Harvard program, arguing that one can oppose the core curriculum while still favoring coherence in education. He warns against the "dangerous reactionary tendencies"

that seem to underlie many imitations of that core. Sheridan (1983) perceives that curricular structures in most American colleges, because they are the result of political compromises over required courses, are one-dimensional structures and therefore fail to accomplish their presumed multi-dimensional and subtle aims.

Conrad (1978) believes that the most pervasive criticism of core programs comes from proponents of the "individualization" of learning. The very idea of a common core curriculum is anathema to this group of reformers. He believes that the most telling criticism of core programs is that they do not always represent new ways of integrating general education. It is true especially of those programs which employ an eclectic approach to integration that they seem only to clothe the same old curriculum in more prescriptive requirements and flowery prose which serves to disguise the absence of any new integrating principle or principles. In addition to this, many reformers voice extravagant claims which may serve only to heighten expectations concerning current efforts at reform that are very unrealistic given the recent history of failure to provide common learning experiences.

Vars (1982), while strongly favoring core curriculum programs, also points out carefully their limitations.

1. Core requires highly dedicated staff members who are broadly cultured and skilled in both group and individual problem-solving processes. Such staff members are rare, although they can be
trained if both staff members and the institution are willing to make the investment.
2. If the core class is guided by a faculty team, all the problems associated with planning correlated and combined courses are present, such as philosophical differences and exorbitant demands for planning time.
3. If each core class is guided by one staff member, there are great demands on that person for mobilizing resources and planning experiences outside his or her field of expertise. This can be an unsettling experience for the instructor and may

lead to errors of fact and judgment by both students and instructor.

4. Housing the core program on campus and providing adequate staff rewards are even more difficult that with combined courses.
5. Graduate schools may be unwilling to accept credits earned in core as the basis for advanced work in any of the disciplines. No two core classes are likely to have identical experiences, so it is difficult to use them as a basis for further work in either general education or the major.
6. In unstructured core, the faculty have relinquished control over the scope and sequence of that aspect of the program. This may result in gaps in students' general education (p. 224).

In summary, this section of the review of literature was begun with a discussion of the terminology of the debate over core curricula. This was followed by a discussion of different approaches to core programs: a set of courses based on distinctive ways of thinking (the Harvard approach is the most famous); a set of competencies based on learning outcomes; and a set of interdisciplinary courses taken by all students. Next we looked at the crucial ingredients of successful core programs: a shared vision, shared values, and shared experiences. This section was concluded by noting some of the advantages and limitations of core curriculum programs.

The Church-Related College

The first issue we shall focus on in this section is the meaning of church-relatedness in relationship to institutions of higher education. Cuninggim (1978) has an excellent discussion which brings clarity to this clouded issue. He begins by asking, what is it that makes an institution really church-related? What does the college have to be or do in order to quality for this description? The terminology used is imprecise and vague. Note the following: "church-sponsored,"

"church-related," "church-supported," "church-connected," "church-affiliated," "denominational," "church," "church-controlled," and "Christian" (p. 17).

Cuninggim takes pains to try to explode some of the myths surrounding the meaning of church-relatedness. These myths or misunderstandings are of two main types: those that are supposed marks of the church-related college, held largely by partisan insiders, and those that are mistaken opinions about these institutions, usually held by critical outsiders. The following are included in his discussion: the ownership of the college by the church; having members of that church on its board of trustees; having clergy on the college board; the chief executive officer is a member of the sponsoring denomination; a church-related college is one that takes religion seriously; required courses in religion; chapel and religious activities; credo-conformity; membership and/or credo-conformity of faculty and staff; membership and/or credo-conformity for students; substantial financial support from the sponsoring denomination; and defining church-relatedness in terms of the rules governing student social behavior. These are mistaken ideas held by partisan insiders. There are two mistaken opinions held largely by highly critical, yet often poorly informed outsiders. The first is the idea that church-relatedness and academic excellence are inconsistent, and the second that church-relatedness is inconsistent with diversity, or with academic freedom (pp. 18-27).

Cuninggim then moves to a discussion of categories of church-relatedness. He criticizes the Pattillo-Mackenzie study (1966) which divides church-related colleges into three types: the "defender of the faith college," the "nonaffirming college," and the "free

Christian (or Jewish) college" (p. 31). C. Robert Pace's study for the Carnegie Commission, Education and Evangelism, (1972) is also criticized for the same basic reason, namely, the pejorative nature of the labels they choose. Pace's four categories are as follows:

1. Institutions that had Protestant roots but are no longer Protestant in any legal sense.
2. Colleges that remain nominally related to Protestantism but are probably on the verge of disengagement.
3. Colleges established by major Protestant denominations and which retain a connection with the church.
4. Colleges associated with the evangelical, fundamentalist, and interdenominational Christian churches (p. 31).

After discussing the weaknesses of these two approaches, Cuninggim presents what he believes is a valid model with the following categories.

A. The Consonant College

B. The Proclaiming College

C. The Embodying College

Or in even shorter form:

A. The Ally

B. The Witness

C. The Reflection

The Consonant College is that institution that "feeling independent in its own operations, is committed to the tradition of its related church and to consistency with that tradition in its own behavior. Its values are in the main its denomination's values. They are taken seriously and are evident in the life of the college and the lives of its alumni/ae" (p. 32).

The Proclaiming College is that institution that "joyously announces its affiliation with its sponsoring denomination at every appropriate occasion. But it does more than merely identify its

connection; in its program it practices what it proclaims in ways that seem approvable to the two worlds in which it exists--education and religion" (p. 34).

The Embodying College constitutes a distinct category from the other two, but is closer to its Proclaiming cousin. Whereas the Proclaiming College is that one "whose allegiance is to the norms of higher education with ecclesiastical overtones," the Embodying College is that one "whose allegiance is to the tenents of its church with educational overtones. It is the mirror, almost the embodiment, of the denomination to which it gives fealty. . .It is the reflection of the church, true in every major respect, sound in faith and observance. When one walks on its campus, one knows immediately where he or she is, ecclesiastically speaking" (p. 35).

Kinnison (1978) sees these three categories as a richer conceptualization of the situation, but believes that the titles that have been assigned, while less pejorative and more useful, are still subject to misunderstanding. The reason may be because the mythologies that were dismissed in the earlier discussion still lurk in the recesses of our minds, and also because there is a lingering feeling that those categories may occur as a result of other factors than those specified.

Jones (1978) sees Cuninggim's categories as providing positive content for dialogue between church and college, and among the colleges, about relationships. She feels the earlier Pattillo-Mackenzie types tended to align college against college and church against church.

After discussing fourteen different colleges as examples of the various types of church-relatedness, Cuninggim moves to a discussion of the essentials that identify church-relatedness. Since there are two

organizational entities involved, the college and the church, he discusses the essentials for each in turn and then, in conclusion, for both together. There are four basic essentials for the college for church-relatedness.

1. "To be church-related, a college must want to be and aim to be so related" (p. 74). There must be a "conscious intention" on the part of the college to achieve and maintain a continuing relationship with its sponsoring denomination.
2. "To be church-related, a college must make proper provision for religion in all its dimensions, in at least rough harmony with the views of its sponsoring denomination" (p. 75). A college must provide for the presence of religion in all appropriate ways in the campus life if it is to be, in the best sense, church-related. This carries with it some inescapable implications. First, "the church-related college will take the study of religion seriously" (p. 76). Second, the church-related college will "take worship seriously" (p. 77). The third implication is a corollary of the other two: "the church-related college must take seriously other customary expressions of religion that fit the purpose and mores of an academic institution" (p. 78).
3. "To be church-related, a college must put its values and those of its church into recognizable operation in every aspect of the life of the institution, including the functions of scholarship, teaching, and learning, as well as in personnel practices and the campus ethos" (pp. 78-79). For Cuninggim, this involves two things. First, "the presence of values and

their integration into the normal behavior of the school" (Ibid.). Second, "it must take the follow-up step of fashioning a personnel policy that supports the college's commitment to values" (Ibid.).

1. To be church-related, a college must be able to count on its church's understanding of the educational task in which the college is engaged.
2. To be church-related, a college must receive tangible support from its church.
3. To be church-related, a college must be made to feel that the denomination also gives it tangible support, when needed and justified by the institution's pursuit of its proper purposes (pp. 81-83).

Cuninggim then lists two essentials which apply to both church and college.

1. To be church-related, a college must inform and illumine its denomination on all matters that would appear to be relevant or useful and must welcome being informed and illumined in return. The heart of this proposition is the simple expectation that the college should have some amount or kind of beneficent influence on its sponsoring church and vice versa.
2. To be church-related, a college must know why it wants to be so related, and to complete the reciprocal arrangement, the church must know why it wants connections with its colleges. In other words, each must develop a rationale for its relationship with the other (pp. 83-84).

Moseley (1978) agrees with Cuninggim as far as he goes, but believes what has been stated should simply be viewed as a basis for action. The larger context in which church and college interact is changing, creating new tasks and encompassing new people with needs the church and the church college can address. Action must be based on that changing context and also on the trends and conditions of the future. Moseley believes that the tough question is: "What ought to be the role and function of the church and the college in the remaining years of the twentieth century" (p. 99). These essentials of church-relatedness may tell us where we are now, but they do not necessarily tell us where we

should be. We must not project the present state as the role of the future, or we may miss the point and the opportunity for a new and even greater mission and service, both for the college and for the church.

Jones (1978) is in full agreement with this position. "The church's college must engage in a self-conscious struggle to discover new models for acting out Christian values for a rapidly changing society, starting with its own setting, but not restricted to it. Colleges ought to be about the business of thinking about and planning for a future that is life affirming" (p. 97).

Kinnison (1978) would underscore more clearly the responsibility of the church in this relationship.

> I would have hoped such a study as this would be more specific in outlining the obligations of the churches which are blessed with colleges with intentions to be clearly church-related. The best of intentions will not preserve the strength and integrity of our colleges in the years immediately ahead. Clear understandings between church and college will be essential for the welfare of both an increasingly secular and state-dominated society. Separately, each shall surely perish; together, the chances for survival for both may be slightly improved (p. 94).

Johnson (1978) believes that church-relatedness is a two way street. "It is just as important for the school to feel, to respond to, and to act out its church-relatedness as it is for the church to feel, to respond to, and to act out its college-relatedness. Too often church-relatedness in my own history has referred to the giving of money by the church and the receiving of money by the schools" (p. 102).

Meyer (1978) urges us to consider the degree of consonance of the church in question with the surrounding society. This is a significant and a determining variable. He would also remind us that the typology has to be based on a two-dimensional space, not a one-dimensional continuum. "Even granting that we have the location of the church along

a continuum of distinctiveness to consonance, even though we have a church located on that continuum, there is still another variable that is significant. A given church may have institutions with entirely different missions in education, and different models would be needed to represent those missions" (p. 105).

Parsonage (1978) reported that of nearly 1,600 independent colleges and universities in the United States, more than 700 of them acknowledge a church relationship. He believes that this represents only about one-half of the picture, because there are many other religious denominations and sects which sponsor, support, and in other ways contribute to the life of colleges and universities with which they have formal relationships.

Both colleges and churches have been reviewing and rethinking their relationships to one another to an increasing degree in recent years. The reasons for this are numerous. The broad general changes which are occurring within religious institutions and within higher education are one cause. Changes in missional primrities, the scarcity of financial resources, shifts in ecclesiastical decision making, and changes in theological and social perspectives are altering the nature of the church-college relationship. Out of this rethinking and review has come renewed commitment to higher education and the church-related college.

Based on visits to fourteen colleges of thirteen different denominations, Parsonage delineates some conclusions about church-related higher education.

1. There is widespread interest among churches in maintaining and strengthening relationships with their colleges and universities.

2. Though there is a difference of purpose or mission, most of the church-related colleges hold the following general purposes in common: concern with the development of the individual's mental, physical, and spiritual resources; providing opportunities for exposure to Christian faith and teachings; committed to value-centered inquiry; affirmation of the importance of the liberal arts in the total education of its students; commitment to the upgrading or transformation of society.
3. Though the rationale differs, most of the college-related churches hold the following reasons in common: Biblical and theological understandings of the nature and purpose of human life impel the church to take responsibility for the intellectual and spiritual life of persons; to provide a forum within higher education for relating faith and reason; providing leaders for church and society who have a liberal arts education and an exposure to value-centered inquiry; provide the church with a means for expressing its prophetic concern and making its prophetic witness in society and a way for the church to be confronted and challenged directly by the academy; providing an arena for an experimentation in higher education that is relatively free of public control; preserving pluralism and a dual system of education in American society; and serving society and providing a means for the church to serve particular constituencies.
4. There is significant agreement about what constitutes the external threat to the survival of church-related higher

education, but less agreement on what constitutes internal threats to it.

5. Some denominations are engaging in formulating, revising, or reaffirming their theological rationales for involvement in higher education.
6. Some denominations are encouraging their colleges to reaffirm their religious, cultural, and social roots from which they sprang.
7. Out of concern for a viable future, a number of denominations are moving to strategic funding.
8. Many denominations are engaged in identifying the issues, strategies, and technical capabilities needed for a public policy more favorable to the church-related college.
9. Many denominations are reviewing or beginning afresh to make individual covenants between the middle judicatories and the colleges.
10. Denominations are working at the creation of comprehensive strategies to give form and substance to their role in higher education. This is moving many to a deepening concern for cooperation far beyond denominational boundaries. But this cannot happen unless and until the churches determine that there is a critical need in higher education and in society and that a critical contribution can be made through cooperative effort (pp. 282-291).

One of the central issues in higher education today is the focus on clarity of mission (Bennett, 1983; Bucher, 1982; Gallin, 1980; Gyertson, 1981; Holmes, 1975; Howe, 1979; Marty, 1978; Moseley, 1980; Moseley &

Bucher, 1982; and Newby, 1972). The first criterion in the self study in preparation for accreditation by North Central Association of Colleges and Universities is focused on the mission of the institution (Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, 1984). If this is true for higher education in general, it is critically so for the church-related college.

"The Mission of the Church-related College," an essay by John D. Moseley, Chancellor of Austin College, Sherman, Texas, is the best article I discovered in the literature concerning the mission of the college. He begins by focusing on five realities for higher education.

First, we need to recognize the reality of higher education's tradition--a great tradition of high expectations, generous support to society, and impressive development over the years. We can be proud of our tradition, but that tradition is being challenged today.

Second, we need to recognize the reality of new conditions, new educational needs, and new societal problems that require the best creative work of higher education. There is a new educational ball game requiring us to understand new rules and use new strategies.

Third, we need to recognize the reality of increasing media exposure of societal institutions, including higher education. This exposure shows up the weaknesses in higher education and demands that we be more aggressive in solving our internal problems before they become public issues.

A fourth reality is the threat to diversity and pluralistic nature of our higher educational system. The threat focuses on the freedom of an individual institution to have its own mission, to be different, or to have a distinctive educational philosophy, program, or process. This

threat ignores the facts that our nation is increasingly more pluralistic, and that society needs diverse educational opportunities for living in the twenty-first century.

The fifth reality is the confusion about institutional mission, the lack of a mission that is understood and has the commitment and support of all groups within and related to the college. The role, the integrity, and the future of the institution are at stake.

These five realities shape the context of the second segment, the mission statement for a college or university. Moseley begins his discussion of the nature of the mission statement by asking, what do we mean by the term "mission statement"? Clarity at this point may be one of the most needed and fundamental requirements of a college that is preparing for the twenty-first century. The following five elements seem essential to any mission segment.

1. The definition of the college. These questions provide the focus: what is the nature of the institution? Who does the institution strive to serve? Who is the primary constituency to be served? What specialized and general constituencies are involved and what special educational needs or services are involved?
2. The basic commitment of the college. What are the values underlying the college? What is the institution's frame of reference? For the church-related college, the answers to these questions are crucial. The basic commitment of the college is the world view or perspective with which the college goes about its task.
3. The educational philosophy of the college. The college's basic

commitment receives practical expression in its educational philosophy, the tenets that guide its teaching and its learning. Liberal arts, wholeness of knowledge, value orientation, interdisciplinary--these express its educational philosophy, the educational practice of the basic commitment.

4. The distinctiveness of the college. What differentiates this college from others? Each college has an obligation to its constituents to define this difference.
5. The general goals or objectives of the college. In what ways does the college intend to carry out the general declarations and commitments in the foregoing statements.

Moseley then delineates five results or uses of the mission statement. Of what practical use is a mission statement for the college? Each college can have its own set of usages, but the following five seem significant for church-related colleges.

First, it can demonstrate the difference between the mission of the church and the mission of the college, for they are different missions. "Mission" is easily misunderstood in the religious context, the constituency must understand and appreciate the difference when applied to education.

Second, the mission statement can help the college address the realities of the higher education context. It helps the institution focus on what it can do and thus continue the tradition of contributing to higher education.

Third, the mission statement can be an important bench mark against which to evaluate the college, and thus to improve it, over time. Goals

Goals for implementation are particularly useful in evaluating the college's success.

Fourth, the mission statement can be significant in what it allows the college to do. It can help reduce confusion, it can free a college to accept challenges that are within its mission. There is a delicate balance between diversity and community.

Finally, the mission statement can be the means to draw all constituencies close to a college, facilitate their understanding about the college, and gather their support. Thus it becomes an important basis and design for communication. A clear understanding of the college may be the most important element in constituency service and support. "The most basic need in the changing condition and context of higher education is the realistic rethinking of the college mission statement and the renewal of the college's commitment" (p. 182).

Arthur Holmes, in his book The Idea of a Christian College (1975), underscores the vital importance of clarity of mission for the Christian college. He addresses the theological foundations that undergird the existence of the conservative Christian college. He provides a perspective on the importance of the liberal arts for Christian higher education.

> College is for education, the liberal arts college for a liberal education, and the Christian college for a Christian education. These are the basics to which we must get back. To sell college primarily on some other basis is to operate under false pretenses; and to start into college for some other reason is to ask for frustrations. We must therefore come to see education as a Christian calling, and we must explore what "liberal education" means and how it is affected by the Christian's task (p. 16).

Holmes addresses two of the most troubling issues confronting the conservative Christian college today: the effective integration of faith

and learning and the issue of academic freedom. He sees the fundamental purpose of Christian higher education as the cultivation of a meaningful academic experience by stressing the integration of faith and learning and by treating all learning as a religious process.

> Then why a Christian college? Its distinctive should be an education that cultivates the creative and active integration of faith and learning, of faith and culture. This is its unique task in higher education today. While the reality is otten more like an interaction of faith and learning, a dialogue, that a completely ideal integration, it must under no circumstances become a disjunction between piety and scholarship, faith and reason, religion and science, Christianity and the arts, theology and philosophy, or whatever the differing points of reference may be. The Christian college will not settle for a militant polemic against secular learning and science and culture, as if there were a great gulf fixed between the secular and the sacred. All truth is God's truth, no matter where it is found, and we can thank him for it all (pp. 16-17).

Sandin (1982) concurs in underscoring the importance of the integration of faith and learning in the Christian college.

> A college which is Christian must first be a college. But the institution assumes additional responsibilities when it aligns itself also with the purposes of the Christian church. It will not do to construe these other responsibilities merely additively. The college which would be Christian assumes responsibility for integrating the functions of the university. . .with the functions of the church. In accepting a religious purpose the Christian college is not merely declaring its willingness to accept more concerns than are typically accepted by colleges and universities. It is declaring its intention to construe its educational objectives by reference to a religious orientation as the principle of unity and integration (p. 63-64).

