

REQUIREMENTS RESTRUCTURED

Grinnell has introduced a new approach this semester to the course-selection decisions which are the building blocks of a student's college education.

Approved by the faculty after several months of campus-wide discussion, the new academic plan emphasizes a set of general requirements for graduation, careful attention from faculty advisers, and the requirements of major fields of study as the student's guidelines in course selection, rather than the previous system of distributional requirements.

The distributional requirements called for a given number of credits to be earned in each of several areas: humanities, social studies, languages, science, fine arts, and physical education.

Graduation with the degree of bachelor of arts now requires that a student complete a major, take a total of 124 credits of work with an over-all cumulative average of 2.0, and complete eight semesters of residence. Some academic work taken elsewhere and offered as transfer or summer-school credit may be accepted as partial fulfillment of the residence requirement.

Students cannot take more than 48 credits in one department or more than 92 credits in one division (humanities, science, social studies, and special programs).

Each entering freshman, beginning this fall, will take a four-credit "freshman tutorial" during the first or second semester of residence. A Freshman-Year Committee of faculty and students will recommend faculty members for appointment by the Dean of the College as tutors and will supervise the freshman-year and underclass-advising programs.

Ordinarily, the tutor will serve as the student's adviser until he selects a major and, together, they will plan his program. The tutorial will serve as an introduction to college work and a preparation for independent study and research.

As in the past, there are three types of major programs: departmental, interdisciplinary, and independent.

A departmental major is the traditional one, taken in a single department with specified requirements set by that department.

Interdisciplinary majors involve prescribed programs in more than one department. Two such programs, American studies and general science, are now available.

Individual programs combining disciplines (such as religious studies or science-history) may be approved by the Dean of the College as independent majors.

Second-semester registration, on January 18, gave the first opportunity to see what courses students would select, given the new flexibility and the absence of distributional requirements.

Dean of the College Joseph F. Wall, '41, reports that no unusual or unexpected shifts were detectable in the pattern of registrations.

Some previously required introductory courses in the fine arts, he said, declined slightly in enrollment, as did foreign languages, especially in second-year classes (with classics showing the least

decline). English enrollments went up, there were increases in every science department, and there was no meaningful decline in the social studies.

Pre-registration figures indicated a strong interest in studio classes in the arts, although most of these are limited in enrollment to what their facilities can accommodate, and such classes filled up early at final registration.

Grinnell Magazine, September – October 1970
Reprinted in *News of the College*, January - February, 1971 / 11