

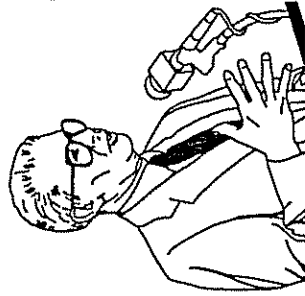
SAAO

Speaking Across the Curriculum

Issue #8, September 1993

Robert O. Weiss, Editor

Rollins College
by Greg H. Gardner



Last April, the Rollins College Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate unanimously passed a proposal to initiate a Communication across the Curriculum program at the college. In July, I directed a workshop for eight senior fac-

ulty who will teach communication-intensive courses beginning this fall. The courses which will be taught include the following: Philosophy 301, Honors Seminar—Shades of Honesty; Politics 327, Urban Policy Analysis; English 295, Travel Writing; English 317, Shakespeare; Economics 307, International Economics; Art 293, Photography I; Theatre 100, Introduction to the Theatre; and Theatre 301, The History of Radio and Television in America. By all accounts, the workshop was a great success!

You are invited to send news for the next (May) issue to the editor:

Robert Weiss
108E Performing Arts Center
DePauw University
Greencastle, IN 46135
(317) 658-4490
Bitnet: ROBERTWEISS@DEPAUW

Fifty-One Programs

Ellen Hay reports that in the survey on assessment trends she conducted (published in *Communication Education*, July, 1992), of the 330 institutions which responded, 51 of them answered "yes" to the question, "Does your college/university offer an oral communication across the curriculum program?"

Thirteen of these 51 then answered yes to the inquiry, "Are standardized feedback forms used in all classes?"

Hay indicates, however, that respondents "applied their own interpretation" to these questions.

Speech Communication Association Convention Miami Beach, Florida November 18-21, 1993

Short Course

Michael Cronin and George Grice will again offer a short course entitled, "Oral Communication across the Curriculum: Designing, Implementing, and Assessing a University-Wide Program." Note that the deadline for preregistration by mail is October 4. This Short Course is scheduled for Thursday from 2:30 to 5:20 p.m. Accreditation issues are among those which will be addressed.

EPB Undergraduate General Education Committee

The Committee on Communication in the Undergraduate General Education Curriculum will present its final report at session 2359 Friday at 1:30 a.m. Included will be George Grice's report on "Implementing Required Oral Intensive Courses as Part of the GE Curriculum."

Some Relevant Papers

We draw attention to the following papers (with their identifying program numbers). Actually, other papers on these same panels will also be of some interest to the Speaking Across the Curriculum gang.

Program 1161 (Thursday). Theodore Sheckels, Jr., "Under Duress: Insuring Oral Communication Competence at a Small College."

Program 1961 (Thursday). Robert O. Weiss, "Speaking Across the Curriculum as an Assessment Process."

Program 1961 (Thursday). Michael Cronin, "Developing Empirical Measures of Learning Outcomes from Oral Communication Across the Curriculum."

Program 2711 (Friday). Carl M. Cates, "Speaking Across the Curriculum at Abraham Baldwin College: An Assessment of the Use of Student Presentations."

Program 2711 (Friday). M.A. Weatherston and Ray Ewing, "Communication Competence and Self-Satisfaction: Assessing Them in the Non-Speech Course Context."

The Cluster Concept

The concept of "clustering" courses may have a contribution to make to speaking across the curriculum efforts. At the Eastern Communication Association meeting in May, Sharon Carrish reported on Babson College's requirement that all students enroll in a cluster during their freshman year.

Clusters are composed of two or more autonomous courses which enroll a common set of students. Carrish gives as one example an Introduction to Speech Communication course clustered with a General Management course. Some common themes are located (e.g. demographics of audiences) and performances include speeches on management topics.

Says Carrish, "When clustering with another course, interesting topics are provided automatically. When given the opportunity to speak about the subject, students learn even more."

Even where speech communication courses are not involved, Babson insists that in each cluster "there must be some common writing and/or speaking assignments."

You may recall, also, that Kristin Marshall reported at the 1992 SCA convention on cluster courses at Clarion University.

A Warning from Andrew King

Upon inquiring about a grapevine report that Louisiana State U. had a speaking across the curriculum program, we received an incisive response from department chair Andrew King:

"We don't have an across-the-curriculum program in oral communication at LSU. Having worked in universities that have such a program I did everything I could to stop it here. Unless your number one priority is service to others it will consume all your energies and resources. And the rest of the university will not be particularly grateful. It will compete with your own major and when resources get tight guess what suffers?"

Factoids

Radford University has expanded the OCP Interactive Video Instruction laboratory from the current five student stations to 20 in Fall, 1993.

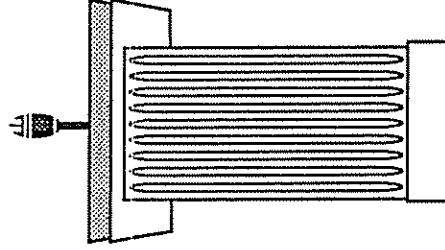
During the 1992-93 school year, DePauw University faculty offered 75 "S" courses in 18 departments, 36 during the first semester and 39 during the spring, enrolling a total of 912 students.

William and Mary

The College of William and Mary, as reported by Tamara Burk, has adopted a new curriculum, to go into effect in 1994, which includes a "discussion intensive freshman seminar" and an upper division "significant oral presentation."

Members of a May, 1993, Faculty Seminar on Oral Communication Competency developed a set of recommendations for the college, including, for instance, that "the first essential resource for the College should be an Oral Communication Center." More faculty development workshops are planned for the fall semester.

The new curriculum as adopted by the college sets forth the following goal: *"To speak clearly and communicate effectively is an important objective of a liberal education. Small discussion intensive freshman seminars and upper-level individual or small group learning experiences provide opportunities for students to develop and enhance this skill. To assist faculty teaching these classes and other classes emphasizing oral communication, the administration should support a regular program of work shops and seminars on teaching such classes as part of an ongoing faculty program. In addition, the highest priority for introductory speech courses should be the identification and instruction of those students who are least proficient at oral communication."*



In the Australian Journal

We call your attention to a literature review, based upon a paper presented at the 1992 conference of the Association for Business Communication, which has been published in (of all places) the *Australian Journal of Communication* 20 (1993): 1-27.

Compiled by Wallace V. Schmidt and Greg H. Gardner, both of Rollins College, its title is "Oral communication across the curriculum: A review of instructional and learning outcomes."

The article includes extended descriptions of "representative oral communication across the curriculum programs" which exist, or have existed, at Central College, DePauw University, Radford University, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, and Clarkson University.

Included also are useful sections on "start-up strategies" (with generous attention to one of the editor's papers on that subject) and on "potential problems and pitfalls."

Finally, especially notable is the 89-item set of references which Schmidt and Gardner provide.