There is a new note beginning to be heard in the literature concerning the mission of the Christian college today. This new note is sounded clearly in an essay, "The Mission of the Christian College at the End of the Twentieth Century," by Nicholas Wolterstorff, Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College (1983). Wolterstorff divides higher education in the twentieth century into three periods, which he calls

stages. Stage one begins at the first of the twentieth century and continues through the second World War. American evangelical Christianity reacted negatively to Darwinism from England and higher criticism from Germany. It became deeply defensive, and at times anti-intellectual. These attitudes were reflected in the educational institutions. The focus of stage one was primarily on piety and evangelism.

Stage two is now in full flower. The flower opened some time after World War II, though the line between the two is not clear. Stage two has been characterized by an emergence from defensiveness, these colleges resolutely insisting on introducing their students to the full breadth of that stream of high culture. There has been an insistence on the integration of faith and learning; people have come to see that scholarship itself is conducted out of differing perspectives and that the integration of faith and learning does not consist in tying together two things independently acquired but of practicing scholarship in Christian perspective. Competent scholarship is seen to be a pluralistic enterprise. The Christian scholar has learned to practice scholarship in Christian perspective and to penetrate to the roots of that scholarship with which one finds oneself in disagreement--along the way appropriating whatever one finds of use. The focus of stage two has been on the cultural heritage of mankind, without losing the concern for piety and evangelism. But culture is something different from society. Culture consists of works of culture, while society consists of persons who interact in various ways. Stage three then must focus on the Christian in society, without losing the contribution of the earlier stages.

Since we are beginning stage three, we do not know what it will look like when it comes to full flower. But Wolterstorff believes the following characteristics will be a part of that picture.

1. Such a college will be much more international in its concerns and consciousness than any of our colleges is at present. The Christian college which enters stage three will have to become internationalized.
2. Such a college will have to explore new ways of packaging the learning it presents students. If our concern is to equip our students to reform society, then we walk in uncharted terrain. He suggests we shall need programs in peace and war, nationalism, poverty, urban ugliness, ecology, crime and punishment.
3. Such a college will have to be far more concerned than ever before with building bridges from theory to practice. "The goal is not just to understand the world but to change it. The goal is not just to impart to the student a Christian world-and-life-view--it is to equip and motivate students for a Christian way of being and acting in the world" (p. 17). (See also Dyrness, 1983.)

Gyertson (1981) believes that the private church-related college has a unique opportunity to explore, develop and implement meaningful approaches to living and learning which are based on the moral and ethical teachings of the Christian faith. But the possibilities of success rest on a number of factors common to other colleges and universities in the private sector. There are serious challenges in the

areas of finance, enrollment, capital construction, debt service, employee and program retrenchment. Gyertson asks:

> Can the church-related segment respond as quickly to these pressures as its private college counterparts? Many believe that the very nature of the church-related college will make it less capable of responding quickly and edfectively to the challenges that lie ahead. What does appear to be clear from the literature is that the survival of this subset of colleges will continue to hinge on their clarity of and commitment to a unique mission and a capacity to adapt and adjust rapidly to changing environmental influences without sacrificing historical distinctives and educational quality (p. 44).

In summary, the church-related college plays a distinct role in American higher education. While the meaning of church-relatedness is not a matter of agreement, the necessity of a clear statement of mission is. The mission statement defines the institution and its basic commitments, delineates the educational philosophy, specifies the distinctiveness and clarifies the goals and objectives of the college. It can and should demonstrate the difference between the college and church, and can be the means to draw all its constituencies together. A broadened vision of its mission will make the Christian college more international in its consciousness and concern, will lead to new ways of packaging learning, and will build more effective bridges between theory and practice.

Summary

This review of literature was concentrated on three key areas: liberal and general education, core curriculum programs, and the church-related college. There is confusion in the terminology of liberal and general education which fails to distinguish clearly between the two. Approaches to curricular study in liberal education vary from

an anthology of essays providing state-of-the-art summaries to a description of innovations in liberal education. Seven major trends in current educational practice were noted.

The concept of the core curriculum has returned from "exile" imposed in the sixties. The debate continues amid terminological confusion. Not all educators agree as to the proper approach to core programs. These disagreements range from a set of courses based on distinctive ways of thinking (e.g., Harvard) through a set of competencies focused on learning outcomes, to a set of interdisciplinary courses taken by all students. To succeed a program needs to be grounded in a shared vision, incorporate shared values, and involve shared experiences.

An understanding of the meaning of church relatedness is important to understanding the church-related college. Also important is a clear, unequivocal statement of the mission of the institution. It appears clear from the literature that the survival of the Christian college will hinge on their clarity of and commitment to their unique mission, and the capacity to adapt and adjust rapidly to the demands of an ever changing society.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the methodology and the processes used to conduct this study. First, the population of interest is identified. Second, the questionnaire used in this study is described. Third, the data-gathering procedures are outlined. Next, the statistical treatments are presented. Finally, the research questions are stated and the research hypotheses are presented in testable form.

Design of the Study

Population

The population of this study consisted of the 187 graduates of Spring Arbor College in 1978. Their participation in the process was wholly voluntary, both in 1978 and in 1983.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study was developed and validated by John Newby as the basis for a doctoral dissertation for Michigan State University in 1972 (Newby, 1972, pp. 9, 16-20). This instrument, with minor adaptations, has been used by the Institutional Research Office of Spring Arbor College for each graduating class since 1972.

Two major areas of the instrument formed the basis for this study. The first is Section B, Evaluation of the General College Experience.

The second segment of the instrument used is Section D, Evaluation of the CPLA Program. The same questionnaire which was administered to the graduates in 1978 was used to collect data on their perceptions five years later in 1983.

Three types of questions were used throughout the instrument. In the first type, the respondent selected the one best answer. The second type asked the respondent to use a five point code (4 = very high--0 = very low) to rate selected aspects of a particular segment of their experience. Open-ended questions were the third type employed in the questionnaire.

The first five items in the instrument were classified as biographical and demographic information.

Questionnaire items 6 through 11, 23a and 24a deal with the general educational experience. These questions relate directly to research question One. Questionnaire items 17 through 21 relate to research question two, and provide data for the examination of the CPLA program.

Questionnaire items 23c and 24c relate directly to research question three, and provide data by responses to open-ended question about strengths and weaknesses of the core courses.

Research questions one and two are responded to by the formulation and testing of research hypotheses one and two. These hypotheses are analyzed by the formulation and testing of sub hypotheses. Questionnaire item 6 provided the data for testing Ho 1.1. Item 7 provided the data to test Ho 2.2. Item 8 provided the data to test Ho 1.3. Item 9 provided the data to test Ho 1.4. Items 10 and 11, 23a and 24a provided the data to test Ho 1.5. With regard to research question two and Ho 2., item 17 provided the data to test Ho 2.1. Item 18

provided the data to test Ho 2.2. Item 19 provided the data for the testing of Ho 2.3. Item 20 provided the data to test Ho 2.4. Item 21 provided the data to test Ho 2.5. Items 23c and 24c provided the data for answering research question three. The open ended questions, items 23 and 24, are summarized and presented in descriptive form in Chapter 4, and in Appendix C and D.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions and hypotheses were constructed to analyze the data collected in this study.

Research Question One. How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later regarding their educational experience at SAC?

To answer this question the following research hypotheses were tested:

Ho 1.: There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding their educational experience at SAC.

Ho 1.1.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their involvement in the study of the liberal arts.

Ho 1.2.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning.

Ho 1.3.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their critical participation in the affairs of the contemporary world.

Ho 1.4.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the

perceptions of the graduates regarding their outstanding experience at SAC.

Ho 1.5.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their identification of strengths and weaknesses in the SAC experience.

Research Question Two. How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later in 1983 regarding the CPLA Program at SAC?

Ho 2.: There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding the CPLA program at SAC.

Ho 2.1.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the development of a Christian perspective for learning.

Ho 2.2.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the CPLA courses as listed in question number 18.

Ho 2.3.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the adequacy of the core courses in providing a foundation for further study in the liberal arts.

Ho 2.4.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the core sequence of courses as listed in question number 20.

Ho 2.5.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the

perceptions of the graduates regarding their general attitude toward the CPLA Program.

Research Question Three: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the core program as perceived by the graduates?

Data Collection Procedures

In the spring of 1978 questionnaires were sent to 187 seniors. One hundred and twenty-three instruments were returned to the Office of Institutional Research, or 65.7%. In the summer of 1983, 187 questionnaires were sent to the same people who received them in 1978. Responses were received from 96 persons, or 53.1% of the group. The only distinctions made between the two segments in the analysis of the data was to keep the year of the questionnaire distinct, and treat as separate groups.

The information from the questionnaires was recorded on data sheets. This information in turn was key punched into computer data cards. The Michigan State University Control Data Corporation 3600 Computer was used to tabulate and analyze the data.

Treatment of the Data

The data were programmed and processed by the Control Data Corporation 3600 computer at Michigan State University. The following analyses were performed:

1. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) procedure with appropriate F tests was used to determine whether significant differences existed between the year of the questionnaire and the perceptions of the graduates concerning the general college experience and the CPLA program.

2. A univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedure was performed to determine the differences in the perceptions of the respondents regarding the year of the questionnaire and selected aspects of the college experience and programs.

3. A chi square test was used to determine whether there was a significant relationship between the year of the questionnaire and selected aspects and the general college experience and the core program.

5. Descriptive statistics were used to indicate ratings of respondents on selected aspects of the program.

For all the statistical tests, the .05 level of significance was selected. This is the typical level of significance for the alpha error in most social-science studies (SPSS, p. 222).

Summary

The population for the present study was the graduating class of Spring Arbor College of 1978. Their perceptions at the time of their graduation were compared with their perceptions five years later in 1983. Participation was totally voluntary, therefore the respondents were self-selected.

A questionnaire developed and administered by the Office of Institutional Research of Spring Arbor College provided the data for the study.

Data gathering procedures were outlined. The statistical treatments applied to the hypotheses were described. The major statistical techniques used were a multi-variate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and appropriate F tests for general comparisons (ANOVA), a chi square test applied item by item to examine specific relationships and

descriptive statistics. Finally, the research questions and the testable hypotheses were presented in verbal form.

The next chapter presents a detailed statistical analysis of the data. Chapter 5 contains the conclusions, implications, and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

Analyses of the data collected are presented in this chapter. Statistical treatments were performed as outlined in Chapter III. The research questions were answered by the formulation and testing of research hypotheses. Tables are included to clarify these statistical results.

Purposes for the Study

The purposes for which this study was carried out were:

1. To assess the perceptions of the graduates concerning the core curriculum program at SAC, and its effectiveness in aiding the integration of faith, learning and living;
2. To obtain criticisms, suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the core curriculum program;
3. To evaluate these data and use the results to suggest implications for the core curriculum program; and
4. To make suggestions concerning the improvement of the evaluation process currently employed by the college.

Statistical Analysis

This study was designed to answer three questions.

Research Question One

How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later in 1983 regarding their educational experience at Spring Arbor College?

Hypothesis I with related sub hypotheses was formulated and tested in order to respond to this question.

Descriptive statistics were used to show the ratings of the respondents on selected aspects of the general experience.

Ho 1. There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding their educational experience at SAC.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with appropriate F tests was used to determine if there was any significant difference in the perceptions of the graduates between the year of their graduation in 1978 and five years later, in 1983. Table 4.1. shows no statistically significant difference over time.

To analyze selected categories of their educational experience, a univariate F Test was applied to the responses of the graduates with regard to the graduates' involvement in the study of the liberal arts, commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning, participation in the affairs of the contemporary world, and their most memorable experience at SAC. (See Table 4.1.)

A chi square test was performed for each of the questionnaire items 7 through 11 in order to test each of the sub hypotheses.

Descriptive statistics were used to show the ratings of the graduates on selected aspects of the general college experience.

Table 4.1.--Results of Multivariate and Univariate Analysis of Variance with Mean and Standard Deviation

Results of Multivariate Analysis of Variation

Source of Variation	F	Significance of F
Year of the Questionnaire	.34996	.844*

Results of Univariate Analysis of Variance with Mean and Standard Deviation

Variable	Year	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	F	Significance of F
Involvement in the Study of the Liberal Arts	1978	2.21849	.81459	119	.86822	.353
	1983	2.11579	.78365	95		
Commitment to Jesus Christ as a Perspective for Learning	1978	4.75630	.65051	119	.24543	.621
	1983	4.80000	.62908	95		
Participation in the Affairs of the Contemporary World	1978	2.06732	.78903	119	.02397	.877
	1983	2.08421	.80772	95		
Most Memorable Experience at SAC	1978	2.45960	.61444	119	.13691	.712
	1983	2.48988	.56916	95		

*Significant to .05.

Ho 1.1. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their involvement in the study of the liberal arts.

Table 4.2. shows the significance of chi square to be .6412. Since no significant relationship was shown at the .05 level between this variable and the year of the questionnaire, this hypothesis could not be rejected.

Table 4.2.--Results of the Chi Square Test for the Liberal Arts, A Perspective for Learning, Participation in the Contemporary World, and the Most Memorable Experience at SAC.

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
Involvement in the Study of the Liberal Arts	2.51909	4	.6412
Commitment to Jesus Christ as a Perspective for Learning	3.70981	4	.4467
Critical Participation in the Affairs of the Contemporary World	2.42281	4	.6585
Most Memorable Experience at SAC	5.36067	5	.3735

Ho 1.2. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning.

Table 4.2. reveals the significance of chi square as .4467. Since no significant relationship was shown between this variable and the year of the questionnaire, Ho 1.2 could not be rejected.

Ho 1.3. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their critical participation in the affairs of the contemporary world.

Table 4.2. indicates the significance of chi square as .6585. Since no significant relationship was shown between the variable and the year of the questionnaire, Ho 1.3 could not be rejected.

Ho 1.4. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their outstanding experience at Spring Arbor College.

Table 4.3.--The One Outstanding Memory about the SAC Experience.

Outstanding Memory	Year	Number	Percent
One or Two Stimulating Teachers	1978	43	35.0
	1983	27	28.1
Personal Friendships	1978	66	53.7
	1983	57	59.4
A Social Function	1978	0	0
	1983	0	0
An Athletic Program	1978	2	1.6
	1983	1	1.1
An Outstanding Chapel Program	1978	1	.8
	1983	0	0
Other	1978	8	6.5
	1983	8	8.3

The graduates were asked to choose the one thing that stands out most in their memory about SAC from the following options: one or two stimulating teachers, personal friendships, a social function, an athletic program, an outstanding chapel program, or some other program. In 1978, 35.0 percent indicated one or two outstanding teachers, while

in 1983 28.1 percent chose this option. Personal friendships were most memorable to 53.7 percent in 1978 and 59.4 percent in 1983. None of the other options were indicated by more than 8.3 percent in either year. (See Table 4.3.)

Table 4.2. shows the significance of chi square as .3735. Since no significant relationship was shown between this variable and the year of the questionnaire, Ho 1.4 could not be rejected.

Ho 1.5. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduated regarding their identification of strengths and weaknesses in the Spring Arbor College experience.

To test this sub hypothesis, the graduates were asked to respond to the 20 different facets of their undergraduate experience listed in items 10 and 11 of the questionnaire. (See Tables 4.4. and 4.7.) The chi square test revealed that 19 of these categories had no significant relationship to the year of the questionnaire. One category did appear to have a significant relationship, the graduates' perceptions regarding the assistance their college experience provided in approaches to solving personal problems. In 1978, 31.7 percent of the respondents perceived that their college experience was weak at the point of preparing them to solve personal problems. Five years later only 14.6 percent of the respondents indicated this as a weakness.

Table 4.4.--Results of Chi Square Test on Areas SAC Could Have Given More Help.

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
Understanding and Preparing for a Vocation	.12188	1	.6263
Approaches to Solving Personal Problems	7.71057	1	.0033*
Understanding and Planning for Economic Life	1.46650	1	.4803
How to Work with Groups	.06477	1	.7991
Development of Social Skills	1.66588	1	.1358
Understanding and Promoting Health in Home and Community	.05293	1	.8180
Relationships with People of other Races	.43695	1	.4043

*Significant at less than .05.

Table 4.5.--Ratings by Graduates on Areas Where SAC Could Have Given More Help.

Effect	Year	Number	Percent
Understanding and Preparing for a Vocation	1978	51	41.5
	1983	42	43.8
Approaches to Solving Personal Problems	1978	28	22.8
	1983	25	26.0
Understanding and Planning for Economic Life	1978	35	28.5
	1983	35	36.5
How to Work with Groups	1978	8	6.5
	1983	8	8.3
Development of Social Skills	1978	14	11.4
	1983	15	15.6
Understanding and Promoting Health in Home and Community	1978	10	8.1
	1983	7	7.3
Relationships with People of other Races	1978	21	17.1
	1983	21	21.9

Table 4.6.--Results of Chi Square Test for Item 11 on How Well SAC Succeeded in Specific Areas.

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
Enables the Student to Achieve a Broad Cultural Background	.76101	4	.9436
Develop the Ability for Critical Thinking	1.00901	4	.9084
Opportunities for Developing Leadership Skills	.37921	4	.9841
Understand Human Behavior	4.97983	4	.2894
Prepared Student for Future Occupation	4.80581	4	.3078
Emphasized Intellectual Growth more than Grades	8.55307	4	.0733
Prepared the Student to be a Lifelong Student	2.10899	4	.7157
Stimulated Exploration Outside Student's Field	2.76957	4	.5971
Developed Ability to Get Along with People	5.82410	4	.2127
Helped one Understand Community and World Problems	5.62437	4	.2290
Helped Develop more Fully One's Morals, Ethical Standards, and Values.	2.94738	4	.5667
Provided Assistance for Personal Problems	3.54130	4	.4716
Investigated Religious, Philosophical, and Moral Problems	3.86909	4	.4240

Items 23_a and 24_a on the questionnaire were open ended questions asking the graduates to identify in writing what they perceived to be strengths and weaknesses of their general college experience. In 1978, 91.9 percent of the respondents responded to these items, while in 1983 only 83.3 percent responded.

The strengths which the respondents cited included the quality of instruction, faculty concern for students, faculty openness, good advising, the development of close personal relationships, the stimulation of classes, the development of critical thinking, the value of small group discussion, the emphasis on the integration of faith and learning, the communication of a liberal arts perspective, the community climate, the Christian atmosphere, the value of the small community, the freedom to grow, the quality of the people, social life, extra curricular activities, dorm life, chapels, spiritual life, and the inspiration of the faculty.

The categories receiving the most attention were the following. Nine percent of the respondents saw the quality of instruction as a strength in 1978. In 1983 it was cited by 25.0 percent. Faculty concern for the students received mention by 9.6 percent in 1978 and 15.0 percent in 1983. Close personal relationships were viewed as strong in both years, 19.0 percent in 1978 and 23.0 percent in 1983. The quality of the people in the community was included by 4.1 percent in 1978 and by 12.5 percent in 1983. The community climate was not mentioned by the respondents in 1978, but in 1983, 20.0 percent made reference to it. (See Table 4.8.)

Table 4.7.--Ratings by Graduates on SAC Success in Providing Selected Objectives of the General College Experience.

