Format II Subcommittee Report: Barnes, Bertelsen, Calonne, Cook, Dorman,
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The Format II Subcommittee was charged with investigating available class patterns,
use of graders, writing labs, self-paced instruction, computer instruction, workload
for students, and the fall/spring balance of section numbers.

1.   The subcommittee recommends that the department consider establishing a
     referral lab for its E 306-307/308 students. That lab could be set up
     by the department or by the Reading and Study Skills Laboratory (RASSL).

     a.   Departmental Lab: (Based on a successful design currently in place at
          Penn. State). Students with particularly severe writing problems would
          be referred to the lab in Parlin 3 by their instructors. Attendance would
          be mandatory, and carefully monitored through the use of writing profiles
          and other devices. The lab would be staffed primarily by T.A.'s
          trained specifically for the purpose during a summer orientation program.
          (The freshman office currently runs such a program for TA's and AI's.)

          The Penn State model suggests that students referred to the lab need
          approximately 1 hour of assistance per week. TA's work half-time (20
          hours). The staffing needs escalate rapidly if we assume that a student
          using the lab attends every week. The figures for large scale use
          suggest these staffing requirements as a <u>maximum</u>:

          $\dfrac{1 \text{ student}}{\text{section}}$ X 250 sections = $\dfrac{250 \text{ hours}}{\text{week}}$ = 13 T.A.'s

          $\dfrac{2 \text{ students}}{\text{section}}$ X 250 sections = $\dfrac{500 \text{ hours}}{\text{week}}$ = 25 T.A.'s

          $\dfrac{3 \text{ students}}{\text{section}}$ X 250 sections = $\dfrac{750 \text{ hours}}{\text{week}}$ = 38 T.A.'s

          But in many cases, students will need only one or two sessions in the
          lab. Or they may not need constant supervision, cutting down substantially
          on staffing requirements. The current lab can handle a maximum of 6
          students/per hour/per staff member, though with students having serious
          difficulty, that maximum drops to 2 students/per hour/per staff member.

          These figures suggest that the English Department might be able to run
          a full-time lab with a commitment of 15-20 T.A.'s.

          While computer terminals are available in the current lab, the programs
          used are not directly designed to help students with basic grammatical
          problems (i.e., run-on sentences, comma splices, etc.). Instead, they
          seem most useful for students who have mastered the fundamentals of
          composition but need to work on syntactical fluency. Moreover, access
          to computer time is limited now and likely to grow more limited in the
          future as university-wide demand increases. One-on-one tutoring seems
          to be both more economical at present and more humane.

          Penn State assigns one credit to students required to work for a full
          semester in the lab.

b. RASSL Lab: RASSL has expressed a willingness to set up an English writing lab specifically for students in E 306-307/308. They are currently working on a lab program with the Mathematics Department. The math lab will be located in the Academic Center.

RASSL has both the experience and (apparently) the staff to handle our students. They claim that most of their tutors are MA's or graduate students. Undergraduates are employed chiefly to take care of books and materials. RASSL currently handles a limited number of voluntary referrals from the English Department.

Allowing RASSL to set up the lab would relieve the English Department of the task and conserve our TA's for other uses. On the other hand, the English Department would have relatively little control over the lab or over staffing.

2. The subcommittee recommends that the department consider setting up several experimental large-section classes.

The subcommittee explored several large section suggestions/proposals. For E 306 it recommended an experiment with 3-5 sections of 100 students, staffed by one faculty member and four T.A.'s. [See Proposal II (3) in the Trimble Report.] 100 students = 4.5 TLC's.

T.A.'s in the large section classes would receive a week of training in grading and discussion techniques during a one-week summer orientation.

The subcommittee endorsed the 100 per section proposal reluctantly, unsure of how large classes would effect the quality of instruction. However, the proposal does maintain the current 1/25 student/teacher ratio for grading of essays. And it does put T.A.'s--who currently double with supervising teachers in a single section--to better use.

The subcommittee suggested that the large-section course be provided with a syllabus and materials (handouts, transparencies, etc.) sufficiently detailed to allow any member of the department to teach the course.

The committee also looked at and endorsed a proposal from Tony Hilfer for a large section (100-250 students) E 308 Popular Culture course, using lectures, discussions, and media presentations.

The committee expects that any large section experiments be subject to thorough and properly-funded evaluations similar to the evaluation underway for the current E 306 courses.

Large section courses at UT face limitations imposed by the availability of classrooms. Classrooms that can hold up to 250 students are all currently assigned. None will be available until the fall of 1981. Last year 100 requests were made for classrooms of this size and approximately 90-95% were honored. The English Department should be able to obtain large classrooms provided that it is willing to be flexible about course times and able to justify its need for the facilities.

Fewer classrooms are available with capacties of approximately 100, but some may be available in Spring, 1981. These rooms are also assigned by a university committee that evaluates departmental requests.

3.   The subcommittee gave no support to proposals to raise the class size
     in E 306-307/308 above the current 25, even with a concomitant reduction in
     required assignments. The subcommittee was so firm on this point that it
     refused even to calculate the effect on the program of various increases
     in course size.

4.   The subcommittee suggested that the current imbalance of fall/spring
     sections of freshman English might be alleviated by closer coordination
     between the sophomore, freshman and associate chair's offices. Teachers
     scheduled to teach freshman English in the spring, for example, might
     be used in sophomore classes if sophomore enrollments exceed estimates.
     (Many sophomore sections are currently enrolled above the usual limit of
     35.) The mechanics of registration coordination would be most efficiently
     handled by the offices involved.

5.   T.A.'s from outside the department:

     Because either proposal of the subcommittee would deplete the current pool
     of departmental T.A.'s (15-20), the subcommittee recommends that the
     department explore the possibility of using T.A.'s from other departments
     in the College of Liberal Arts to staff the lab and/or large section courses.

     Some current A.I.'s might want to become T.A.'s under the proposals outlined
     above, but the subcommittee recognized that A.I.'s would still remain more
     economical than T.A.'s. (A.I.'s currently teach their own sections; T.A.'s
     operate under supervision.)