Minutes of the Faculty Council
College of Arts and Science
February 22, 1977

The meeting was convened by Chairman Birkby at 4:10 p.m. Present were: Professors Alberstadt, Barach, Bloch, Bloxom, Cannon, Compton, Getz, Hinshaw, Martin, Mode, Pride, and Voegeli. There were none absent. Guests in attendance were: Associate Deans Donaldson, and Tuleen and Professor Waller.

1. First on the agenda was a proposal from the Admissions Committee to review the Harold S. Vanderbilt Scholarship Program. The Committee wished to have comments by members of the Faculty Council on Questionnaires to be used in the review.

Of the three proposed questionnaires, one to students at large, a second to faculty members, and a third to H.S.V. scholars themselves, the first received the most attention. Professor Pride thought a questionnaire to the general student body was not a reliable method to use in order to assess effects of the H.S.V. Program on the quality of students or on student life in the College. It would be better, he thought, to interview H.S.V. scholars and, on the basis of these interviews, to conduct follow-up interviews with those with whom they have been associated. Many of the facts being sought, moreover, would be better derived from course records and from faculty members who have actually taught the H.S.V. scholars. Professor Bloxom echoed the same sentiments. Professor Barach observed that some H.S.V. students might not desire to be "marked" by having this type of inquiry made about them. Professor Pride pointed out that the questionnaire method itself would influence the results. Dean Voegeli noted that the H.S.V. scholars, are a numerically small group; thus, we cannot expect widespread effects of their presence and information on their interactions with others, will be difficult to get. Professor Cannon contributed suggestions for revision of specific questions.

Professor Martin noted that the third questionnaire, to H.S.V. scholars themselves, seemed the most likely to succeed, since it had a clearly limited and specifically relevant population. Professors Birkby and Bloch wondered why a questionnaire should be sent to all faculty members rather than to those who have actually taught the H.S.V. scholars. Professor Bloxom suggested that the questionnaire to the scholars might be expanded to include those who applied for H.S.V. grants without receiving them. In this way one might learn something about the effects of the "program" not restricted to the effects on the actual recipients. Professor Mode thought the timing proposed for the questionnaires (early Fall 1977) was bad in that it was too soon following the opening of school. Dean Tuleen said he would do his best to transmit these comments and suggestions to the Admissions Committee.

2. Attention turned to the review of the Senior Scholar Program by the ad hoc Committee chaired by Professor Derek Waller. The Committee on Educational Programs, has reviewed the report and endorsed its recommendations. Further disposition is now up to the Faculty Council.
Council members made a number of suggestions for modification of specific recommendations in the report. Professor Bloxom expressed support for the suggestion that two faculty members might co-advice the Senior Scholar projects, but he urged caution. Two faculty members may not always work well together and a student may be caught between them. A better arrangement would be to assign major responsibility to one, with consultative responsibility to the other. Professor Waller thought this was an excellent suggestion and added that a major reason for including another faculty member in a supervisory role was to mitigate the isolation of the Senior Scholar by increasing the number of people he could justifiably call upon.

Professor Martin recommended that there be some routine review of the Scholar's progress after one semester's work to see whether he is headed for success or disaster and give an opportunity to terminate it if necessary. Professor Waller indicated that the Committee's recommendation number 4 on page 4, urging that the student have done a 3 hour independent study prior to requesting entry into the program, was intended as a means to this early scrutiny. Also the recommendation number 2 on page 5, provides for a mandatory interim report. Professor Bloxom, picking up Professor Martin's point, suggested that this mandatory interim report be made at the end of the first semester. Professor Waller thought that would be quite acceptable.

Professor Waller pointed out that a very high percent of the Scholars have actually completed their projects. Dean Donaldson said he has made it a practice to call in Senior Scholars during the fall semester to check on their work and to make informal reports to the C.I.P. He thought the high percentage of success was due in good part to the rigor of the selection process. Professor Bloch, from his experience on the C.I.P., expressed the opinion that a major weakness in the Program was that project evaluation typically took place only after completion of the work. Dean Donaldson said that this had changed during the past and current years, that evaluations of work in process were carried on, and that last year one Senior Scholar project was adjudged to require revisions.

Dean Voegeli raised the questions: What if the C.I.P. judged progress not adequate in mid-stream? What credit could be given the student? Dean Donaldson responded that he would have to be failed, for there is no legislation now permitting an award of partial credit in such cases. Professor Martin suggested that the C.I.P. be empowered to consider partial credit if it seems necessary to phase out a project. But Professor Barach questioned how the C.I.P. would go about fixing the appropriate amount. And Professors Bloxom and Hinshaw thought that one should not offer this "out" since it eliminates an important part of the Senior Scholar experience, namely, the risk the student takes.