Effect	Year	0 %	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
Enabled the Student to Achieve a Broad Cultural Background	1978	.8	28.5	38.2	25.2	5.7	123	2.07	.901
	1983	3.1	20.8	44.8	24.0	7.3	96	2.12	.928
Helped the Student to Develop the Ability for Critical Thinking	1978	.8	7.3	19.5	53.7	16.3	123	2.79	.839
	1983	3.1	5.2	24.0	49.0	18.8	96	2.75	.929
Provided Opportunities for Developing Leadership Skills	1978	2.4	4.1	33.3	40.7	17.9	123	2.69	.904
	1983	2.1	6.3	28.1	39.6	24.0	96	2.77	.957
Encouraged the Student to Understand Human Behavior	1978	2.4	7.3	32.5	42.3	14.6	123	2.60	.915
	1983	2.1	10.4	28.1	47.9	11.5	96	2.56	.904
Prepared the Student Primarily for Future Occupation	1978	1.6	17.1	39.0	29.3	8.9	123	2.28	.923
	1983	3.1	18.8	33.3	38.5	6.3	96	2.26	.943
Emphasized Intellectual Growth More than Grades	1978	4.1	11.4	37.8	35.0	6.5	123	2.29	.915
	1983	6.3	16.7	34.4	25.0	17.7	96	2.31	1.136
Prepared the Student to be a Life Long Student	1978	3.3	11.4	30.1	40.7	13.8	123	2.50	.981
	1983	2.1	8.3	21.9	42.7	25.0	96	2.80	.980
Stimulated through Various Means the Exploration of Areas Outside the Student's Major Field of Study	1978	1.6	6.5	32.5	41.5	15.4	123	2.64	.887
	1983	3.1	12.5	20.8	44.8	18.8	96	2.64	1.027
Developed One's Ability to Get Along with People	1978	1.6	8.9	26.0	48.0	12.2	123	2.62	.883
	1983	0	7.3	28.1	40.6	24.0	96	2.81	.886
Helped One Understand Community and World Problems	1978	4.9	16.3	39.8	30.9	5.7	123	2.17	.947
	1983	7.3	21.9	38.5	25.0	5.2	96	1.99	1.000

Table 4.7. (cont'd.)

Effect	Year	0 %	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
Helped an Individual to Develop More Fully His Morals, Ethical Standards, and Values	1978	4.9	9.8	19.5	44.7	19.5	123	2.65	1.062
	1983	4.2	11.5	29.2	34.4	19.8	96	2.55	1.070
Provided Assistance for Personal Problems	1978	4.1	13.8	34.1	36.6	8.1	123	2.32	.965
	1983	5.2	18.8	35.4	24.0	13.5	96	2.23	1.085
Investigated Religious, Philosophical & Moral Problems	1978	1.6	8.9	17.1	44.7	26.8	123	2.86	.970
	1983	0	16.7	18.8	40.6	22.9	96	2.71	1.009
Average	1978							2.50	
	1983							2.50	

Table 4.8.--Responses of Graduates on Open Ended Questions Concerning the Strengths of their General Educational Experience.

Strength	Year	Number	Per Cent
Faculty			
Quality of Instruction	1978	11	8.9
	1983	24	25.0
Concern for Students	1978	12	9.6
	1983	14	15.0
Openness	1978	3	2.4
	1983	5	5.2
Good Advising	1978	2	1.6
	1983	4	4.2
Students			
Close Personal Relationships	1978	23	19.0
	1983	22	23.0
Classes			
Stimulation	1978	4	3.3
	1983	4	4.2
Critical Thinking	1978	4	3.3
	1983	2	2.1
Small Group Interaction	1978	6	4.9
	1983	4	4.2
Integration of Faith & Learning	1978	3	2.4
	1983	4	4.2
Program			
Perspective in the Liberal Arts	1978	3	2.4
	1983	2	2.1
Academic Excellence	1978	3	2.4
	1983	0	
Development of Leadership Skills	1978	3	2.4
	1983	0	
Community			
Climate	1978	0	
	1983	19	20.0
Christian Atmosphere	1978	7	5.7
	1983	2	2.1

Table 4.8. (cont'd).

Strength	Year	Number	Per Cent
Small Community	1978	9	7.3
	1983	4	4.2
Freedom to Grow	1978	5	4.1
	1983	5	5.2
Quality of People	1978	5	4.1
	1983	12	12.5
Extracurricular Activities			
Activities	1978	0	
	1983	9	9.4
Social Life	1978	6	4.9
	1983	4	4.2
Dorm Life	1978	3	2.4
	1983	5	5.2
Spiritual Life			
Chapels	1978	4	3.3
	1983	4	4.2
Inspiration of Faculty	1978	5	4.1
	1983	1	1.2
Spiritual Life	1978	2	1.6
	1983	4	4.2

The weaknesses of the general college experience noted by the respondents included the quality of instruction, advising, poor student relationships with the faculty, the lack of academic excellence in the college program, weak administration, poor attitudes and relationships with students on the part of the administration, poor administration of rules and discipline, the climate is too sheltered, poor communication, the community was cliquish, an inconsistency between saying and doing, inadequate social life, too much emphasis on athletics, the need for more involvement in the outside community, inadequate housing, inferior food service, weak chapels and deficient spiritual life.

Table 4.9.--Responses of Graduates on Open Ended Questions Concerning the Weaknesses of their General Educational Experience.

Weakness	Year	Number	Per Cent
Faculty			
Quality of Instruction	1978	4	3.3
	1983	2	2.0
Advising	1978	3	2.4
	1983	4	4.2
Poor Student Relationships	1978	4	3.3
	1983	4	4.2
Program			
Lack of Academic Excellence	1978	2	1.6
	1983	4	4.2
Administration			
Weak Administration	1978	0	
	1983	5	5.2
Attitudes and Relationships with Students	1978	10	8.1
	1983	7	7.3
Administration of Rules & Discipline	1978	2	1.6
	1983	7	7.3
Community Climate			
Too Sheltered	1978	6	4.9
	1983	10	10.4
Poor Communication	1978	2	1.6
	1983	5	5.2
Cliquish	1978	2	1.6
	1983	3	3.1
Inconsistency between Saying and Doing	1978	3	2.4
	1983	1	1.2
Extracurricular Activities			
Social Life	1978	4	3.3
	1983	8	8.3
Too much Emphasis on Athletics	1978	1	0.8
	1983	4	4.2
Need More Involvement in Outside Community	1978	0	
	1983	4	4.2
Housing	1978	0	
	1983	4	4.2
Food Service	1978	0	
	1983	3	3.1

Table 4.9. (cont'd).

Weakness	Year	Number	Per Cent
Spiritual Life			
Weak Chapels	1978	4	3.3
	1983	4	4.2
Deficient Spiritual Life	1978	6	4.9
	1983	5	5.2

Only one area of weakness was noted by more than 10 percent of the respondents. In 1978, 4.9 percent saw the community as too sheltered, but in 1983, 10.4 percent cited this as a weakness. The only other change of more than 5 percent was in the administration of rules and discipline, where the percentage moved from 1.6 in 1978 to 7.3 in 1983. (See Table 4.9.)

Even though one category was shown to have a significant relationship to the year of the questionnaire, the specific items in the area of strengths and weaknesses as a whole did not prove to be significantly related to the change in time from 1978 to 1983. Therefore, Ho 1.5 could not be rejected.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis of the data, Ho 1 could not be rejected. There was no statistically significant difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the respondents regarding their educational experience at Spring Arbor College.

Research Question Two

How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later in 1983 regarding the CPLA program at Spring Arbor College?

Ho 2 with its related sub hypotheses was formulated and tested in order to respond to this question.

Table 4.10.--Results of Multivariate and Univariate Analysis of Variance including Mean and Standard Deviation

Results of Multivariate Analysis of Variation

Source of Variation	F	Significance of F
Year of the Questionnaire	2.11832	.080

Results of Univariate Analysis of Variance including Mean and Standard Deviation

Variable	Year	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	F	Significance of F
Your Development of a Christian Perspective for Learning	1978	2.04390	.89316	123	0.21308	.645
	1983	2.09792	.81357	96		
Aspects of the CPLA Courses	1978	2.11942	.85431	123	5.18074	.024*
	1983	2.37629	.78794	96		
Ratings of the Core Courses	1978	1.32419	.70345	123	0.06232	.803
	1983	1.30078	.66875	96		
Aspects of the Core Sequence	1978	1.70732	1.00836	123	1.64631	.201
	1983	1.87083	.83350	96		

*Significant at less than .05.

Hypothesis 2. There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding the CPLA program at Spring Arbor College.

To formulate the data concerning the CPLA program, the graduates responded to questions regarding the development of a Christian perspective for learning, selected aspects of the CPLA courses, the core sequence of courses, and their general attitude toward the CPLA program. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with appropriate F tests was used to analyze the data. (See Table 4.10.) A chi square test was performed for each of the items on the questionnaire in order to examine each of the sub hypotheses.

Descriptive statistics were employed to show the relationship of the graduates on various aspects of the CPLA program.

Ho 2.1. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the development of a Christian perspective for learning.

The graduates were asked to respond to the following items as contributing to the development of a Christian perspective for learning: A CPLA course, contact with a faculty member, a particular religious experience, a special chapel program, and small group participation. A chi square test reveals no significant relationship between these categories and the year of the questionnaire (see Table 4.11.). Therefore, Ho 2.1. could not be rejected.

Table 4.11.--Results of Chi Square Test for the Development of a Christian Perspective for Learning

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
A CPLA Course	4.35957	4	.3595
Contaat with a Faculty Member	.27564	4	.9912
A Particular Religious Experience	4.18559	4	.3815
A Special Chapel Program	1.08965	4	.8943
Small Group Participation	3.21822	4	.5220

Table 4.12.--Comparative Rating Scores ol the Contribution toward the Development of a Christian Perspective for Learning.

Variable	Year	0	1	2	3	4	N	X	SD
A Course in	1978	19.9	24.4	30.9	19.5	5.7	116	1.92	1.01
CPLA	1983	10.4	25.0	34.4	26.0	4.2	94	1.75	1.15
Contact with a	1978	6.5	8.9	22.0	34.1	28.5	117	2.79	1.05
Faculty Member	1983	5.2	10.4	21.9	34.4	28.1	95	2.78	1.88
A Particular									
Religious	1978	15.4	13.8	30.1	23.6	17.1	114	2.23	1.11
Experience	1983	14.6	11.5	29.2	34.4	10.4	94	2.28	1.27
A Special	1978	22.1	22.0	26.0	25.2	4.9	115	1.70	1.23
Chapel Program	1983	25.4	21.9	24.0	21.9	7.3	93	1.84	1.17
Small Group	1978	22.0	13.0	24.4	21.1	19.5	115	2.20	1.23
Participation	1983	15.6	14.6	27.1	28.1	14.6	95	2.11	1.42
Average	1978							2.17	
	1983							2.15	

Ho 2.2. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the CPLA courses as listed in item number 18 on the questionnaire.

The graduates responded to questions concerning the general clearness of the major objectives of the CPLA courses, the general agreement between objectives and assignments, clear organization of class presentations, clear explanations of important ideas, the instructor's encouragement to seek help when necessary, the use of class time for instruction purposes, the instructor's regard for viewpoints different from his/her own, stimulation of classes, and fairness of grades. A univariate analysis of variance indicates an alpha level of .024 for specific aspects of the CPLA courses. (See Table 4.10). A chi square test was used to indicate which specific aspects were significantly related to the year of the questionnaire, and three variables were shown to have an alpha level below .05: general clearness of major objectives, .0487; clear organization of class presentation, .0332; and use of class time for instruction purposes, .0106. (See Table 4.13.)

Table 4.13.--Results of Chi Square Test for Aspects of the CPLA Courses

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
General Clearness of Major Objective	9.55277	4	.0487*
General Agreement between Objectives and Assignments	9.40409	4	.0518
Clear Organization of Class Presentation	10.47319	4	.0332*
Clear Explanation of Important Ideas	4.93675	4	.2938
Instructor's Encouragement to Seek Help when Necessary	5.73505	4	.2198
Use of Class Time for Instruction Purposes	13.13612	4	.0106*
Instructor's Regard for Viewpoints Different from His Own	4.01889	4	.4035
Stimulation of Classes	8.09980	4	.0880
Fairness of Grades	8.22766	4	.0836

*Significant at less than .05.

The perceptions of the respondents with regard to the general clearness of major objectives changed significantly from 1978 to 1983. In 1978, 9.8 percent of the respondents perceived this category as very low, 28.5 percent as low, 31.4 percent as neutral, 19.5 percent as high, and 8.1 percent as very high. Five years later, in 1983, 6.3 percent saw it as very low, 22.9 percent as low, 29.2 percent as neutral, while 37.5 percent saw it as high, and 4.2 percent as very high. The categories of very low and low decreased 9.1 percent while the high categories increased 18.0 percent. (See Table 4.14.)

Table 4.14.--Comparative Rating Scores on Selected Aspects of CPLA Courses.

Variable	Year	0	1	2	3	4	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
General Clearness of Major Objectives	1978	9.8	28.5	34.1	19.5	8.1	118	2.04	.97
	1983	6.3	22.9	29.2	37.5	4.2	94	2.04	1.07
General Agreement between Objectives & Assigmments	1978	11.4	20.3	41.5	27.0	4.8	118	2.17	.87
	1983	4.2	17.7	34.4	38.5	5.2	94	2.00	1.03
Clear Organization of Class Presentations	1978	13.8	23.6	37.4	20.3	4.9	118	2.12	.91
	1983	5.2	18.8	34.4	37.5	4.2	94	1.89	1.08
Clear Explanation of Important Ideas	1978	7.3	19.5	37.4	25.2	10.6	118	2.18	.84
	1983	3.1	18.8	39.6	33.3	5.2	95	2.25	1.07
Instructor's Encouragement to Seek Help	1978	10.6	12.2	33.3	27.6	16.3	118	2.50	.92
	1983	3.1	10.4	35.4	36.5	14.6	94	2.36	1.15
Usage of Class Time for Instruction Purposes	1978	8.1	23.6	25.2	31.7	11.4	118	2.50	.93
	1983	3.1	8.3	28.1	45.8	11.6	93	2.37	1.09
Instructor's Regard for Viewpoints other than His Own	1978	9.8	5.7	17.1	42.3	25.2	117	2.72	1.02
	1983	5.2	7.3	26.0	38.5	22.9	93	2.87	1.02
Stimulation of Classes	1978	22.0	24.4	26.0	17.1	10.6	117	1.99	1.10
	1983	12.5	17.7	33.3	28.1	8.3	94	1.82	1.31
Fairness of Grades	1978	6.5	9.8	23.6	36.6	23.6	116	2.88	.85
	1983	3.1	2.1	21.9	49.0	24.0	95	2.79	1.01
Average	1978							2.34	
	1983							2.27	

There was also a significant shift in perception of the clear organization of class presentations. In 1978, 4.9 percent of the respondents viewed this as very high, 20.3 percent as high, 37.4 percent as neutral, 23.6 percent as low, and 13.8 percent as very low. Five years later the percentage had shifted to 4.2 percent very high, 37.5

percent high, 34.4 percent neutral, only 18.8 percent low, and 5.2 percent as very low. While the very low and low categories decreased 13.4 percent, the high category increased 17.2 percent. (See Table 4.14.)

The third variable that demands attention is the usage of class time for instruction. In 1978 this variable was seen as very low by 8.1 percent of the respondents as low by 23.6 percent, as neutral by 25.2 percent, as high by 31.7 percent and very high by 11.4 percent. Five years later the shift revealed a very low rating by only 3.1 percent, low by 8.3 percent, neutral by 28.1 4percent, high by 45.8 percent and very high by 14.6 percent. While the low categories decreased 20.3 percent, the neutral and high categories increased 20.2 percent. (See Table 4.14.)

Three other aspects of the CPLA courses, while not below the .05 alpha level, are close enough to warrant attention. General agreement between objectives and assignments had an alpha level of .0518. Stimulation of classes had an alpha level of .088, and fairness of grades had an alpha level of .0836. (See Table 4.13.)

The univariate analysis of variance reveals a statistical significance of F equals .024. Therefore, this hypothesis was rejected.

Ho 2.3. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the contributions of the core courses to the total degree program.

The chi square test (see Table 4.15.) indicates that there was no significant relation between the year of the questionnaire and the contribution of the core courses to the total degree program. Therefore, Ho 2.3. could not be rejected.

Table 4.15.--Results of Chi Square Test for Adequacy of Core Courses

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
Contribution to Total Degree Program			
Core 100	5.78222	4	.2160
Core 200	7.64266	4	.1056
Core 300	5.77290	4	.2168
Core 400	7.13177	4	.1291
Contribution to Liberal Arts			
Core 100	4.82451	4	.3058
Core 200	5.18027	4	.2693
Core 300	5.57895	4	.2329
Core 400	9.04483	4	.0600

Ho 2.4. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the adequacy of the core courses in providing a foundation for further study in the liberal arts.

The chi square test (see Table 4.15.) shows that there was no significant relation between the year of the questionnaire and the perceptions of the respondents regarding the adequacy of the core courses in providing a foundation for further study in the Liberal arts. Therefore Ho 2.4. could not be rejected.

One category, however, is worth mention. The chi square test shows the relation of the year of the questionnaire and the respondent perceptions of the contribution of Core 400 to the liberal arts at the .060 alpha level. A freqency count discloses the following information: In 1978, 26.1 percent of the respondents perceived this category to be

very low or low, 24.4 percent neutral, and 48.0 percent as high or very high. Five years later 28.1 percent saw it as low or very low, only 15.6 percent as neutral, and 56.3 percent as high or very high. (See Table 4.16.)

Ho 2.5. Change in time is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the core sequence of courses as listed in questionnaire item number 20.

Table 4.16.--Comparative Rating Scores on the Core Courses.

Variable	Year	0	1	2	3	4	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
Contribution to Total Degree Program									
Core 100	1978	55.3	17.1	15.4	7.3	4.9	50	1.32	.99
	1983	69.8	13.5	11.5	3.1	2.1	57	1.68	1.28
Core 200	1978	52.8	14.6	17.1	12.2	3.3	83	1.72	.95
	1983	36.5	20.8	28.1	12.5	2.1	65	1.48	1.29
Core 300	1978	62.6	6.5	7.3	16.3	7.3	57	2.19	1.72
	1983	57.3	6.3	17.7	12.5	6.3	47	2.06	1.44
Core 400	1978	17.9	13.8	21.6	22.8	24.4	114	2.23	1.31
	1983	17.7	19.8	13.5	33.3	15.6	93	2.37	1.37
Averages	1978	47.15	13.0	15.35	14.65	9.98		1.87	
	1983	45.33	15.1	17.70	15.35	6.53		1.90	
Contribution to Foundation for Liberal Arts									
Core 100	1978	55.3	14.6	17.1	6.5	6.5	51	1.67	1.03
	1983	64.6	11.5	12.5	9.4	2.1	56	1.80	1.33
Core 200	1978	43.9	13.0	22.8	15.4	4.9	83	1.89	.94
	1983	35.4	14.6	31.3	17.7	1.0	65	1.92	1.78
Core 300	1978	61.0	8.1	11.4	10.6	8.9	56	2.38	1.07
	1983	55.2	5.2	14.6	19.8	5.2	47	2.09	1.38
Core 400	1978	16.3	9.8	24.4	23.6	26.0	112	2.46	1.18
	1983	12.5	15.6	18.8	37.5	15.6	92	2.50	1.27
Averages	1978	44.13	4.48	18.93	14.03	11.58		2.10	
	1983	41.93	11.73	14.3	21.10	5.98		2.08	

A univariate analysis of variance disclosed a significance level of .201 for item 20 on the questionnaire regarding the effectiveness of the core sequence of courses. (See Table 4.10.) But the chi square test shows two of the variables in this section to be significantly related to the change over time. (See Table 4.17.)