Professor Mode noted that the Senior Scholar Program is not intended only for the superior quality student, but for a student in good standing who seeks this unusual educational experience. In keeping with this, he suggested elimination of the word "extraordinary" on page 10 of the report.

Professor Martin drew attention to the designations which may be awarded to the work of Senior Scholars -- to wit: Distinguished Pass, Pass and Fail. He wondered what "Distinguished Pass" meant. Professor Waller pointed out
that the real question was why it had never been used. Apparently, the existence of this designation was forgotten as the Senior Scholar program was put into effect; no one ever thought to raise the possibility of awarding this designation to any of the projects, some of which certainly would have merited it. The Committee recommends that it be recalled and used. Professor Martin persisted that if such a designation is to mean anything, it should be applied on the basis of some extraordinary merit as judged by an outside authority or on the basis of publication. Martin also wondered why departments should automatically waive major and minor requirements in advance for Senior Scholars. He thought that departments should review the projects after their completion in order to determine whether this was merited. Professor Bloxom suggested that the use of two faculty members from the department in advising the Scholar should be sufficient for departmental review and Professor Barach argued that a department is in no way required to waive its major or minor requirements beforehand, but if it wishes to do so, it can.

Professors Bloxom and Alberstadt proposed acceptance of the ad hoc Committee's report, Chairman Birkby called the question, and the Council approved acceptance by a unanimous voice vote. It was understood that various recommendations by members of the Council for modification of details were to be referred to the C.E.P. for expeditious consideration and resolution prior to general Faculty action.

3. Assorted curricular recommendations, voted by the Curriculum Committee, were presented to the Council, and, following a motion by Professors Barach and Cannon, were unanimously accepted.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

John J. Compton
TO: Professor Robert H. Birkby, Chairman of the Faculty Council
FROM: J. Venable, Chairman of the CEP
SUBJECT: Senior Scholar Program Review

Enclosed is the review of the Senior Scholar Program by an ad hoc committee chaired by Professor Derek J. Waller. As you will recall, this ad hoc committee was appointed at the request of the CEP and operated under a charge from the CEP (enclosed). The CEP subsequently received the report.

The report recommends that the Senior Scholar Program be continued. It further recommends modifications to the original faculty legislation and a few guidelines for the administration of the Program by the CEP.

The CEP has studied and discussed the report of the ad hoc Committee to review Senior Scholar Program. We endorse the recommendations of the Committee, and we submit the report to the Council for its consideration.

JHV/pp
Enclosures: 2
CHARGE TO THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE SENIOR SCHOLAR PROGRAM

The Faculty Council of the College of Arts & Science has asked the Committee on Educational Programs (CEP) to review the Senior Scholar Program through the nomination of an ad hoc committee which would report to the CEP. Such a review at the end of four years was provided for in the legislation instituting the Senior Scholar Program in the College. (See the minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of April 6, 1971. The Faculty of the College approved the program at its meeting of April 20, 1971.)

The committee to review the Senior Scholar Program should examine the original proposal submitted to the Faculty Council by the Educational Policy Committee (chaired by Professor Touster) and should determine how this proposal has been implemented and how successful the Program has been at fulfilling the goals set out in the proposal. Several specific problems in the Program's operation which the Committee should investigate include:

1) how to reconcile the Senior Scholar Program with the requirements for a major in the Senior Scholar's major department;

2) what should be done about a Senior Scholar's unfinished distribution requirement;

3) how the Senior Scholar's work is supervised, evaluated, and finally graded, and especially the criteria for awarding the designation "distinguished," which was provided for by an amendment of the Faculty Council to the original proposal (meeting of April 6, 1971);

4) whether the description of the Program in the College Bulletin should be amplified or revised;

5) whether or how faculty supervisors could be compensated by a reduction in their work load for the time spent directing a Senior Scholar's project;

6) whether a project of less than a full year's duration might be an appropriate alternative for the Senior Scholar program;

7) how applicants are judged for admission to the program.

The review committee should probably consult with the College Committee on Individual Programs (past and present members), which presently administers the Senior Scholar Programs, with faculty members who have supervised individual projects under the Program, and, if possible, with students who have passed through the Program or are presently engaged in it. Dean Donaldson will be able to provide the names of people who have been involved. The CEP would appreciate any specific recommendations for changes or improvements as well as an overall evaluation, in the light of four years of experience, of the value of the Senior Scholar Program within the general educational offerings of the College.

The CEP requests that the review committee report by December 1, 1976.

Committee on Educational Programs
September 20, 1976
Introduction

The proposal to establish a Senior Scholar Program was passed by the Faculty Council on April 6, 1971, on the basis of a report and recommendations from the Educational Policy Committee. The proposal was subsequently approved by the Faculty of the College at its meeting on April 20, 1971.

The approved legislation provided for a review of the Senior Scholar Program at the end of four years. Accordingly, this Committee to review the Senior Scholar Program was set up by the Dean of the College on September 27, 1976, and was asked to review the Program in the light of a charge developed by the Committee on Educational Programs on a request from the Faculty Council.

The Committee to Review the Senior Scholar Program was charged generally with providing an evaluation of the Program and with determining how the Program had been implemented, and how successful it had been in fulfilling its goals.

Specifically, this Committee was asked to investigate: –

1. How applicants are judged for admission to the Program.

2. How the Senior Scholar's work is supervised, evaluated, and graded and especially the criteria for awarding the designation "distinguished."

3. How to reconcile the Senior Scholar Program with the requirements for a major in the Senior Scholar's major department.

4. What should be done about a Senior Scholar's unfinished distribution requirement.
5. Whether the description in the College Bulletin should be amplified or revised.

6. Whether or how faculty supervisors could be compensated by a reduction in their work load for the time spent directing a Senior Scholar's project.

7. Whether a project of less than a full year's duration might be an appropriate alternative in the Senior Scholar Program.

In its deliberations the Committee were able to draw on the experiences of two of its members: Professor Charles E. Scott (supervisor of two Senior Scholar projects) and Professor James R. Wesson (a member of the Committee on Individual Programs since the inception of the Senior Scholar Program). In addition, the Committee sought and received the benefit of the experiences of the following:

Professor Robert H. Birkby
(project supervisor, Chester P. Beach, 1975/76)

Professor Ronald M. Spores
(project supervisor, John B. Cloud, 1974/75)

Mr. Richard Douglas Stone (Senior Scholar, 1973/74)

Ms. April Taniecz (Senior Scholar, 1973/74)

Professor Susan Wiltshire
(member of the CIP 1975/76)
Since the Senior Scholar Program was started in 1971 there have been 28 applications of which the CIP rejected 8, one withdrew before acceptance, three withdrew after acceptance, 15 were completed*, and one is still in progress.

Admission to the Program

The original legislation required that "a student desiring admission to the Program would be expected to be a junior in good standing and making normal progress toward the degree." A prospectus, which would include a statement of the student's motives for wanting to enter the Program, together with an outline of the proposed project, was to be submitted to the Senior Scholar Committee, accompanied by a supporting recommendation from the prospective supervisor.

With respect to the criteria for acceptance or rejection of student proposals, this Committee recommends that the following guidelines be adopted by the Committee on Individual Programs:

1. The project should represent an intellectual achievement.

2. The project must be capable of being completed within the allotted time.

3. The student must be adequately prepared to undertake the project and have the requisite competence and self-discipline to successfully complete the project.

* a list of the 15 scholars who have completed their projects is appended together with the titles of the projects, supervising faculty, and dates.
4. The Committee also recommends that, where possible, the student be urged to do three hours of Independent Study with a faculty member prior to requesting entry into the Senior Scholar Program, in order to ascertain whether the project is feasible, and to establish a working relationship with a faculty member.

5. The Committee further recommends that when a student proposal is rejected by the CIP, that the student be informed of the reasons for the rejection.

**Supervision of the Project**

Once a project has been accepted by the CIP, a faculty supervisor appointed, and the finished work presented with the recommendation from the supervisor, it is naturally difficult for the CIP to reject the project. Apart from the above sequence of events, a great deal of time and effort will have been expended on the project. Also, most CIP members will probably not be in a position to pass expert judgment on the merits of the finished product. In fact, the CIP has never rejected a completed project (although revisions were requested in one case).

This is not to imply that the logic of the situation has led the CIP to accept inferior work. However, in order to insure that projects maintain a high intellectual level in the future, this Committee suggests:

1. That the CIP consider assigning two faculty members to each project. These supervisors could act in a joint capacity, both meeting regularly with the student, or one could be a primary supervisor with major responsibility and the other charged only with evaluating a finished project.
before its submission to the CIP. In the latter case, the secondary supervisor should not be empowered to request any sweeping changes in the project. This Committee also felt that the use of two supervisors would help to mitigate the loneliness of the Senior Scholar, a fact referred to by both of the former participants in the Program whom the Committee interviewed. In effect, whichever method might be adopted, the two supervisors would be the evaluators of the project, subject to the review by the CIP.