Table 4.17.--Results of Chi Square Test for Core Sequence of Courses

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
Increased Understanding of the Christian Faith	10.65497	4	.0307*
Development of a Christian Perspective toward your Academic Major	2.89004	4	.5764
Integration of the Christian Faith with your Educational Experience	10.52715	4	.0324*
Understanding of the True Nature of Liberal Arts Education	5.87143	4	.2090
Perspective to Evaluate the Significant Events of Your Society	3.29167	4	.5103

*Significant at less than .05.

Table 4.18.--Comparative Rating Scores on Selected Aspects of the Core Sequence.

Variable	Year	0	1	2	3	4	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
Increased Understanding of the Christian Faith	1978	21.1	20.3	33.3	19.5	5.7	118	1.89	.93
	1983	7.3	24.0	42.7	24.0	2.1	94	1.78	1.18
Development of a Christian Perspective toward the Academic Major	1978	23.6	26.0	27.6	16.3	66.5	117	1.60	1.01
	1983	17.7	29.2	33.3	16.7	3.1	95	1.65	1.25
Integration of the Christian Faith with Educational Experience	1978	18.7	25.2	29.3	21.1	5.7	119	1.89	.97
	1983	9.4	16.7	46.9	24.0	3.1	94	1.82	1.15
Understanding of the True Nature of the Liberal Arts	1978	19.5	23.6	30.1	22.0	4.9	118	1.85	1.02
	1983	13.5	16.7	37.5	30.2	2.1	94	1.84	1.17
Provided a Perspective to Evaluate Events in Society	1978	16.3	21.1	26.0	29.3	7.3	118	2.05	1.08
	1983	9.4	20.8	34.4	29.2	6.3	94	1.98	1.15
Average	1978							1.86	
	1983							1.80	

One of these was the question: To what extent has the core sequence of courses increased your understanding of the Christian Faith? The responses of the graduates had a significance level of .031. The breakdown in responses was as follows: in 1978 a rating of very low was given by 21.1 percent; low, 20.3 percent; neutral, 33.3 percent; high 19.9 percent; and very high, only 5.7 percent. In 1983 those perceptions had changed to 7.3 percent for very low, 24.0 percent for low, 42.7 percent for neutral, 24.0 percent for high, and only 2.1 percent for very high. The change in perceptions can be seen more clearly if the two low categories and the two high categories are

combined. The very low or low rating of 41.4 percent in 1978 decreased to 31.3 percent in 1983, a decrease of 10.1 percent; the neutral rating of 33.3 percent in 1978 increased to 42.7 percent in 1983, an increase of 9.4 percent; and the high or very high rating was nearly the same at 25.2 and 26.1 percent, respectively. (Table 4.18.) Change over time disclosed a significant difference of .0307 in the perceptions of the respondents with respect to their increased understanding of the Christian Faith. (See Table 4.17.)

The other notable change was in response to the question: To what degree has the core sequence of courses assisted you to integrate the whole of the Christian Faith with all of your educational experience? The statistical significance of this variable was at a .032 level (See Table 4.17.). In 1978 this was rated very low by 18.7 percent of the respondents, low by 25.2 percent, neutral by 29.3 percent, high by 21.1 percent, and very high by 5.7 percent. The shift in 1983 was to 9.4 percent very low, a decrease of 9.3 percent; 16.7 as low, a decrease of 17.8 percent; 46.9 as neutral, an increase of 17.6 percent; 24.0 as high, and 3.1 as very high, a change in these two categories of only 0.3 percent. (See Table 4.18.)

Although two of the categories did show a statistically significant relation to the year of the questionnaire, the overall alpha level was .201. Therefore, Ho 2.5. could not be rejected.

Ho 2.6. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their general attitude toward the CPLA Program.

The significance level of this variable was .0787. (See Table 4.19.)

Table 4.19.--Results of Chi Square Test for Attitude Toward the CPLA Program

Variable	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Significance of Chi Square
Your Attitude Toward the CPLA Program	11.32935	6	.0787

While the statistical results were not significant, the shifts in perceptions were interesting. The graduates were asked to rate their general attitudes toward the CPLA Program by noting their one best answer among the following five options: the CPLA program provided a Christian perspective for further study in the liberal arts, gave a broad foundation upon which to build a major, provided new insights into the relationships between the academic disciplines, was on the whole beneficial, or was too general and failed to challenge.

Table 4.20.--General Attitude Expressed by Graduates toward the CPLA Program

Attitude	Year	Number	Percent
Provided a Christian Perspective for Further Study in the Liberal Arts	1978	9	7.3
	1983	7	7.3
Gave a Broad Foundation upon which to Build a Major	1978	1	0.8
	1983	3	3.1
Provided New Insights into the Relationships between Academic Disciplines	1978	14	11.4
	1983	13	13.5
Were on the Whole Beneficial	1978	30	24.4
	1983	38	39.6
Were too General and Failed to Challenge	1978	55	44.7
	1983	30	31.1

In both 1978 and 1983, 7.3 percent of the respondents gave their one best answer as providing a Christian perspective for further study in the liberal arts. Only 0.8 percent in 1978 and 3.1 percent in 1983 chose the answer of providing a broad foundation upon which to build a major. 11.4 percent in 1978 chose new insights into the relationships between academic disciplines while in 1983 13.5 percent checked this option. In 1978, 24.4 percent considered the CPLA program on the whole as beneficial, while 39.6 percent had this attitude in 1983, an increase of 15.2 percent. It was too general and failed to challenge for 44.7 percent in 1978 and 31.3 percent in 1983, a decrease of 13.4 percent. (See Table 4.20.)

Since the analysis of the data reveals that there was no statistically significant change over time in the general attitude of the graduates toward the CPLA program, Ho 1.6 could not be rejected.

Only one of the sub hypotheses under hypothesis II was rejected. The univariate analysis of variance for Ho 2.2. regarding selected aspects of the CPLA program was shown to have a significance level of .024. (See Table 4.10.) The other sub hypotheses could not be rejected. The multivariate analysis of variance for Ho 2. revealed the significance of F at the .080 level. Therefore, Ho 2. could not be rejected.

Research Question Three.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the core program perceived by the graduates?

The data for the answer to this question was provided by the responses to the open ended questions in items 23_c and 24_c on the questionnaire. The graduates were asked to identify in writing what

they perceived to be the strengths and weaknesses of the core program. In 1978, 91 percent of the graduates responded to these items, while in 1983 only 77 percent responded.

The general strengths of the program which the respondents cited were the integration of faith and learning, the stimulation of critical thinking, the quality of the faculty, the quality of the program, and the attention which was given to problems and issues. The greatest change in perception was with regard to the attention given to problems and issues. In 1978 1.6 percent of those responding indicated this as a strength, while it was noted by 8.3 percent of those responding in 1983. The integration of faith and learning received the most attention, with 6.5 percent of those responding in 1978 and 7.3 percent of those responding in 1983 including it. (See Table 4.21.)

The strength most noted in Core 100 was the acquisition of Biblical knowledge, as 8.1 percent in 1978 and 9.4 percent in 1983 included it. The quality of the course showed the greatest change in perception, when only 0.8 percent cited it in 1978, whereas in 1983 7.5 percent of those responding noted it.

A number of strengths were noted in Core 400, namely the quality of the faculty, the attention given to major issues, the integration of faith and learning, the development of critical thinking, the development of values and morals, the value of the group discussion, and the fact that the course was stimulating and valuable. The greatest change in perception was with regard to the course being stimulating and valuable, for in 1978 only 2.4 percent noted this, while in 1983 it was cited by 9.4 percent of those responding. (See Table 4.21.)

Table 4.21.--Responses of Graduates on Open Ended Questions Concerning Strengths of the Core Program.

Strength	Year	Number	Percent
General			
Integration of Faith and Learning	1978	8	6.5
	1983	7	7.3
Stimulates Critical Thinking	1978	3	2.4
	1983	8	8.3
Quality of the Faculty	1978	7	5.7
	1983	4	4.2
Quality of the Program	1978	2	1.6
	1983	5	5.2
Attention to Problems and Issues	1978	2	1.6
	1983	8	8.3
CORE 100			
Acquisition of Biblical Knowledge	1978	10	8.1
	1983	9	9.4
Quality of the Course	1978	1	0.8
	1983	8	8.3
A Challenge to Thinking	1978	0	0.0
	1983	3	3.1
CORE 400			
Quality of Faculty	1978	4	3.3
	1983	3	3.1
Attention to Major Issues	1978	2	1.6
	1983	7	7.3
Integration of Faith and Learning	1978	4	4.2
	1983	2	2.0
Development of Critical Thinking	1978	4	3.3
	1983	6	6.3
Development of Values and Morals	1978	0	0.0
	1983	3	3.1
Discussion Groups	1978	5	4.1
	1983	6	6.3
Stimulating and Valuable	1978	3	2.4
	1983	9	9.4

The general weaknesses of the core program noted by the respondents included the quality of the faculty; the program was a waste of time, and therefore not valuable; it was too general and vague; there was poor structure and administration of classes; it was too demanding for some; and there was a lack of integration in the program. Receiving the most attention was the category "not valuable and a waste of time." In 1978, 8.9 percent of those responding cited this as a weakness, and in 1983 this was noted by 26.0 percent of the respondents. While none of the respondents in 1978 mentioned the program being too general and vague, in 1983, 11.5 percent of those responding included it. The quality of the faculty was noted as a weakness by 4.1 percent of the respondants in 1978 and by 9.4 percent in 1983. (See Table 4.22.)

Weaknesses pointed out in Core 200 were quality of the faculty, lack of structure, and a waste of time, this last weakness being noted by 0.8 percent in 1978 and by 13.6 percent of the respondants in 1983. (See Table 4.22.)

Mentioned specifically in Core 400 were two weaknesses. Some reqpondents saw it as too unstructured, 1.6 percent in 1978 and 7.3 pepcelt in 1983. 1.6 percent in 1978 perceived it to be a waste of time, while 6.3 percent remembered it in this way in 1983. (See Table 4.22.)

Table 4.22.--Responses of Graduates on Open Ended Questions Concerning Weaknesses of the CORE Program.

Weakness	Year	Number	Percent
General			
Quality of the Faculty	1978	5	4.1
	1983	9	9.4
Program is not Valuable, a Waste of Time	1978	11	8.9
	1983	25	26.0
Too General and Vague	1978	0	0.0
	1983	11	11.5
Poor Structure and Administration of Classes	1978	14	11.4
	1983	10	10.4
Too Demanding	1978	0	0.0
	1983	6	6.3
Lack of Integration	1978	6	4.9
	1983	0	0.0
CORE 100			
Not Valuable, a Waste of Time	1978	2	1.6
	1983	4	4.2
CORE 200			
Quality of the Faculty	1978	2	1.6
	1983	4	4.2
Lack of Structure	1978	1	0.8
	1983	3	3.1
Not Valuable, a Waste of Time	1978	1	0.8
	1983	13	13.6
CORE 300			
Not Valuable	1978	0	0.0
	1983	5	5.3
Too Demanding	1978	0	0.0
	1983	3	3.1
CORE 400			
Too Unstructured	1978	2	1.6
	1983	7	7.3
Not Valuable, a Waste of Time	1978	2	1.6
	1983	6	6.3

Results of the Analysis

As a result of the data analysis, the researcher found that:

1. There was no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding their educational experience at SAC. This major research hypothesis was accepted on the basis of the following findings:
   a. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their involvement in the study of the liberal arts.
   b. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning.
   c. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their participation in the affairs of the contemporary world.
   d. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their outstanding experience at SAC.
   e. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their identification of strengths and weaknesses of the SAC program.

The respondents identified the following strengths in their general college experience: the quality of instruction, faculty concern for students, faculty openness, good advising, the development of close personal relationships, the stimulation of classes, the development of critical thinking, the value of small group discussions, the emphasis on

the integration of faith and learning, the communication of a liberal arts perspective, the community climate, the Christian atmosphere, the value of small community, the freedom to grow, the quality of the people, social life, extra-curricular activities, dorm life, chapels, spiritual life, and the inspiration of the faculty.

The strengths which received the most attention were the following. The quality of instruction was noted by 8.9 percent of the respondents in 1978 and by 25.0 percent in 1983. Faculty concern for students was pointed out by 9.6 percent of the graduates in 1978 and 15.0 percent in 1983. The development of close personal relationships was cited by 19.0 percent of the respondents in 1978 and by 23.0 percent in 1983. Twenty percent of the respondents in 1983 referred to the community climate as positive. The quality of the people in the community was included by 4.1 percent of the class in 1978 and by 12.5 percent in 1983.

The following weakness in their general college experiences were noted by the respondents the quality of instruction, advising, poor student relationships with faculty, the lack of academic excellence in the college program, weak administration, poor administration of rules and discipline, the sheltered climate, poor communication, the community was cliquish, and inconsistency between statement and action, inadequate social life, too much emphasis on athletics, the need for more involvement in the outside community, inadequate housing, inferior food service, weak chapels and deficient spiritual life.

The weakness which generated the most attention was the sheltered community. The next most prominent weakness was the administration of rules and discipline.

2. There was no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the

graduates regarding the CPLA program at SAC. This major research hypothesis was accepted on the basis of the following findings.

a. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the development of a Christian perspective for learning.

b. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the following aspects of the CPLA courses: general clearness of major objective, clear organization of class presentation, and use of class time for instruction purposes. (See Tables 4.10. and 4.13.) This was the only research hypothesis tested which could be rejected on the basis of the statistical analysis.

c. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the contribution of the core courses to the total degree program.

d. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the adequacy of the core courses in providing a foundation for further study in the liberal arts.

e. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the following aspects of the core sequence of courses: an increased understanding of the Christian faith; the integration of the whole of the Christian faith with all of one's educational experience; an understanding of the true nature of the liberal arts; and the development of a perspective to evaluate the significant events of one's society.

f. Change in time from 1978 to 1983 was not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their general attitude toward the CPLA program.

The first purpose for which this study was carried out was "to assess the perceptions of the graduates concerning the core curriculum at SAC, and its effectiveness in aiding the integration of faith learning and living."

A comparison of the mean scores for the categories in the general education experience with those of the CPLA program, and especially the core sequence of courses, reveals the fact that the students' perceptions are that the program is weak. The mean scores for the general education experience are higher than those of the CPLA program. Table 4.1. shows the mean scores of involvement in the study of the liberal arts to be 2.22 and 2.12 respectively for 1978 and 1983. The mean scores for commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning were 4.76 and 4.80 respectively. For participation in the affairs of the contemporary world, the mean scores were 2.07 and 2.08. These are the three facets of the Spring Arbor College concept, and thus are crucial in the college experience.

The statistics for commitment to Christ as a perspective for learning may be misleading. The options given the graduate under this heading are: no commitment, a set of beliefs, a set of guides for judging right and wrong, the realization you are following a revealed way of life, and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Master. Given the fact that Spring Arbor is an evangelical Christian college, the last option is a natural part of most Spring Arbor students' vocabulary, whereas the others are not. It would be natural

for a majority of the students to mark this rather than one of the others. Also it is questionable whether this statement really measures the extent to which one has made Jesus Christ "a perspective for learning."

Table 4.10. shows the mean scores for the CPLA program. The mean scores for the development of a Christian perspective for learning are 2.04 and 2.10 respectively for 1978 and 1983. The mean scores for selected aspects of the CPLA courses are 2.12 and 2.38 respectively. The mean scores for the ratings of the core courses are much lower, 1.32 for 1978 and 1.30 for 1983. For selected aspects of the core sequence, the mean scores are 1.71 and 1.87 respectively. (See Table 4.10.)

The revealing statistic is the extremely low rating the students give to the core courses. To place them at 1.32 and 1.30 on a five-point scale is hardly a passing mark. (See Table 4.10.)

The specific courses fare somewhat better in responses to questionnaire items 19a and b. The students rated each course in regard to a) its contribution to the total degree program, and b) its contribution for foundation for liberal arts. The mean scores for Core 100 for a) were 1.32 for 1978 and 1.68 for 1983. Core 200 was rated at mean scores of 1.72 for 1978 and 1.48 for 1983. Core 300 revealed mean scores of 2.19 and 2.06 respectively, and Core 400 rated the highest with mean scores of 2.23 for 1978 and 2.37 for 1983. (See Table 4.16.)

The contribution of the core courses was given a higher rating as foundation for the liberal arts, which was listed as b) above. Core 100 had mean scores of 1.67 and 1.80 respectively; Core 200 mean scores of 1.89 and 1.92; Core 300 had mean scores of 2.38 and 2.09; and Core 400 had mean scores of 2.46 and 2.50 respectively. (See Table 4.16.)

Selected aspects of the core sequence also indicate the weakness of the program. Its contribution to an understanding of the Christian faith had mean scores of 1.89 for 1978 and 1.78 for 1983. The development of a Christian perspective in the academic major had mean scores of 1.60 and 1.65 respectively. The contribution of the core sequence toward the integration of the whole of the Christian faith with all of the educational experience had mean scores of 1.89 and 1.82 respectively. The contribution of the core sequence to understanding the nature of the liberal arts had mean scores of 1.85 and 1.84 respectively. The value of the core sequence in providing a perspective to evaluate the significance of one's society had mean scores of 2.05 and 1.98 respectively. (See Table 4.18.)

The strengths of the core program as perceived by the graduates were as follows: integration of faith and learning, the stimulation of critical thinking, the quality of the faculty, the quality of the program, and attention given to problems and issues.

The acquisition of Biblical knowledge was the major strength noted in Core 100. In Core 400 the following strengths were listed: the quality of the faculty, the attention given to major issues, the integration of faith and learning, the development of critical thinking, the development of values and morals, the value of group discussion, and the fact that the course was stimulating and valuable.

The weaknesses of the core program pointed out by the respondents included the quality of the faculty; the program was a waste of time, and therefore not valuable; the program was too general and vague; there was poor structure and administration of classes; it was too demanding; and there was a lack of integration in the program. The major weakness

was pinpointed in the oft repeated phrase: "not valuable and a waste of time." Core 200 was censured for the quality of the faculty, a lack of structure, and a waste of time. Two major weaknesses were underscored in Core 400: too unstructured and a waste of time.

The general attitude of the students toward the CPLA program gives us a good indication of the effectiveness of the program in helping the student integrate faith, learning and living. In 1978 nearly one-half of the class (44.7 percent) perceived the CPLA program as too general and not challenging (Table 4.20.). This perception was tempered with five years of distance from that judgment, and in 1983 only 31.1 percent of the respondents voted in this way. Whether the five years of maturation helped the graduates realize some delayed value in the program, or time simply tempered their judgment with forgetfulness, is difficult to judge. On the plus side of the ledger, the number of respondents who perceived the program as beneficial changed from 24.4 percent in 1978 to 39.6 percent in 1983. This might lead one to decide that they learned more and the program was more positive than they realized at the time of their graduation. And the percent of respondents who perceived the program to be too general and offering no challenge dropped from 44.7 in 1978 to 31.1 in 1983. (See Table 4.20.)

Certain categories were perceived by some respondents as strengths and by others as weaknesses. In the general college experience, the quality of the faculty was viewed as a strength by 8.9 percent of the respondents in 1978 and by 25.0 percent in 1983 (Table 4.8.). This same category was perceived as a weakness by 3.3 percent of the respondents in 1978 and 2.0 percent in 1983 (Table 4.9.).

The quality of the instruction in the core program was cited as a strength by 5.7 percent of the respondents in 1978 and by 4.2 percent in 1983 (Table 4.21.). However, 4.1 percent of the respondents in 1978 and 9.4 percent in 1983 rated this as a weakness (Table 4.22.). The greatest contrast was that in 1983, 25.0 percent of the respondents viewed the quality of instruction in the general college program as a strength (Table 4.8.), but only 4.2 percent of the respondents perceived the quality of instruction in the core program as a strength (Table 4.21.).