2. The original legislation allowed for but does not require that the Senior Scholar make periodic progress reports to the CIP. This Committee feels that it would be beneficial for all concerned—supervisor, Senior Scholar, and CIP—if an interim report, brought by the student with his supervisor to the CIP, was made mandatory. It would insure close liaison between the student and the supervisor(s) and keep the CIP informed of the direction the project was taking, in the light of the original proposal.

Evaluation and Grading

The question of evaluation has been dealt with under the preceding section. This Committee has no further recommendations relating to the evaluation of projects nor any concerning the way that the CIP has graded projects on the Pass-Fail basis.

This Committee investigated the ability of the CIP to award the grade of "distinguished" to a finished project. We were surprised to find that the
designation "distinguished" has never been awarded. Further inquiries ascertained that no one (of those people to whom we spoke) concerned with the evaluation of Senior Scholar projects was aware of, or remembered the faculty amendment to, the original legislation enabling the CIP to designate a project "distinguished" instead of simply grading it either pass or fail. This Committee recommends, therefore, that:

1. That the present grading system of Distinguished Pass, Pass, or Fail be maintained and that the possibility of a project being given the designation "Distinguished" be more widely publicized, particularly among those who would be instrumental in awarding it.

Reconciliation of the Senior Scholar Program with the Requirements for the Major

The original legislation states that "Admission into the Senior Scholar Program would waive major and minor requirements for the B.A. Degree." However, because most Senior Scholars prefer to have a major, in addition to being Senior Scholars, and because the diploma states that the student is graduating with a B.A. in a particular field, this Committee recommends that the original legislation be replaced by the following:

1. Admission to the Senior Scholar Program would normally waive major and minor requirements for the B.A. Degree. However, at the request of the student and with the agreement of his Department, he may be designated as a major in that Department without having to fulfill all the requirements.
Distribution Requirements

No reference to distribution requirements is to be found in the original legislation. The normal policy of the CIP has been to require completion of the distribution requirements before entrance to the Senior Scholar Program. One case has been recorded where this has not been followed, owing to an error, and the requirement was waived. There is also the possibility that a potential Senior Scholar might transfer to Vanderbilt from a school where they did not have distribution requirements. For these reasons, this Committee advises that the following recommendations be adopted:

1. All the normal distribution requirements should be followed. However, exceptions to this rule may be allowed at the discretion of the College Committee on Individual Programs.

The Description of the Program in the College Bulletin

The description of the Program as it currently appears in the Bulletin is as follows:

"Under the Senior Scholar Program a student may spend the senior year pursuing a project of the student's own devising. This project will result in a finished document which will constitute material evidence that the time has been profitably spent in terms of intellectual development. The program is directed by the Committee on Individual Programs. Juniors wishing to apply for this option may obtain further details from the chairman of the committee."
The feeling of this Committee was that the above outline is too brief and unappealing, particularly when contrasted with the Bulletin's description of the Honor's Program. Consequently, this Committee recommends that:

1. The description of the Senior Scholar Program in the College Bulletin be amplified and made more attractive.

2. The description should include in it a statement to the effect that, for Senior Scholars, major and minor requirements for the B.A. Degree are normally waived, and also that it is possible for the designation "Distinguished" to be awarded for superior results.

Faculty Compensation

This Committee was asked to consider whether faculty supervisors should be compensated by a reduction in their work load for the time spent directing a Senior Scholar project.

This Committee found no evidence to suggest that Senior Scholars had difficulties in finding supervisors as a result of the fact that supervisors are not compensated for the time taken up by supervision. Those faculty we spoke to seemed to consider that work of this kind was in the normal line of duty. Consequently we recommend that:

1. The current situation, where supervisors of Senior Scholar projects are not compensated for their time, be continued unchanged.
Project Duration

This Committee was asked to consider whether a project of less than a full year's duration might be an appropriate alternative in the Senior Scholar Program.

The Senior Scholars that the Committee talked to seemed to feel that they needed more than a year, not less. Given the availability of Independent Study courses for those unwilling to spend a whole year on a project, we do not feel that the time period should be reduced. Therefore, we recommend that:

1. The status quo should be maintained with respect to the duration of the Senior Scholar project. That is, the normal project should last for one year, and not less.

The Future of the Senior Scholar Program

The original rationale for the establishment of the Senior Scholar Program, as set out in the 1971 report to the Educational Policy Committee was as follows: -

"There are usually a few seniors who are ready to spend full-time on a sound and imaginative project. Vanderbilt has some departments in which a well-qualified and interested student can spend a large portion of his senior year on a research project, but in most instances a senior can spend no more than half-time on such an activity. Moreover, although an honors program involving 12 hours a semester is frequently adequate for the student's interest, in exceptional cases a student could profitably spend the entire year in a writing and research effort. We propose a plan
under which such a student would spend all of his senior year engaged upon a special project of his own devising which would result in some form of finished document that would constitute material evidence that his time has been profitably spent in terms of his intellectual development.

The specifications for the following program are heavily indebted to a recently instituted program at Amherst called "Independent Study" and to the "Scholars of the House Program" at Yale. This program is designed to meet the needs of those few seniors who are ready for total immersion in independent, constructive study."

This Committee feels that the original reasons for the creation of the Program have been justified. We feel that extraordinary students who are not encouraged in their own ambitions by the ordinary curriculum have a track provided for them by the Program. We believe that the Program is to be complimented; particularly for the way in which it acts as a non-professional intellectual outlet in an increasingly professionalized student body. Furthermore, the existence of the Program can only serve to make Vanderbilt University more attractive to high school students. Nevertheless, his Committee was somewhat concerned that the Program has never had a single student from the natural sciences. We were unable to divine any obvious reasons for this; however, we believe that this problem might be alleviated by more aggressive advertising of the Program, to reach independent and capable students in all fields.

For our final recommendations, therefore, we urge that:

1. The Senior Scholar Program be continued.

2. That an information sheet on the Program be drawn up and circulated to each student during the fall semester of the junior year.
Submitted: December 14, 1976

Derek J. Waller (Chairman)
Charles E. Scott
James R. Wesson
Margaret McNichols
Nancy Matush
APPENDIX

Senior Scholar Applicants, Titles of Projects, and Sponsoring Faculty

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Faculty Supervisor(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>Pat Kalmans</td>
<td>&quot;Federal Funding of Welfare Services: A Case Study of Human Services Corporation&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor Gary Wamsley)</td>
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<td>Barry L. Master</td>
<td>&quot;An Analysis of State Insurance Regulation&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor Lester Salamon)</td>
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<td>1972-73</td>
<td>Mary C. Rawlinson</td>
<td>&quot;A Philosophical Description of Man and World Guided by Martin Heidegger's One 'Analysis of Dasein' and Its Value for Therapeutic Psychology&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor Charles E. Scott)</td>
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<td>1973-74</td>
<td>Alice Gant</td>
<td>&quot;Creating the Nashville Sound: The Songwriter&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor John McCarthy)</td>
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<td>Rosylyn Malkin</td>
<td>&quot;Health Fair: A Tool for Community Organizing&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor Kenneth A. Wallston)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Richard Stone</td>
<td>&quot;The Implications of the Eastern Methods of Meditation for Our Western Practices of Psychotherapy&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor Richard L. Blanton)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Robert L. Sullivan</td>
<td>&quot;An Analysis of the Farm Security Administration's Re-Settlement Projects and Their Implications for the 1970s&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor John J. Siegfried)</td>
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<td>April Taninecz</td>
<td>&quot;Poetic Communication and Poetic Form&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor Vereen M. Bell and Professor Charles E. Scott)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Robert E. Cox</td>
<td>&quot;The Science of Creative Intelligence and Literature&quot;</td>
<td>(Professor Vereen M. Bell)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>1974-75</td>
<td>Herby E. Smith</td>
<td>&quot;Documentary Films Depicting the Way of Life of People in the Coal Regions of Eastern Kentucky&quot;</td>
<td>Professor Omer Galle</td>
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<td>John V. Cloud</td>
<td>&quot;A Photographic Portfolio on the Rural South&quot;</td>
<td>Professor Ronald M. Spores</td>
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<td></td>
<td>David Dodson</td>
<td>&quot;Architecture in Pensacola, Florida, 1698 to 1860&quot;</td>
<td>Professor Thomas B. Brumbaugh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Michael Rozek</td>
<td>&quot;Low and His Problems&quot;</td>
<td>Professor John J. Conder</td>
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<td>1975-76</td>
<td>Scott Siman</td>
<td>&quot;Modelling the Success of Country Music Records&quot;</td>
<td>Professor Richard A. Peterson</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chester P. Beach</td>
<td>&quot;The Courts and the Philosophical Basis of the State's Power to Conscript&quot;</td>
<td>Professor Robert H. Birkby</td>
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