Summary

The researcher's primary purpose was to determine whether there were any changes over time in the perceptions of the graduates regarding the core program at Spring Arbor College. Three research questions were posed, and two major research hypotheses were formulated and tested by way of sub hypotheses. Multivariate analyses of variance were applied to the main hypotheses, and univariate analyses of variance were used for testing the sub hypotheses. A chi square test was applied to particular variables. Responses to open ended questions produced the data to answer the third research question. While some interesting facts came to light in the analyses of the individual variables, a statistically significant difference was disclosed in only one sub hypothesis. Therefore, the hypotheses could not be rejected.

Chapter V contains a summary of the study, conclusions based on the research findings, recommendations for further research, and reflections.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter represents a summary of the study as a whole. It begins with a brief review of the purposes for which the study was carried out, the design of the study, and proceeds to the results of the study. This will be followed by conclusions, recommendations, and implications for further research.

Purposes for the Study

This study was organized to compare the perceptions of the SAC class of 1978 with their perceptions five years later in 1983. The following were stated as the researcher's purposes:

1. To assess the perceptions of the graduates concerning the core curriculum program at Spring Arbor College, and its effectiveness in aiding the integration of faith, learning, and living;
2. To obtain criticisms, suggestions, and recommendations for the improvement of the core curriculum program;
3. To evaluate these data and use the results to suggest implications for the core curriculum program; and
4. To make suggestions concerning the improvement of the evaluation process currently imployed by the college.

Design of the Study

This study was designed to answer the following questions.

1. How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later in 1983 regarding their educational experience at Spring Arbor College?
2. How do the perceptions of the graduates in 1978 compare with their perceptions five years later in 1983 regarding the CPLA program at Spring Arbor College?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the core program as perceived by the graduates?

To answer the first two questions, the following research hypotheses with related sub hypotheses were formulated and tested.

Ho 1.: There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding their educational experience at Spring Arbor College.

Ho 1.1.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their involvement in the study of the liberal arts.

Ho 1.2.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning.

Ho 1.3.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their critical participation in the affairs of the contemporary world.

Ho 1.4.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their outstanding experience at SAC.

Ho 1.5.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their identification of strengths and weaknesses in the SAC program.

Ho 2.: There is no difference from 1978 to 1983 in the perceptions of the graduates regarding the CPLA program at SAC.

Ho 2.1.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the development of a Christian perspective for learning.

Ho 2.2.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the courses as listed in item number 18 on the questionnaire.

Ho 2.3.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the contribution of the core courses to the total degree program.

Ho 2.4.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding the adequacy of the core courses in providing a foundation for the further study of the liberal arts.

Ho 2.5.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding specific aspects of the core sequence of courses as listed in questionnaire item number 20.

Ho 2.6.: Change in time from 1978 to 1983 is not related to the perceptions of the graduates regarding their general attitude toward the CPLA program.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), with appropriate F tests was used to test the main research hypotheses. A univariate analysis of variance was used to test the sub hypotheses. A chi square test was performed to determine the relationships between particular items on the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were employed to show the ratings of the respondents on selected aspects of the programs. Research question number three was examined by way of content analysis, using frequency counts and percentages.

Conclusions

In relation to the specific purposes for which this study was carried out, as stated in Chapter 1, the following conclusions were made based on the analysis of the data presented.

1. The graduates of SAC in 1978 have not modified significantly the perceptions of their educational experience at SAC, nor of the core curriculum program. Only one research hypothesis out of the eleven tested in this study could be rejected.
2. The SAC graduates perceived that they had achieved a moderately high level of success in accomplishing the goals of the "Concept." Approximately 93 percent of the respondents in 1978 and 97 percent in 1983 indicated some level of involvement in the serious study of the liberal arts. Eighty-seven percent in each year acknowledged commitment to Jesus Christ, and 78 percent in 1978 and 74 percent in 1983 perceived a moderate or high level of participation in the affairs of the contemporary world.
3. Graduates were not particularly well satisfied with their total SAC experience. An average mean of 2.50 (on a 5 point

scale; 0 = lowest; 4 = highest) for each year of the questionnaire was given on items used to measure this impression. The greatest weaknesses of the SAC program, as indicated by the respondents, were in the areas of aiding students in "understanding and preparing for vocation" (41.5 percent in 1978; 43.8 percent in 1983), "approaches to solving personal problems" (22.8 percent in 1978; 26.0 percent in 1983), and in "understanding and preparing for economic life" (28.5 percent in 1978; 36.5 percent in 1983).

4. Graduates perceived the need for more direction in preparation for vocation. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents in 1978 and 55.0 percent in 1983 indicate that they enrolled in SAC for vocational reasons. As they looked back on their educational experience at SAC, 41.5 percent of the respondents in 1978 and 44.0 percent in 1983 perceived a need for greater assistance in understanding and preparing for a vocation.
5. Graduates saw a weakness in the CPLA program relative to its contribution toward the development of a Christian perspective for learning. The average mean scores of 2.17 for 1978 and 2.15 for 1983 were given on the items used to measure this category. The lowest ratings were given to "A course in CPLA" (1.92 in 1978; 1.75 in 1983), and "A special chapel program" (1.70 in 1978 and 1.84 in 1983). The only item which was rated higher than 2.38 was "Contact with a faculty member" (2.79 in 1978 and 2.78 in 1983).
6. It was concluded that the CPLA courses ought to be restructured, or at the least strengthened. Average mean

scores of 2.34 in 1978 and 2.27 in 1983 were cited on the items used to measure selected aspects of the CPLA courses. The lowest ratings were given by the respondents to "General clearness of major objectives" (2.04 for both years), "General agreement between objectives and assignments" (2.17 in 1978 and 2.00 in 1983), "Clear organization of class presentations" (2.12 in 1978 and 1.89 in 1983) and "Stimulation of classes" (1.99 in 1978 and 1.82 in 1983). This points to a weakness of faculty in the CPLA courses.

7. The SAC graduates were not well satisfied with the core program. The average mean scores on selected aspects of the core sequence were 1.86 in 1978 and 1.80 in 1983. In response to the question concerning their general attitude toward the CPLA program, 44.7 percent of the respondents in 1978 and 31.1 percent in 1983 stated that the program was too general and failed to challenge them. The responses of the students to the open-ended questions concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the core program showed no strengths listed by as many as 10 percent of the respondents, and 4 weaknesses included by more than 10 percent. The general comment made by more respondents than any other was "The program is not valuable, a waste of time" (26.0 percent in 1983).
8. It was concluded that the graduates perceived that the quality of the core program was inconsistent. The mean scores given to the contribution of Core 100 to the total degree program were 1.32 in 1978 and 1.68 in 1983. The average mean scores of its contribution to the foundation for the liberal arts

were 1.67 in 1978 and 1.80 in 1983. The mean scores given to the contribution of Core 400 to the total degree program were 2.23 in 1978 and 2.37 in 1983, and its contribution to the foundation for the liberal arts was rated at 2.46 in 1978 and 2.50 in 1983.

9. It was concluded that the core program did not have a significant impact on the integration of faith, learning and living. The mean scores of 1.89 in 1978 and 1.78 in 1983 were given by the respondents to the effectiveness of the core sequence in increasing their understanding of the Christian faith. Mean scores of 1.89 in 1978 and 1.82 in 1983 were recorded with respect to the effectiveness of the core sequence in integrating the Christian faith with the student's educational experience. The value of the core sequence in aiding the students in understanding the true nature of the liberal arts had mean scores of 1.85 in 1978 and 1.84 in 1983. The success of the core sequence in providing a perspective to evaluate significant events in society rated mean scores of 2.05 in 1978 and 1.98 in 1983. When asked to list the "one best" answer describing their general attitude toward the CPLA program, "provided a Christian perspective for further study in the liberal arts" was chosen by 7.3 percent of the respondents each year, and "provided new insights into the relationships between academic disciplines" was marked by 11.4 percent in 1978 and 13.5 percent in 1983.
10. The respondents were less well satisfied with the CPLA program, especially the core courses, than with the general

college experience. The average of the mean scores on the contribution of the CPLA program to the development of a Christian perspective for learning was 2.17 in 1978 and 2.15 in 1983. (See Table 4.12.) The average mean scores on selected aspects of the CPLA courses was 2.34 in 1978 and 2.27 in 1983. (See Table 4.14.) The average of the mean scores on the contribution of the core courses to the total degree program was 1.87 in 1978 and 1.90 in 1983. The average of the mean scores for the contribution of the core courses to a foundation for liberal arts was 2.10 for 1978 and 2.08 for 1983. (See Table 4.16.) The average of the mean scores for selected aspects of the core sequence was 1.86 for 1978 and 1.80 for 1983. (See Table 4.18.) The general average of the mean scores for the CPLA and core programs was 2.05 for 1978 and 2.04 for 1983.

11. It was concluded that the core sequence of courses was perceived by the respondents as the weakest part of the general education program at SAC. The responses of the students to the core courses were consistently lower than the other facets of their college experience examined by this study.

12. On the basis of the findings of this study, it was concluded that the CPLA program at Spring Arbor College was weaker in 1978 than it was in 1972. Newby's study (1972) cited an average mean score of 2.56 on the contribution of the CPLA course to the total degree program. This study found the average of the mean scores to be 1.87 and 1.90 respectively

for 1978 and 1983. Newby's study had an average of mean scores of 2.65 for the contribution of the program for a foundation for liberal arts, while this study indicates an average of mean scores at 2.10 and 2.08 respectively. Newby's study related the average of the mean scores on selected aspects of the CPLA courses at 2.75. This study showed an average of mean scores at 2.34 and 2.27 respectively for 1978 and 1983.

13. Faculty do not wield as great an influence on the students as Newby (1972) reported. That study cited 60 percent of the respondents declaring that their outstanding memory at SAC was a stimulating instructor. This study reports that only 35 percent of the respondents in 1978 and 28.1 percent in 1983 indicated that their outstanding memory was an instructor. This difference could be partially accounted for by the fact that the questionnaire in 1978 (and also in 1983) included the optional item of "personal friendships" as a category which was not included in Newby's study. In this study, "personal friendships" was chosen by 53.7 percent of the respondents in 1978 and 59.4 percent in 1983 as their outstanding experience at Spring Arbor College.

Implications

It is highly suggestive that the CPLA program at SAC is given a lower rating by the graduates of 1978 than was reported in Newby's study in 1972. Obviously something was lost in the transition from the old curriculum to the program now in operation. A careful comparison of the

two programs could lead to effective restructuring and meaningful change.

SAC must prepare its faculty to teach differently. Many of the students experience the core classes as boring, not stimulating, and a waste of time. While this is not true of many of the students, there are a significant number who respond in this way to indicate a genuine problem with the quality of instruction. The genius of teaching is getting the students excited about learning. Teaching is the key to the atmosphere of learning.

But, obviously, the faculty are not the whole problem. Which leads to a further implication. The college must begin to instill in its students a sense of responsibility for their own education. Too many college students today seem to believe that nothing is inherently worthy of study unless it is "useful," and "useful" is defined very narrowly, usually tied to the idea of immediate translation into monetary values. Required courses are viewed as merely necessary hurdles to get over in the quest of specialization or vocational preparation.

SAC needs to encourage more widespread and active involvement of students in their own education. The students should be challenged with questions like the following: How committed to learning are you? Are you willing to make a major investment of time and energy in learning those things which will be of life long value to you? Do you assume any responsibility to encounter the course content, to improve the quality of class discussion, to make the classroom experience interesting and valuable for both peers and instructors? Do you extend the classroom by pursuing issues and ideas outside the classroom with both peers and teachers? Do you attempt to relate course content to your own personal

experiences? Do you try to see implications for social problems and issues? Are you experiencing growth and development as a person? How much are you really getting from your educational experience? (See Bakker, 1977).

The literature focuses much attention on a clearly articulated mission statement for the institution. The fact that many students are missing the relatedness of the core courses to the rest of their educational experience indicates that the mission of the college as well as goals and objectives and values of the institution are not being clearly communicated. The integrity of a college depends upon its ability to communicate its values and ideals to its students. There must be unity and coherence in its program if it is to have meaning and purpose. The core program should be the glue of the educational program of a liberal arts college. Improvement here is essential for SAC.

The fractionalization of education in general, the reality of a shrinking market of students, the economic squeeze which impacts the fiscal situation (especially the small liberal arts college), the increasing emphasis on vocational education with demands for job preparation, make directly applicable the emphases of the last three decades in higher education: change or perish, relevance, and quality education (see the first paragraph of this study). It seems obvious that an average (much less below average) educational program will not attract and retain college students in the last two decades of the twentieth century, much less lead to the development of "whole persons" which is the goal of a liberal arts education.

An additional implication of this study is the need for evaluation; cooperative, continual, contextual, critical evaluation. The evaluation

must be cooperative. It must include not only professional evaluators and review committees, but the entire faculty. Collaboration in this endeavor is an excellent way to build commitment to the procedures and findings of the evaluation as well as to the mission of the institution.

Evaluation must be continual. Five year studies are inadequate to keep the educational program abreast of the changing needs of our students. Effective evaluation is not a one-shot affair, but a cumulative effort. The ideal expressed in the literature is seldom a reality in practice.

Evaluation must be comprehensive. All facets of the institution must be included. Selected aspects of a program do not operate in isolation from the rest of the program. The integrity of the program demands comprehensive evaluation.

Evaluation must be contextual. This is especially true for the liberal arts college. Evaluations of the college environment are seldom undertaken. Liberal arts colleges, focusing on the "development of persons" should be especially sensitive to this need.

Evaluation must be critical. The goal of the liberal arts college is to develop in students the skill of critical thinking. This goal will be short- circuited if the institution itself fails to engage in critical thinking about its own goals and programs.

Recommendations

One of the stated purposes for this study was to suggest implications for the core curriculum program and to make suggestions for the improvement of the evaluation process currently employed by the college. The following will focus this purpose for the study.

1. It is recommended that the core program be studied carefully in the light of the mission of the college and the implications of this study. As suggested in the literature care should be taken to make indelibly clear the purpose of the institution; also the goals of liberal education, of the Christian liberal arts college, and of the core program. A careful look should be taken at the freshman year from the perspective of its significance for effecting change through the establishment of clear expectations of excellence and integrity. The program should communicate a clarity of expectation of the kind of person a student is to become.
2. It is recommended that the core courses be evaluated carefully each year to determine strengths and weaknesses. Student responses indicate a lack of coordination between the core courses.
3. It is recommended that the study of the core program be organized to analyze not only graduate perspective, but also to include the actual results of course evaluations.
4. It is recommended that faculty evaluation of the program be included along with student responses to give a more balanced picture of the educational process and its effectiveness.
5. It is recommended that special training be given to core faculty to improve the instruction in the core sequence. Also the selection of faculty for the core courses should be done with care, using the most able faculty, with special attention given to their ability to assist the students in the

integration of faith, learning, and living, and that the faculty be models of the SAC "concept."

6. Since the students indicate that "close personal relationships" were a significant factor in their SAC experience, a study of those aspects should be carried out, with close attention given to the impact of the co-curricular aspects of college life on the educational experience.
7. It is recommended that a periodic review of alumni be included in the evaluation process.
8. Since many of the SAC students enrolled in college for vocational reasons, and sense the need for more vocational assistance, it is recommended that the placement program be upgraded to provide students with better information and guidance in the selection of a career, profession, or vocation.
9. The following suggestions are made for the improvement of the questionnaire used in the evaluation process at Spring Arbor College.
    a. Types of questions and response categories should be standardized to allow for better comparisons. For example, questionnaire items six, seven, and eight, concerning the facets of the "concept," should all be ranked on a scale of 0 to 4 so that meaningful comparisons of them can be made. Also items ten and eleven are really dealing with strengths and weaknesses and should be structured with standardized responses.

b. Careful distinction should be made in the phrasing of the questions to distinguish between the CPLA program as the broad general education curriculum and the core sequence as the curricular center of that program.

c. Clarify the terminology in the questionnaire. Distinguish clearly between CPLA and Core, and also between a Christian perspective for learning and commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Master.

d. Make sure the goals of the college and of the core program are clearly addressed in the questionnaire.

e. Each facet of the concept should be included in the evaluation of the core courses. For example:

i. How would you evaluate the contribution made by the core courses toward your development of serious involvement of the liberal arts?

Core 100	0	1	2	3	4
Core 200	0	1	2	3	4
Core 300	0	1	2	3	4
Core 400	0	1	2	3	4

ii. How would you evaluate the contribution made by the core sequence to the development of Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning?

Core 100	0	1	2	3	4
Core 200	0	1	2	3	4
Core 300	0	1	2	3	4
Core 400	0	1	2	3	4

iii. How would you evaluate the contribution of the core courses to the development of critical participation in the affairs of the contemporary world?

Core 100	0	1	2	3	4
Core 200	0	1	2	3	4
Core 300	0	1	2	3	4
Core 400	0	1	2	3	4

f. Rephrase item seven on the questionnaire. The question itself focuses on "perspective for learning." None of the options refers to a "perspective for learning." It is a different matter to talk of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ than to talk of commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning. The question might be phrased as follows: "To what degree does Jesus Christ function as a perspective for learning for you?"

1.____ High 3.____ Low

2.____ Moderate 4.____ None

g. Include the ideal graduate statement to evaluate the extent to which the program is meeting the stated goals of the college. This is the most succinct statement of the educational goals of the college that is available and they are stated in measurable form.

Recommendations for Further Research

The review of the literature and the findings of this study point to some possibilities for future research.

1. This study examined the perceptions of graduates in the college learning experience. It is suggested that research be done on the faculty perceptions of the core program. Such data could be valuable not only in improving the core program, but also in the training of new core faculty.
2. It would be interesting to evaluate the core program beginning with the freshman year and concentrating on the development of the students through the four years of the college experience. This would provide excellent data with which to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each core course.
3. Research on faculty as role models for learning could be very helpful in the selection and preparation of teachers.
4. This study concentrated on the core program of one Christian liberal arts college. It is recommended that a comparison study be done between the core program at a public institution and one at a Christian liberal arts college.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER

Spring Arbor College • Spring Arbor, Michigan 49283 • (517) 750-1200

Dear SAC Graduate:

I am interested in doing a follow-up study of the Spring Arbor College class of 1978 concerning the effectiveness of the CORE program of the College. The data will be used as the basis for a doctoral dissertation for the Ph.D. degree at Michigan State University, and also for continuing study by the CPLA committee of Spring Arbor College.

This is the same questionnaire you were asked to complete at the time of your graduation. The study will compare your current perceptions with those you had as a graduating senior. One item has been added to assist in evaluating how SAC is meeting the goals stated in the Ideal Graduate statement.

Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and in no way will your name be identified with this study. Any and all information is considered strictly confidential and will be treated with respect.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Darrell Moore

Darrell Moore
Associate Professor of Philosophy

DM:jd

Enclosure

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Name (optional) _____

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. What is your: 1. age _____
   2. Occupation _____

QUESTIONS 2 THROUGH 5 (Please check (✓) the ONE best answer)

2. What is your current marital status?
   1. ____ Single
   2. ____ Married
   3. ____ Divorced
   4. ____ Widowed
   5. ____ Separated

3. Which of the following comes CLOSEST to describing the community in which you live?
   1. ____ A rural community
   2. ____ A small town (up to 2,500)
   3. ____ A small city (2,500 to 25,000)
   4. ____ A city (25,000 to 100,000)
   5. ____ A large city (100,000 to 500,000)
   6. ____ A metropolis (500,000 or over)

4. What was your ONE most important reason for attending college?
   1. ____ To obtain a broad general education
   2. ____ To prepare for a vocation
   3. ____ To increase your earning power
   4. ____ To gain a better understanding of the world and the people in it
   5. ____ It was the thing to do
   6. ____ Other _____

5. What was the ONE major reason you chose SAC?
   1. ____ To gain a Christian perspective
   2. ____ Good academic program
   3. ____ Influence of a friend or relative
   4. ____ Located near my home
   5. ____ Other _____

B. EVALUATION OF THE GENERAL COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

QUESTION 6 THROUGH 10 (Please check (✓) the ONE best answer)

6. How would you describe your involvement, while at SAC, in the study of the liberal arts?
   1. ____ Very involved
   2. ____ Involved
   3. ____ Mildly involved
   4. ____ Not involved

7. Which one of the following best describes your commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning?
   1. ____ No commitment
   2. ____ A set of Beliefs
   3. ____ A set of guides for judging right and wrong
   4. ____ A realization that you are following a revealed way of life
   5. ____ A personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Master

8. To what degree did your experience at SAC influence you toward critical participation in the affairs of the contemporary world?
   1. ____ High
   2. ____ Moderate
   3. ____ Low
   4. ____ No participation

9. What ONE thing stands out MOST in your memory about your experience at SAC?
   1. ____ One or two stimulating teachers
   2. ____ Personal friendships
   3. ____ A social function
   4. ____ An athletic program
   5. ____ An outstanding chapel program
   6. ____ Other _____

10. Which of the following represent areas of living in which you wish SAC had given more help? (Check as many as apply)
   1. ____ Understanding and preparing for a vocation
   2. ____ Approaches to solving personal problems
   3. ____ Understanding and planning for economic life
   4. ____ How to work with groups
   5. ____ The development of social skills
   6. ____ Understanding and promoting health in home and community
   7. ____ Relationships with people of other races
   8. ____ Other _____

11. How well do you think SAC succeeded in providing the following?

Please note that the rating scale uses "0" for a low rating and "4" for a high rating. Circle the desired response

1. Enabled the student to achieve a broad cultural background	0	1	2	3	4
2. Helped the student to develop the ability for critical thinking	0	1	2	3	4
3. Provided opportunities for developing leadership skills	0	1	2	3	4
4. Encouraged the student to understand human behavior	0	1	2	3	4
5. Prepared the student primarily for his future occupation	0	1	2	3	4
6. Emphasized intellectual growth more than grades	0	1	2	3	4
7. Prepared the student to be a life long student	0	1	2	3	4
8. Stimulated through various means the exploration of areas outside the student's own field of study	0	1	2	3	4
9. Developed one's ability to get along with people	0	1	2	3	4
10. Helped one to understand community and world problems.	0	1	2	3	4
11. Helped an individual to develop more fully his morals, ethical standards, and values	0	1	2	3	4
12. Provided assistance for personal problems	0	1	2	3	4
13. Investigated religious, philosophical, and moral problems	0	1	2	3	4

C. EVALUATION OF YOUR MAJOR

12. What was your SAC major? (Elementary education should be treated as a major.)

_____

QUESTIONS 13 THROUGH 15 (Please check (✓) the ONE best answer)

13. At what point in your education did you definitely decide on your college major? (Select BEST answer)
    1. _____ Before high school
    2. _____ During high school
    3. _____ Freshman year of college
    4. _____ Sophomore year of college
    5. _____ Junior year of college

14. If you selected a major after entering college, who had the greatest influence on your choice?
    1. _____ Personal interests
    2. _____ Faculty members
    3. _____ Your college advisor
    4. _____ Other _____

15. Which of the following describes your motivation in choosing a major? (Check as many as apply.)
    1. _____ Pursuit of a well established interest
    2. _____ Desire for a liberal education
    3. _____ Need or desire to earn a living
    4. _____ Service to others
    5. _____ Other _____

16. How would you rate the courses in your SAC major?

Please note that the rating scale uses "O" for a low rating and "4" for a high rating. Circle the desired response.

1. General clearness of major objective	0	1	2	3	4
2. General agreement between objectives and assignments	0	1	2	3	4
3. Clear organization of class presentations	0	1	2	3	4
4. Clear explanation of important ideas	0	1	2	3	4
5. Instructor's encouragement for you to seek help when necessary	0	1	2	3	4
6. Usage of class time for instruction purposes	0	1	2	3	4
7. Instructor's regard for viewpoints different from his own	0	1	2	3	4
8. Stimulation of classes	0	1	2	3	4
9. Fairness of class grades	0	1	2	3	4

D. EVALUATION OF THE CPLA PROGRAM

In responding to the following QUESTIONS 17 THROUGH 20, please note that the rating scale uses "O" for a low rating and "4" for a high rating. Circle the desired response.

17. How would you evaluate the contribution made by the following toward your development of a Christian perspective for learning?

1. A course or courses in CPLA	0	1	2	3	4
2. Contact with a faculty member	0	1	2	3	4
3. A particular religious experience	0	1	2	3	4
4. A special chapel program	0	1	2	3	4
5. Small group participation	0	1	2	3	4

18. Please rate each of these aspects of the CPLA courses which you took at SAC.

1. General clearness of major objective	0	1	2	3	4
2. General agreement between objectives and assignments	0	1	2	3	4
3. Clear organization of class presentations	0	1	2	3	4
4. Clear explanation of important ideas	0	1	2	3	4
5. Instructor's encouragement for you to seek help when necessary	0	1	2	3	4
6. Usage of class time for instruction purposes	0	1	2	3	4
7. Instructor's regard for viewpoints different from his own	0	1	2	3	4
8. Stimulation of classes	0	1	2	3	4
9. Fairness of class grades	0	1	2	3	4

19. Please rate each CORE course which you took at SAC for its overall contribution (a) to your degree program and (b) for adequacy in providing a foundation for further study in the liberal arts.

a. Contribution to total degree program

1. CORE 100	0	1	2	3	4
2. CORE 200	0	1	2	3	4
3. CORE 300	0	1	2	3	4
4. CORE 400	0	1	2	3	4

b. Contribution to foundation for liberal arts

1. CORE 100	0	1	2	3	4
2. CORE 200	0	1	2	3	4
3. CORE 300	0	1	2	3	4
4. CORE 400	0	1	2	3	4

20. How would you rate the following questions as they relate to the CORE sequence of courses?

1. To what extent has the CORE sequence of courses increased your understanding of the Christian Faith?	0	1	2	3	4
2. To what degree have these courses assisted you in developing a Christian perspective toward the subject matter of your academic major?	0	1	2	3	4
3. To what degree has the CORE sequence of courses assisted you to integrate the whole of the Christian Faith with all of your educational experience?	0	1	2	3	4
4. To what degree have they contributed to your understanding of the true nature of a liberal arts education?	0	1	2	3	4
5. To what degree has the sequence provided a perspective to evaluate the significant events of the society in which you live?	0	1	2	3	4

21. Which ONE of the following statements BEST describes your general attitude toward the CPLA program?
Please check (✓) the ONE best answer.
1. _____ Provided a Christian perspective for further study in the liberal arts
2. _____ Gave a broad foundation upon which to build a major
3. _____ Provided new insights into the relationships between the academic disciplines
4. _____ Was on the whole beneficial
5. _____ Was too general and failed to challenge

22. Which one of the following best describes your commitment to Jesus Christ as a perspective for learning?
1. _____ No commitment
2. _____ A perspective through which I understand the facts and presuppositions of my academic major
3. _____ A guide for judging right and wrong
4. _____ A basis for integrating what I have learned in the classroom with my personal religious and social values

23. What would you identify as the major strengths of the SAC experience in the following areas. (Please be specific in your suggestions.)

a. General college experience

b. Major

c. CPLA (CORE 200, 300, 400)

24. What do you consider to be the major weaknesses of the SAC experience in the following areas. (Please be specific in your suggestions.)

a. General college experience

b. Major

c. CPLA (CORE 200, 300, 400)

APPENDIX C

GRADUATES' RESPONSES TO STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE GENERAL COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

APPENDIX C

Responses of the Graduates on Strengths and Weaknesses of the General College Experience

The responses were recorded as written by the respondents. Only minor editing was done, and all names were omitted.

Strengths

What would you identify as the major strengths of the general college experience at SAC?

Responses of the Graduates in 1978

I have appreciated the opportunity to relate to and share idea with peers who share a like faith. I am greatly indebted to several staff and faculty for the input that they have had in my life and for the care and love evidenced by them. I appreciate quality instruction and fairness of grading. Various experiences--chapel, retreats, small groups, classes, have strengthened and challenged my Christianity.

By SAC being small, better chance to get to know the students and form closer friendships.

Some very concerned professors.

Challenged to leadership. Challenged to develop. Community emphasis. Emphasis on "whole person."

A Christian atmosphere and emphasis in individual classes. Concerned faculty members who take a personal interest in students. A broad general education that promotes exposure to a variety of classes not included in one's major field of study. A friendly student body!

Helped to develop socially within the college community.

Small campus is good because you get much more personally involved with people. Faculty is great.

Communication was good--such as Blue and Gold. Broadened my outlook on life--definitely a maturing experience--exposed me to areas of life never before experienced.

The classroom experience, and the openness of profs.

My college experience, while here one year, has been very good. I have truly felt the acceptance and love given through the concept of the "community." Academically, as well as spiritually, I have grown and learned tremendously.

Appreciate caring atmosphere--positive approach. Allow for individuality. Some very excellent leadership. Encouraged advanced study.

An overall Christian atmosphere enabled me to develop personal, long-lasting friendships. Small groups (Prayer and Share, Community Action and participation in Christian ministries and nursing home ministries) provided for real growth and learning about myself and others, as well as providing means by which I (and others) could share Christ with the world.

People here worth meeting and knowing. Classes interesting and informative on the whole. People willing to help.

I think friends and new relationships proved to be strengths. You learn to live with people from various backgrounds and even religions. Also, the common interest of Christianity is another strength.

Good openness between administration, faculty, students as shown in Community Senate. Some excellent professors. I think the Core program is very good; I've taken only 300 and 400 but I've counted both experiences as beneficial. I also feel there is a high quality of professors in most departments in the school.

Good growing experience as far as emotional development and maturation over a four year period.

Chapel services were excellent the last three years. Profs were excellent in helping out with student problems.

Other student fellowships. Maturity in personal, social aspects.

Developing the ability to get along with others. Meeting other Christians with different views and beliefs.

Good faculty that cares about personal lives.

The friendly atmosphere that the professors and student body make up at SAC. There are many extra-curricular activities that a student can get involved in. An important point is that SAC has upheld good morals and values throughout the history of SAC.

My general college experience was good. I really enjoyed living in the dorm and the relationships I established. Several of my classes were very good and stimulated my thinking. I was able to grow spiritually too.

Small groups as freshman. Resident assistant and staff. Small community that cares (students, profs, staff, etc.).

The faculty and staff seem to care for individuals and are basically willing to help with any problems. The atmosphere of this school is both friendly and helpful. That is carried through to the students.

Good to be in a Christian community during this growing time of my life.

Good Christian professors who really care and know their field. Nice facilities. Excellent art professors--stimulate, challenge, push you to the limit.

Close personal friendships. Room to "grow up." Friendliness of the faculty and staff.

On the whole I enjoyed my college experiences. I feel that SAC provides a wide variety of activities for students to enjoy and participate in. I felt my classes in art were very worthwhile and helped me grow as a person more than other classes taken.

Learning to get along with others and learning to communicate with others.

Liked the freedom to choose liberal arts or CPLA classes. Faculty friendly, most had time to help when you needed it.

Good housing. I think the advisors offer good and valuable help to the students--if and when they can be found. Vespers and Sunday School program have improved greatly the last year or two.

The opportunity a small college gives for running for a student office. For getting to know your professors. For getting to know a large percent of the student body. I am thankful for my entire experience at SAC and am now ready to leave and do other things.

Many activities (social, spiritual, athletic) to get involved with.

The people and staff. The college is known by its students. The chapel programs at times were excellent--especially those where outside speakers were brought in for a two or three day seminar.

Student activities. Community involvement. Instructors were the most important to my strengths.

Major strengths include open-mindedness of some professors. Increasing dorm open hours. The variety of Town and Gown events.

I met and formed solid relationships with quite a few people, including faculty. On the whole, I've discovered that I got as much as I was willing to give.

Community living. Faculty concern for the spiritual welfare of students. Providing a small well-rounded athletic program. Desire to improve its weaknesses.

Contacts with personal friends--learning and growing in relationships with people who "accepted me for who I was"--not by what they wanted me to be!

Courses of specific classifications were generally well organized and informative.

Small class size so that there is interaction between prof/student. Student can speak with prof outside of class.

Community Senate governing system. Student interactions--helpfulness and friendship of students.

Overall, the profs were excellent.

Well-rounded programs in most areas. Friendliness of student/faculty/staff.

Christian atmosphere and strong influence of Christian friends.

Faculty very important and beneficial.

Christian professors are the strong point of Spring Arbor College. They provide an opportunity to get to know a person of high education and Christian experience. It is very impressive to see such widely varying personalities and disciplines bound by the common denominator of Christianity.

Class size--personalized instruction.

Setting a goal and being able to obtain such. The fellowship of friends and professors. Seeing a change in myself as well as in professors themselves.

The people I have met and taken as friends, as well as a seemingly fair faculty.

Relationships between students and faculty, and students and students.

The social aspect of dorm living and growing up is excellent in challenging us as humans.

We are given much opportunity and if a person wishes to get involved there is always room. Also, if one wants to learn and understand the Christian faith there is also opportunity as well.

I would have to say that the people are SAC's major strength. You can have the best facilities in the world but if you don't have friendly people to fill them you might as well burn them down. At

SAC I feel that most of my fellow students as well as faculty, staff and administration really do care about what happens to me.

Closeness of the community. Personalness of the faculty.

Strong teachers dedicated to teaching, not earning a paycheck. Teachers strong on Christian helpfulness and mission. Small campus.

I learned to live with people and how to communicate with them. It provided an atmosphere to grow, and to examine my philosophy of life. I learned what it means to integrate my studies and Christian perspective.

Presence of Christian influence, high moral standards.

Closeness of college community allows learning how to get along with others. Variety of social events and happenings. Christian perspective fostered and cultivated. Many opportunities for involvement and leadership.

Good professors. Good course variety. Pertinent courses.

Overall, the general college experience was positive. The faculty was, as a whole, concerned about the total development of the student.

Good campus, good classes, good faculty.

My experience in the liberal arts has been a good one. I feel I am much more ready to face life because of it.

It does a good job of integrating faith and knowledge.

An atmosphere of warmth and friendliness. A college where a proper balance between the world and Christianity has been put into practice.

The people, the students, the staff, the Christian atmosphere.

College is small, warm, and friendly. Scholastically superior.

Good intentions, ideas, friendly atmosphere. Several exceptional faculty.

Opportunity to get personal help and attention in many areas--especially counseling and teachers.

The personal touch, especially between teacher and student.

Community effort is probably the most significant strength of SAC. Evidence that all opinions are important--e.g., Community Senate Committee membership.

Good opportunities for leadership and growth development activities is provided. Chapel program improvements have made it a strong point--especially Staley Lecture Series, Christian Life Series, etc.

Opportunity to share in dorm life.

Education in a friendly environment.

A lot of good activities, some good professors, broad spectrum of possibilities to experience in school.

Small classes--Christian friendship.

A perspective of the liberal arts rather than occupational training.

It provides the opportunity to increase and sharpen learning skills. It aids in talking with people. You can relate to more people because you have interests in a variety of areas.

The total impact, care, knowledge, and character of each of my teachers.

The dorm life--living together was one of the most valuable experiences; living in such closeness to others and learning how to interact was valuable. Extra curricular activities. Christian atmosphere (Bible studies, Chapel, church, Vespers).

Teachers are excellent; stimulating and concerned. Gave opportunity to be closely involved in people's lives.

A close community. Small size. Availability of faculty to students.

Remarkable cosmopolitan involvement for a rural college.

Good instructor/student ratio--relationship. Able to get to know instructors.

Openness of professors to share their lives and faith with us. The students' commitment to learning and sharing with me. The opportunity to be totally responsible for myself and yet the stress involved in competition.

The instructors I had were the major influence of my Spring Arbor College experience.

The closeness of the college community--primarily between faculty and students.

Good campus size. Very good professors. Good professor-student interactions. Dorm situation pleasant.

For the most part I found the classroom experience extremely worthwhile in my developments as a person. Most professors and some students forced me to be critical of my own thinking and views.

A chance to really know myself, to be "real," honest with myself and with others about my strengths, weaknesses and my feelings. A desire for continued learning.

To be able to talk with your professors and to actually know that they are interested in you is a big asset.

Very high quality student body. A distinctively Christian campus.

Good overall liberal arts education. Creation of meaningful and important friendships. Guide for a life-long learning process.

The smallness creates more accessibility and a closeness of fellow classmates. I have found that quality friendships are what count and that there is empathy at Spring Arbor College. A major plus would be the idea of expectations. Also the environment leaves some choice to the individual and their independence.

Excellent professors.

There were many opportunities for one to take leadership and excel. There were many people who had time to relate to others. The school has a positive attitude toward helping a student grow.

Some good, caring professors.

The availability of faculty, staff, and administration and desire to meet personal needs. The Christian perspective.

Getting to know others and their beliefs. Finding one's own values.

The willingness of the profs and the administrative staff to give personal attention was important to me.

Responses from the Graduates in 1983

Well-rounded perspective of life--mind, body, spirit. Incorporates God in studies.

Exposure to some quality Christian people. I made some life-long Christian friendships. I also remember about five or six professors whom I look up to and admire greatly for their combination of intelligence and commitment. The opportunity to be around people who believe as I do was SAC's major strength to me.

Protective, predictable (both needed at that point in my life).

Variety of Chapel programs, dorm life--learned to get along with others.

Atmosphere for interaction with other students and faculty and staff. Presenting personal challenges via outside Chapel speakers.

In my opinion the major strength of my college experience was the small family atmosphere of SAC. Coming from a small family, I don't think at that point in time I could have coped in a larger school. I would have felt lost.

The social and academic experiences were positive. It lays down a strong foundation for life in the world.

Several instructors who themselves were deeply committed to Christ as Lord and Savior and who were able and willing to integrate this into their classes.

Special friends.

Excellent relationships between students and teachers. Consistent Christian perspective in classes.

Small college, close proximity to home.

Good student-professor ratio. Professors really seemed interested in student's concerns.

Small, intimate. Opportunity for leadership development.

I liked the well-rounded liberal arts perspective.

Interested profs (interested in student), good lifelong friends.

Personal friendships with other Christians--staff--other students. Closer contact with professors; not just a number. Maturing in values, religious beliefs, self concept.

Small campus atmosphere--community orientation.

Some outstanding professors who took their calling seriously, through apparent diligence in knowing their subject material, as well as presenting it in a stimulating, challenging way.

Opportunities for fellowship, spiritual growth. Solid academic background. The variety of courses, which gave me a broader perspective of life and learning. Opportunities for involvement in leadership roles.

A variety of campus activities--work, etc. Good library. Personal relationships with friends. Good food for a cafeteria. Nice field house, science building, student center.

Gave me a wider view of people.

Good atmosphere for learning.

Good college to attend, welcome and involved atmosphere.

Dorm life and the sense of community were highlights for me. My R.A. as a freshman and the guys on my floor helped me come out of my shell and formed deep, lasting friendships. Instructors, staff and campus jobs helped me feel accepted and loved. It was a warm, caring atmosphere that helped me begin expressing myself--a vast difference from high school.

Faculty and staff availability and motivation to teach.

For me personally, it was an opportunity to leave my dormant, strong F.M. parents and discover that I had the ability to secure beliefs of my own.

Encouraged students to excel--do the best they can.

The many caring and interested people at SAC were its major strength. Faculty and students.

My general college experience was great and I am very glad I was able to go to college even though I am doing a job now that is a far cry from being a teacher.

Opportunity for interpersonal dialogue and interaction. Interaction with faculty in the liberal arts setting (multi-disciplined). Student involvement in campus policy-setting and governance.

Friendliness across campus for older, returning student.

Small community enabled the student to develop close and meaningful relationships with students and professors.

Being on the volleyball team helped me prepare for my coaching position I now have.

It refuted personal prejudices by challenging me to examine various lifestyles (quite different than my own), value systems, Biblical truths, relationships, etc.

Concerned, excited professors made learning interesting.

Development of "life-long" personal friendships.

Profs who cared made up for lack of instruction.

Learning to live--for a short period of time--with people you've never known before.

The relationships with professors and friends is invaluable as well as the Christian environment. I needed a Christian environment in which to grow since at times I could be easily influenced. I was strengthened.

Questioning why we believe what we do. Development of relationships with peers and faculty. Educational experiences off campus.

Development of personal relationships. Opportunity to improve leadership skills.

Bible classes, Vespers, chapels, special programs, speakers, groups. Commitment of faculty to Christ, assisting students on personal as well as academic level. High quality of instruction, courses, etc.

The major strengths of the Spring Arbor experience were the people--faculty, administrators, workers, and students.

Developed great friendships. Faculty was desirous to see students succeed. The opportunities were there to develop as an individual student and Christian.

General atmosphere and size. Ratio of faculty (staff) to students.

Small "core groups"--good. Good attitudes by some profs.

Provides well-rounded education. . .exposure to many different areas.

Several exceptional professors.

The availability of friendships and overall attitude of togetherness which pervades the campus, hopefully due to rampant Christianity.

Contact with vital Christians.

Relationships with students and facuty.

Emphasis on academics first, Christian emphasis later.

Good. Liked the smaller college environment.

Overall SA provided a positive experience.

Close friends with common goals, beliefs, concerned instructors, motivating. Small class size. Many opportunities for extra-curricular involvement and service.

Concerned staff, the strong Christ-centered lives that proved to be an example.

Smaller class sizes.

Providing a Christian atmosphere in the midst of an academic one.

I feel that the teachers at SAC were very committed to and interested in the students, and because it is a comparatively small school, the bureauracy is not as intimidating as at a larger school.

Opportunity for close friendships as SAC is a small college.

It offered many positive social experiences. The Spiritual Life retreats were very helpful, living in dorms helped many people get used to what it might be like in a day to day working situation. Jobs available to earn money. Personal interest taken by professors in students.

Appreciated diversity as well as sound Biblical teaching in chapel services. Good strong teachers. Christian fellowship.

The opportunities to be involved in smaller groups such as a dormitory floor, athletic team, student government, allow for personal development in many areas and a feeling of belonging.

One to one cooperation.

SAC's major strength for me was that you were there when I needed you and were extremely helpful in every way.

The major strength of my SAC experience was to examine why I accepted Christ as my savior. Further, to discover for myself that Christianity is a valid and credible way of life.

Size of classes.

College activities, social functions and room mates gave a great influence on my opinions and relationships with people.

Long lasting relationships formed.

Strong Evangelical Christian professors in most areas of study. Small and personal class sizes. Allowing the non-Christian student exposure to the Gospel without feeling he is an outcast.

Strong community and emphasis on integration of faith.

The challenging and broadening of my ideas about Christianity and society.

Weaknesses

What would consider to be the major weakenss of the general college experience at SAC?

Responses from the Graduates in 1978

There needs to be more emphasis on the Humanities. Students need a better understanding of how to interpret and appreciate art, music, and literature.

The school promotes students to live a sheltered life, wrapped up in a private world. They are not prepared to face the real world or even witness to it because they are not able to handle the pressure.

Lack of communication between students, faculty, staff and administration as to the needs of the student body.

A bit too comfortable. A bit too "introverted." Perhaps a bit narrow (culturally--experientially).

The advising system is poor. Students are not kept aware of their academic standing with the registrar's office.

It is isolated from the "real" world. It doesn't really prepare you for it.

The advising system.

The student body is too homogeneous. Need for more students from different backgrounds to create stimulating class discussions.

A definite need for some sort of program for transfer students.

Perhaps too "protected."--An idealistic atmosphere. Needs additional student input.

My major disappointment has been in the chapel program, although this year it has been much improved.

Housing placement. Being put in the wrong place could harm your experiences.

Lack of other cultures. There should be more exchange students.

Need higher pursuit of academic excellence. It might help if the college were more selective in admissions.

Need better screening of teachers.

Rather poor on social functions. Did not provide enough social outlets.

Discipline or upholding their rules.

Rules too picky. Treat us as children.

Too many students have too much freedom without responsibility.

Poor housing facilities and poor respect from students concerning the property.

One major weakness of SAC is their policy of trusting the students. Many students took advantage of this.

Not enough concern for the quiet, stand back in the background individual and too much for those who were outstanding.

Felt alienated from the general student body. Some effort should be made to include and genuinely care about foreign students.

Dating atmosphere was poor.

There are too many "Mickey Mouse" courses.

SAC was, to me, an extension of high school.

Too much emphasis on athletics and social life and not enough on academics and Christian growth. Little Christian love shown outside one's own little group of friends.

The major disappointments in my experience at SAC were the quality of the food served and the lack of dating at SAC.

The major weakness is that we don't keep our students involved in the campus needs and activities.

Administrative narrow-mindedness. Inconsistency of security.

I think more attention should be put on academics. There should be more encouragement and praise for academic achievement.

The biggest problem I have is with the fact that PR is a top priority.

The school administrative system has a tendency to be two-faced.

Students and instructors seem to be distant with those that were not full-time participants in campus life.

Poor dealing with disciplinary problems. Lack of consistency between areas of study. Academic excellence not enforced.

Sympathy sometimes rules grading rather than reaching accepted goals. Grading too easy and inconsistent. Seeking athletic excellence without balanced academic and spiritual expectations.

I feel that there is too much emphasis on the fringe events--sports, etc.

Vagueness of policies, who's in charge, etc.

Social, SAC is quite backward. A combination of a very wide variety of people with regard to lifestyle and extreme pettiness with regard to rules have made an often unhealthy atmosphere. Also, the smallness of the school makes personal matters everyone's business.

The students are not taught what values and responsibilities they will have after they leave this protective environment.

The college personnel (except for faculty).

Students are apathetic in general. Need more stimulating experience--
academically, socially, physically and spiritually.

Doesn't always allow for mature growth. Sometimes students aren't "trusted" with responsibility and unhealthy perspectives come about as a result of being "protected."

Lack of communication.

Other things are sometimes given a higher priority than academics.

Limited major offerings. Poor music facilities. Some poor teachers.

Social relationships seem to be very tense.

Lack of indepth advising.

Not very much involvement or opportunity for involvement in the outside community. Lack of cultural variety. Need better facilities, e.g., auditorium and music facilities. Lack of academic excellence in many areas.

Poor administration.

Lack of agreement between profs, staff and administrators.

Too segregated from the world around us.

Does a poor job of integrating action with faith and knowledge. Need a better communication system between leaders and students (including class as well as college President).

The ambiguity and seeming hypocracy of the administration.

Complacency, apathy, not functioning as a Christian body.

Some courses are offered alternate years rather than each semester.

Campus is socially minded rather than academically minded. Not interested in cultural events. Many inconsistencies in policies.

The quality of teachers in some of the departments. Some of the teachers grade too easily, creating inflated GPAs.

Need to keep the commuters better informed about what is going on on campus. Secure a place where people can study where it is quiet!

Immaturity and shallowness of students. Leisure time alternative lacking. Cut off from contemporary world affairs by rural and uninformed environment.

No concern for the student as a person.

Communication is a natural weakness, especially between faculty and students. We seem to be more socially oriented than academically minded.

Too many classes are required that are insignificant.

Many professors' theologies are not Free Methodist or conservative in nature.

Chapel programming should be upgraded.

I think the liberal arts should be more emphasized. The social life is stressed too much. The students need to understand what integration of faith and learning means.

Not enough flexibility in choice of classes.

SAC does not do an adequate job of preparing students to face the real world as Christians and maintain their faith.

Library lacks adequate materials. There is a tendency for the administration to forget the student is the one served, not the donator.

I feel that SAC should be more open to surrounding communities. Tends to be a little close-knit.

Administration attempted to legislate their morality onto students. Also showed hypocritical attitudes.

It was awful. People are stuck up. Social life was terrible. Financial aids were ridiculous. Business office is so unorganized it is a wonder anyone's bill is ever straightened out.

I believe Spring Arbor suffers from a dichotomy in classroom and living experience. The challenge to be a thinking, understanding person in the classroom is destroyed by the college living experience being narrow in its view and legalistic rather than free in Christ. Very inconsistent.

The majority of people are superficial and show no concern or love.

Too legalistic--too willing to sacrifice the students for the sake of the institution.

Lack of concern among many of administration and staff for needs and concerns of students.

Weakness of adequate social life. Weak faculty in some departments.

Lack of fairness in Student Affairs Office--lack of consistency in communication. Also, housing arrangement should be more organized.

Too narrow-minded and two-faced.

The school is definitely geared for a Christian student. It can be very difficult for the nonchristian to feel comfortable here.

Responses from the Graduates in 1983

The general atmosphere seemed a little snobbish to me.

The community is too sheltered.

Need a better way to have contact with commuting students--feel completely out of it.

Lack of open-mindedness of professors.

Watered down Christianity.

Students need to be challenged to establish higher goals than just learning to make a living. They need to develop a sense of responsibility for what is happing in the world around them.

Some professors too lax, unconcerned about student's learning and some professors were unprepared.

It seemed like there were more scholarships given to athletes than to nonathletes.

In some ways, SAC isolates students from social ethics, etc., on a broad basis.

I think the school was too social-oriented, without enough emphasis on academics and on career decision making.

Very often students were not treated as adults. Too many petty do's and don'ts.

Too many cliques.

Failure to show and practice the views and beliefs they taught as a school.

An overall lack of emphasis on scientific progress, research, and thinking. Unwillingness to question beliefs openly and honestly resulting in a significant degree of dogmatism.

Not enough emphasis on communication skills.

Little personal confrontation with positive inter-cultural experiences.

The administration's attitude toward students was at times akin to that of a fifth grade teacher toward her fifth graders.

Students have a very narrow perspective.

Lack of leadership cultivation among students.

No computer science requirement.

The politics of the school. The necessity to "play games."

We tend to be sheltered in the SAC community as if the world is alien to us.

Lack of activities of interest to keep students on campus during weekends.

Academic instruction from certain instructors.

Some of the required academic courses did not expect enough from the student, comparatively speaking, to other liberal arts schools. I am disappointed with some of the academia at SAC.

We need either better academic advising and/or educating the student to realize that the final responsibility of fulfilling graduation requirements is with the student so that they take the initiative.

Need more education classes.

Need for more stimulating, higher quality professors.

Very generalized--hard to concentrate on subject areas.

The sometime philosophy of the administration as portraying optimism, success, all is well, rather than confronting us with the realities of life. The emphasis on the short-term rather than the long-term objectives in the classes. A greater awareness of students' hurts and needs.

Not enough spiritual integration of values into the different classes.

Isolated itself from the world too much.

Lack of career counseling.

Not enough emphasis on personal and small group Bible study.

Teachers need to be sensitive to students' problems.

A lack of knowledge of how a Christian "fits in" to the secular world.

No real major weaknesses.

The experience was so good for me that it is difficult to locate any weakness.

Tends to treat students like they were in high school.

Too many social situations causing people to be fake.

Shows favoritism too much.

More college-sponsored and organized student activities.

Often legalistic approach to Christianity.

Gives lip service to trust and respect of students' decisions.

Library limited. More weekend activities for students.

Too isolated from the "real world."

Not enough indepth exposure to current world issues.

Lack of "professionalism" of certain faculty, staff, administration.

Tuition costs are too high.

I felt as if I never quite belonged.

Chapel programs not central to student life.

Far too many noncommitted Christians pretending to live the life they should.

Chapel program was weak.

Not enough adherence to the conduct guidelines of students.

At the time, the environment was too rigid for the purpose of integrating other cultures and races into the area.

We were pretty sheltered at the Christian liberal arts college in a small town, rural area.

APPENDIX D

GRADUATES' RESPONSES TO STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF CORE PROGRAM

Appendix D

Strengths

What would you identify as the major strengths of the Core Program at SAC?

Responses of the Graduates in 1978

Core 400 gave you an understanding of the societal as well as personal problems. You were able to look into other people's lives and analyze their situations. This class develops a lot of critical thinking. The material was well chosen.

The general knowledge studied.

Of these classes I enjoyed Core 400 most. I think it was because it was a small enough class we could discuss issues among ourselves.

Gained a better understanding of Old Testament law and how it pertains to the New Testament. Discussion of novels and current issues were usually interesting and informative if the student is willing to get involved and form an opinion.

It does give some exposure of the Christian perspective to those attending SAC who aren't Christians, but at times I felt ashamed to see the kind of Christian attitude that was displayed.

Core 200 is a stimulating class. The books used really challenged me. I learned quite a lot in that class and had to change my mind about some beliefs I had held previously. Core 400 had some good points but were let go of to go on to others.

CPLA 100 was basically a factual course. We learned lots of facts about the Bible. CPLA 200 - none. CPLA 400 was excellent. Very stimulating and interesting. I learned the Christian perspective that I can apply to my major. We dealt effectively with major issues.

This program offered many good aspects of the Bible. First dealing with the Old/New Testaments, being aware of current issues that a Christian must face in the world today, then having a capstone course involving your major with other senior's majors. This is a good way to end the program.

Core 400 only. It is a good idea but difficult to achieve in a classroom setting.

Of all the Core courses I felt 400 the most beneficial to me. The other two really gave no challenge - but 400 was presented in such a way that it included all.

Made me really think things thru - only when I applied myself.

400--Enjoyed the discussion groups, especially those that conflicted with other students' feelings. It got one to thinking of how he felt.

Core 400 is the only one I can positively comment on. Though I disagree a lot with the professor, he did an excellent job teaching, organizing and meeting the goals of what I had always thought the Core classes were supposed to be.

Core 400 was the best. We dealt within each of the majors and discussed the issues around them. It is also a more personal class.

Core 200--Overall it was very helpful in stimulating ideas that were either ignored by the Christian community or rejected because they were "secular" and not "religious."
Core 400--This class was basically middle-of-the-road. Some insights were gained, but as a whole, many of the classes were boring and unnecessary. The best classes were when instructors from different disciplines came to talk to us.

I felt 200 especially helped me in making decisions of an ethical nature.

Core 400--general enough to recover a total functional aspect of living without stressing religion too much--excellent.

For me Core 400 was the only one that was beneficial.

Letting people voice their opinion.

Places life and religion together.

Small discussion groups.

I did not receive too much benefit from Core 100 or 200. They were very general and the teachers were very narrow-minded as to the objectives and what they wanted to teach the students. Core 400 was very beneficial and a good preparing class for a senior.

400--Super. Excellent discussions. Especially enjoyed Menninger's book "Whatever Became of Sin." All graduates should read it.

400 brought out some interesting concepts.

Core 200--helped the individual establish his or her values in many critical moral issues. Core 400--was excellent in furthering what 200 started in allowing for the integration of the liberal arts education.

The success of the course depends on who teaches it.

300 & 400--Great. I've learned a lot, especially on the Bible in Core 300; and on questioning my own values from Core 400.

I only attended Core 300 and 400. I thought Core 300 was the best because it expanded my Bible knowledge.

Core 400 brought up some good critical issues that face us today. It made me think about how I should deal with them from a Christian perspective.

Core 300 and 400 has given me the chance to evaluate my values and morals. To put them in perspective within my life style now. It's truely given me insight into who I really am.

CPLA 300 should be the student's option, but not a requirement. If required it could be very boring.

Variety of teacher viewpoints, usually good--sometimes confusing.

Helps to teach morals using religion as a base.

CPLA 100 (Christian Faith; Biblical Foundations) covered much Bible History. However, the particular professor was not very thorough, nor did he present an interesting atmosphere for encouraging students to seek Bible perspectives. CPLA 200 (Christian Faith; Living Issues) was very challenging and the class discussions and also the controversial reading topics encouraged students to be critical thinkers and Christians who know our beliefs!

Challenged in my views of scripture in Core 100 by the idea that scripture was not necessarily the word of God. I thus came to a much stronger conclusion that it was <u>the word of God</u>.

300 was delightfully interesting.

200--Effort to cover many issues of importance.
300--Good learning experience, a chance to study the whole Bible for a class.
400--Good grown-up approach to mature issues.

Core 300--exposed me to some Biblical teachings.

Core 200--interesting in dealing with major issues.

I found Core 400 to be the best of the Core classes. I think it was especially good for interim. I had to actually sit down and

write out my philosophy of life, which helped me to understand myself much better.

Only Core 300.

The thought provoking teachings in CPLA 100 were the high-light of my Core career. Radical ideas make me think.

100 had interesting subject matter and is a good idea to scan whole Bible in freshman course.

CPLA 100 was not well organized. Too much busy work in both 100 and 200. (Papers, Reading, etc.) Core 400 was more beneficial. The discussions were good and relevant.

As a transfer student, I was required to take Core 300 and 400. Core 300 was valuable as the Bible is an interesting story book. Core 400 raised pertinent issues that all but cried to be discussed. It was a good experience to have a discussion oriented class that was free from the pressure of a grade. The pass-fail feature stimulated study for self and not a grade.

Core 400 was very interesting, intellectual, and self-searching.

Obtaining different ideas and opinions of students and instructors for evaluation and comparison with one's own thoughts.

400 in being able to see what you should expect and set your values.

The Bible history was all that I found valuable.

Excellent course for seniors to draw things together and get a good look at one's philosophy.

Core 400 class was excellent.

I transferred in and took only Core 300 and 400, both very good experience for me. It was interesting to see people of all different levels of Christian maturity come together and work out compromises.

Core 400 is an excellent course. It attacked many key issues. And caused me to look at the problems facing other disciplines other than my own.

Allowed me to do some reading and research in areas that I wouldn't have without these courses.

Core 300 was very helpful in understanding biblical history.

100--Good basis for the Christian perspective. 200 and 400--Basically good for integrating the Christian perspective into

world problems. Smaller groups in 400 worked better than the large lecture of 200.

Some challenging discussions have occurred. Some crucial issues were raised. Exchange of views and perspectives were valuable in 400.

The only strength of the Core program is that from some professors there is enough latitude in the course to enable the student to structure a program that is meaningful to him or herself.

Core 400 was good. Did best job of examining issues related to life and majors.

All depends on instructors.

Opportunity to explore long held ideas. Test of faith.

Only 400 applies--good chance to rap without worrying about grades.

Major strength is everyone takes it. Good opportunity to reach students universally. Good design to whole program, i.e., Bible, world, involvement, Christian--SAC concept.

I didn't like Core 400. It was good material but the way it was presented was boring and unmotivating.

Good interrelatedness.

I had generally good experiences with CPLA programs. The courses seemed to cover the general areas significant to the concept of Christian Liberal Arts. The professors teaching the courses I took were well suited for the class.

Brought together many areas of study.

Unless restructured, none.

Core 300 was very challenging--one of the best courses I had. Made me <u>think</u> about the very foundations of my Christian faith and helped me integrate it better with history.

No strengths.

Core 300 was great but too rushed. Winget's explanation of the Christian perspective was great. Learn it from him and teach to the students each year from the beginning and find out their responses as they grow intellectually and spiritually each year.

None!

Frankly, the CPLA courses have not been major strengths in my SAC experience. Core 400 has been the most beneficial of all the CPLA courses that I have taken. Its objectives were rather clear and it

was up to the individual to make it a good experience or a bad one. You could put into it what you wanted out of it. This challenged me to learn from the class and I did.

300--Familiarizes one with basic purpose and content of Scripture.
400--Examines Christian's response to contemporary issues.

200--wrestling with issues. 300--better understanding of God's Word. 400--being "real"--seeking answers.

None!

There are none. It was a waste of time.

Opens your eyes to the problems of the world, and teaches you to critically evaluate your faith.

Exposed me to others philosophy and belief which in turn made me take a double look at mine and gave me further understanding--Core 400.

Being able to experience various viewpoints on different subjects from different people.

Core 400--The challenge to my faith and independent thinking in class presentation and the forcing to see Christian perspective on all the world.

That last two of the four CPLA courses were very beneficial. Again, here the strengths were the instructors I had.

One thing that you have changed that was a very good idea was to change CPLA 100 to Core 300. My class took the course as a Freshmen and were not mature enough for the material. Core 400 should be taught at Interim.

Although I never completed it for various reasons the only Core course I found worthwhile was 400. It exposed me to other ideas and challenged my Christian experience.

200--Made me consider alternate lifestyles and ways of thinking.
300--Helped me gain better knowledge of whole Bible.
400--Easy-going class--good reading--stimulating.

None.

Teaching of Biblical matters to non-Christians who may not have studied this area.

Core 300 was the best of the Core classes.

The concept is strong in theory. . .

The ideal behind the Core program is excellent but that's as far as the impact goes.

None.

I did not feel Core 100 related to my Christian perspective of liberal arts education. Core 400 was probably the most beneficial because it was discussion and graded on a pass-fail basis.

Casual yet firm leadership. Integration of all fields to a meaningful whole in Christianity. Express differences in accepting framework.

CPLA 100 was probably the most worthwhile to me. It gave me a good overall view of the Bible and its history. It gave a broad groundwork on which to build later. Core 200 was rather disturbing to me--in a good way. It opened my eyes to the vast problems to be faced in the world today. It challenged me to think thru some issues. Core 400--It is difficult to measure the value of this course. It produced a high level of frustration--so many issues face us.

At least the material is made available and awareness is set forth to the issues covered. CPLA 200 was especially valuable in aiding individuals to clarify their own values.

Responses of the Graduates in 1983

Gave opportunities to consider moral issues from a Christian perspective; to establish a means by which to evaluate future issues.

Covered a wide area of a person's life--helped to bring understanding to personal experiences. Dealt with contemporary problems as well as traditional.

Discussion of values proved beneficial. Good discussions in 300 and 400.

I enjoyed the class discussions in Core 400 about the nature of God/the meaning of suffering. I later appreciated the lectures on the critical study of the scriptures, although I remember squawking at the time. That was in the first CPLA class.

Interesting profs (nice having profs outside their areas).

Biblical foundations was valuable to me. I gained a very clear and fresh view of who Christ was and what His mission was. This is fundamental to our faith. If one understands that, other contemporary issues can be resolved with careful thought at the personal level.

The strength is the quality of the instructors.

Opportunity to examine liberal Christian views.

Core 400 helped integrate faith and learning.

The strength of the program comes from the thrust given by the professors and administration toward the teachings of the Bible.

Great overview of the Bible.

Raised good social and relational issues.

Good general background. Additional awareness of integrating the Christian faith with the world at large.

Core 400 was quite beneficial. We were allowed to break into small groups, discuss different issues that were pertinent to the present as well as the future.

The professor in Core 300.

Core 400 putting everything together so your decisions might be of value to yourself and those around you.

Core 200: Exposure to various problems facing the world that I had not previously contemplated, or been aware of. Core 300: Exposure to history of the Bible, basic themes, etc., that I was not familiar with previously. Core 400: Opportunity to discuss critical issues within the Christian framework and perspective.

The courses helped me to a better understanding and to evaluate various events in society today as it relates to my personal Christian perspective.

Core 300 was stimulating.

Core 300 helped me to better understand "the ideas of a Christian college" and helped me to better understand the Bible as a whole and its relationship to God's revelation in the world. I was stretched and challenged and had to think things through.

Group participation.

Bible history was by far the most informative of the three courses I took.

It initiated me to the relationship between "Christian faith" and "liberal arts." By the existence of CPLA courses, it brought to my attention that the institution was making a sincere attempt to integrate Christian faith with one's educational experience. As a result it fostered admiration for SAC in an attempt to be distinctive from other educational institutions by integrating these two (faith and education) despite pressures within and without.

Variety of professors and issues kept it interesting.

Core 400 allowed for differing views to be expressed. Left room for thought. Excellent.

Core 400 allowed small group interaction on some crucial life issues. Also, Core 200. Valuable for me to hear discussion centered on specific life issues.

I enjoyed especially Come Let Us Play God and discussion of moral and ethical problems dealing with the scientific fields.

I enjoyed Core 400 because it was more personalized where students were asked for more input. And, of course, instructors have a lot to do with it.

Variety of subjects and materials used. Professor availability.

Core 400 was the best. Although my thinking has developed and changed since I wrote the paper, that was my first real sitting down, analyzing, reasoning out, justifying and crystalizing my system of belief. That was invaluable.

Enjoyed CPLA 200, the moral issues of the day, and the question "How would you handle it"?

Good Biblical notes in Core 300.

Core 400--giving our viewpoints on reality in today's society was not only fun but necessary for so many naive students overprotected from today's world.

Core 400 was the most beneficial.

Core 300, excellent history. Core 400, lots of talk--some interesting.

Small group interaction on subjects of moral/ethical debate, i.e., genocide.

Give a new outlook for those not accustomed to the liberal arts/Christian integration. Creates an atmosphere for questioning and evaluation of ideas/beliefs.

Biblical heritage taught. Self evaluation/esteem.

Challenged me to critically evaluate my views as a Christian.

Core 400 was very good.

Stimulated thought as it relates to the integration of faith, learning and living.

Interesting professors that stimulated thought.

The courses raised many important questions for consideration by the students.

Core 400 broadened my whole perspective and gave me a chance to bring my education together and think through my philosophy about life.

Bible background of the first course, a good introduction to SAC. Issues and ideas of 400 was a good summary of SAC experience, and preparation for graduation.

I will admit at the time I had a very hard time understanding what CPLA was supposed to be teaching us. I will also admit that I did not always try very hard to understand. But, hardly a day goes by when some thought about SAC comes to mind. Whether it is something a prof said, or a friend, or a special time. I think in many ways I was getting hold of the idea of a Christian perspective and I didn't even know it. The example of others was its strength.

Core 300 was good. Core 400--all peers facing graduation together gave us a chance to get to know a few people better.

Enlightening--definitely gave me a new outlook on life and living.

Strength: Overall good experiences--helped in real life--good material.

Weaknesses

What do you perceive to be the weaknesses of the core program?

Responses of the Graduates in 1978

Core 400 did not integrate at all. The immature and unrealistic approach of the students trying to deal with the problems discussed without enough directives from the instructor of how to deal with them correctly.

Core 400 seems to need some revision as to its structure. We are made aware of the problems that face the world, but given few principles.

My CPLA courses were really boring.

Seeming to be, a somewhat, waste of time and money.

Core 200 and 400 a waste of time. In no way was 400 a capstone to my major.

On the whole unchallenging and unstimulating.

The program as a whole does not tie together. It did not provide the foundations needed for liberal arts study.

All the core classes should be graded on a pass/fail basis.

Very unchallenging and no stimulation at times in core classes except Core 400.

Core 200 and 300 are too stiff grade-wise. Need to take pressure off students so that they can enjoy the classes a little without worrying about grades.

Sometimes these classes seem unnecessary and boring.

Some student input inadequate, perhaps because it is pass/fail course.

Core 200: fairness of instructors and their methods of relating to students. Core 300: instructor interesting at times. Core 400: class too unrestricted.

Core 100 and 200 were not really good classes. Core 100 was above everybody's head and Core 200 was all common knowledge.

Core 100 and 200 were a waste of my time. They were not positive contributions to my academic or spiritual life.

These classes were a waste of time and money.

Too much busy work--could have been beneficial without it. Too lengthy of sessions.

Core 100 was a good idea but presented poorly. Core 200 was presented poorly, but the books were good.

Objectives were too general and vague. Professors were not familiar enough with the material.

Core 400 should have some relevant information for the student's specific major.

Core 100: too many facts were crammed in all at once. Core 200: a waste of time. It was boring and we did not learn much. Core 400: no weaknesses. It was great!

They are not worth the money we are asked to pay. They give no new views and did not challenge.

Core 300 was boring. Too much material was covered in too short a time.

Inconsistencies in the instructors and the administration of the classes.

Cut out the Sunday School stuff. Get down to serious business. Our world is facing serious problems. Make us aware of these. We are the ones who must help solve them.

Too broad! No depth. Not enough enthusiasm on the instructor's part.

They were not interesting to me on the whole. Core 200 was stuffed with too many facts in too little time for me even to remember what it was about.

Core 300 should be more structured as far as daily assignments and discussions are concerned.

Core 200 was a lot of busy work. It needs more student interaction than just lectures. Core 300 was cut and dried lectures. It needs to be related to realistic, every day life situations.

No important things even introduced in class material. It seemed a total waste of the student's time.

Core 300 has the potential for being an excellent course, but attempting to cover the entire Bible in a semester it left little room for serious thought.

Core 400 didn't seem very rewarding, just an evaluation class. The lectures were too surface for real deep thinking.

The only complaint I have is that these courses are required. That causes problems with the subconscious.

The courses have such a bad reputation that it's almost impossible to go in the class with an open mind. They were a waste of my time and money because they did not meet the goals that they were supposed to meet.

Core 100: basically useless although I did learn a little. Core 400 could be a much more challenging class.

Instructors are little interested and are unable to stimulate participation and therefore do not achieve their goals.

Core 200 and 400 were very vague. I was reluctant to attend.

Bad reputation. Using left overs for teachers. Metaphysical rather than Christian approach. Too nondirective for the students.

The courses are too broad. You can't cover the whole Bible in one semester.

Core 200 was tedious. Core 300 was delightfully interesting. Core 400 was a waste of time and seemed to stimulate me not to think.

Too vague in general. Too much work for a required course that is not in your major.

Core 100 and 200 were so general that they were a complete waste of time and money for me. I honestly feel that they were of no value.

It's too bad that courses this helpful need to be required.

Core 100 was a great deal of material for just one semester. Core 200 and 400 seemed to overlap in subject material.

Core 200 was boring and very repetitious. Core 300 was taught on a level completely above me. The grading was very arbitrary. Core 400 was the best course by far.

Too general, failed to be concise in subject matter of study.

Often boring and irrelevant to issues. Often the professors were way over student's heads and talked only about what interested them. The quality of the courses vary widely. Sometimes assignments seem merely busy work.

The core program is more concerned with the contemporary world than with a Christian perspective. More balance is needed between these two areas.

Generally they were boring and a waste of time.

Core 200: One of the teachers was not able to stimulate class interest.

Core 100 had too many basic Biblical concepts that I already had.

Why is core 200 in the program? It does not accomplish its purpose. Core 300 should be a required religion class, not a core class.

Lack of clear objective for the courses. Core 200 was a waste of time for me.

Boring, uninteresting, too much "religion."

Requirements vary from professor to professor.

I couldn't find any--it seemed a well laid out program.

This curriculum needs careful selection of faculty.

Core 100: Ideas taught which should not have been taught at the freshman level. Core 200: Irrelevant, and more work than all my

other classes combined. Core 400: No work, too lax, I didn't learn much.

Core 100 is too difficult for me to understand as a freshman. Core 200 was rather boring and did not seem very significant to me.

More time should be spent on Core 300. In Core 400 we talked a lot but never did anything.

Core 300: Too indepth for short period of time--need broad overview. Core 400: Lack of time for full participation in all issues.

The total program.

The courses were interesting but some of the course goals need to either restated or the class work needs to change. Some (200, 400) did not seem to me to reach the goals stated at the beginning.

Lack stimulation.

The time spent was not done so in enthusiasm. The themes did not penetrate. The objectives were not fulfilled. Core 400 instructor was not open to other opinions while stressing an open classroom.

Core 200: Unchallenging, insignificant. Core 400: Prof's attitude unaccepting of difference in viewpoint. Waste of time and money.

Core should be tuition free because they are a waste of the students' money. These classes did nothing to stimulate my thinking.

The courses are not always geared for the maturity level of the student.

Core as a whole needs committed professors. Core 200 has a very loose structure. The class needs to be less talk and a little more direction.

Core 300 was a waste of my time. Nothing covered was applicable. Core 400 was a good experience, but it was so unorganized that it was difficult to work and concentrate.

The goals are unclear and confusing to me.

Make sure that the professors teaching core are the best teachers.

Poor. Attempted to relate to many students coming from all directions by a single line of thinking. Valiant efforts made, but basic structure lacking.

Only solution for this mess is to throw them out. It is unfair to the students to have to pay for such worthless classes.

This area is often irrelevant and senseless. The interconnectedness of ideas is often not present.

Sometimes boring. Needs to be more practical.

Do not deal with what is important in my life now.

A total waste of time. It's irrelevant, inefficient, unorganized.

Major problem with 200 and 400 is that they are so vague and cover so many general topics that application of the material to real life is impossible. In 400 I feel as though I am just learning about all the world's problems, but not reaching a decision about a plan of action.

Need stimulating profs in core courses! Core 200 was extremely boring. Core 400 was extremely boring and it didn't integrate or allow for study of integration of Christian perspective to my major.

Core 100 was too broad for such a wide variety of backgrounds represented in students on a freshman level. Perhaps these courses could all be less credit hours or on a pass/fail basis.

A waste of time.

Core 100 did not gain me any memorable knowledge. Core 200 had the potential but the teachers were horrendous. Core 400 was the only winner in the program.

A waste of time.

Core 200 was basically a waste of time. No continuity to the program.

Core 100 was terrible!

Responses of the Graduates in 1983

I was frustrated and upset with Core 400. The teachers seemed (to me then) dogmatic and unchristian.

Only Core 400 redeemed this otherwise worthless curriculum.

A lot of time was spent discussing issues, but not much time is spent on how Christians and the church can influence moral decisions that are being made today.

Core 300 is too involved. There is too much academic information. Core 400 is too much of a liberal stance.

I do not see any correlation between a liberal arts education and taking Core classes. The courses did not seem to be put together very well. Core 100 was a real waste.

Too much lecture. Much too involved.

Should have included more about what are "liberal arts," and a little less about the "Christian perspective."

Nebulous. Superfluous to try to hammer secular learning into the same mold that contains your Christian learning and commitment.

Not stimulating.

Classes were so general or so personal to staff as teachers that it was in almost no way applicable to me.

I was rarely able to find any relevance between core course material and my major. Core 200 and 400 raised many issues that were pertinent to the times, but only "canned" answers were reached.

This is a vague set of courses. Core 400 was a joke, fourteen weeks long.

Mostly useless.

No comment.

Core 100 was taught too soon to be of benefit.

Personally I was satisfied for the most part and bored by presentation styles a minority of the time.

Though a good attempt at getting a Christian perspective, Core 200 challenged only a few and left the majority uninterested. Core 300 interested those with a bent toward history and the like, but bored most. Core 400 was very interesting, the only weakness being its lack of structure.

No real weaknesses.

Core 200 was very poor. Teacher's view was deemed right. The rest--too narrow.

Raised good social and relational issues. More Biblical perspective needed.

Core 200 was very redundant to philosophy-religion ethics class. Core 400's success or failure was dependent upon the individual instructor. There is little or no continuity between the Core 400 courses taught.

They seemed to lack a specific goal or purpose--vague.

Core 400 was a waste of time.

Too broad in general; not personal enough.

I had mixed feelings about the Core classes. I never knew quite how they related to my major or to the liberal arts.

Core 400 was partially challenging in that it opened my eyes more to social issues, but the class (actual students) as a whole did not seem to respond well for being responsible for the bulk of the semester's presentations in many classes. There was no accountability as far as reading.

Should this be for credit?

Good idea, but the classes weren't stimulating or informative.

As a whole the Core courses were boring and provided little stimulation for indepth study. I would suggest having only the most creative, stimulating professors teach the Core courses.

Poorly taught, irrelevant materials.

Boring, unchallenging, far too general in scope, objectives obscured. Now I see the importance of them--then I didn't. Why was I unchallenged? Introspectively, unexcitable teaching methods, immaturity, peer pressure, I wasn't confronted, obscure objectives, too general, low self-esteem, all contributed to my attitude of being unchallenged.

Many times these classes were too general and basic in presentation. Too general to be of great interest to me.

Suffers from a bad reputation.

Core 400--certain teachers who will not allow freedom to opinions in class.

Laak of organization by professors. No clear leadership uith team teaching. Objectives unclear. Non-standardized grading policies. Courses did not seem to be a priority to the professors or to administrators whm arbitparily threw the profs into the assignment.

Core 100 (as a freshman) seemed then to be a waste of time.

Encourage more talking! More individual thinking!

Classroom time was often boring (even when based on good material). Need a variety of delivery techniques, an enthusiastic professor, and more student participation.

It was hard to see the need for CPLA (except for Core 400) in my area of study.

Too general; attitude of the instructors always gave the feeling that they had to teach it out of duty, rather than enjoyment.

Core 200: I didn't receive anything from it except a "C." Core 300: Too much taught by professors, not enough student input. Student input was "output"! Not really heard. Core 400: Extra good--no complaints.

Core 100 was a waste.

A lack of continuity--both between and within courses. A lack of purpose or at least consistency of purpose among instructors.

Being required it inherits a stigma.

Sometimes a lot of meaningless busy work. Objectives and choices seemed too broad and undirected.

Can be a real opportunity for serious study--not taken seriously enough.

I found little value in the CPLA program. The courses I took rank among the worse courses in my college experience.

The objectives of the program did not always agree with the classroom assignments.

Too much material was covered for the amount of time.

Core 200: Confusion between professors; very broad and general goals and subject matter; lacksidasical attitude of all involved.

Too much time spent on unimportant or less important concepts, while vital issues were hardly touched.

The classes were of little help to me. Evaluating each student, concerning background, major, etc., would be good before these were required.

The major weakness was myself. In my immaturity I could not comprehend what CPLA was about. But, as I go along I find many, many things coming to mind that I read and heard about in these classes. I find myself going back and reading some of the books we used in those classes. I hope that others will work harder at understanding what valuable concepts CPLA is trying to teach.

Core 300 was taught as literature. I don't recall the theme of the entire Bible ever being presented in a session to present the magnificent message of its contents. Nor was a sense of life-long love of learning the Scriptures ever instilled. Core 400 is intellectual lunacy of the purist form. A delightful senior interim diversion to be sure, but of little value and perhaps even detrimental to most.

Coming from a Roman Catholic background I found little understanding from peers as to what my perspective was.

These courses made very little impression on me. I found the courses boring, contrived, too liberal and too opinionated.

Strength of course corresponded to enthusiasm of instructor.