General Education Team Report
Effective and Persuasive Communication
Submitted by:
Heidi Mills
June 1, 2007

The Effective and Persuasive Communication team met on February 28, March 23, April 20 and May 4. Drs. Cahue and DeFord met with me on May 30 to develop a revised working definition and outcomes based on insights and ideas generated by the entire team on May 4. I am pleased to report that the committee accomplished a great deal this semester. I will highlight significant accomplishments and recommendations made throughout the semester and conclude with our revised definition and outcomes as well as our vision for our work together next fall. A review of the minutes posted on the General Education website reveals the depth and breadth of our conversations. Although we addressed a number of noteworthy topics, I will focus on patterns that emerged over time and those issues that seem most promising given our current mission.

We began our work together by developing a vision and goals for Effective and Persuasive Communication in General Undergraduate Education. To do so I posed the following questions to frame our work:
What is? What might be?
We discussed the fact that currently students choose discrete courses and that we are hoping to develop goals and then align them with new or enhanced experiences as well as courses to better prepare our students in effective and persuasive communication. I argued for a reflexive stance throughout the process so that we might study ourselves to outgrow ourselves.

I invited team members to select one of the following questions to investigate in small groups. Group members then volunteered to research and report on the following questions:
- ❑ What already exists at USC? What are we doing well? (Friend and Morris)
- ❑ How might we (or do we) expand learning beyond the classroom? (Bailey and Moore)
- ❑ How might we create critical experiences that enhance communication that are unique to USC? How might we impact South Carolina and enhance intellectual capital in the state? (DeFord and Hubbert)
- ❑ How do communities on campus, especially in student residential life, contribute to learning and communication skills? (Broome and White)
- ❑ What special perspectives and issues do regional campuses face? (Castleberry)

We spent a couple of meetings reflecting on their reports and the issues that were raised by each subcommittee. In summary, the following issues and ideas were identified as worthy of further consideration based on the report discussions across subcommittees:

- Information about existing communication resources is difficult, if not impossible, to find on the USC website. Therefore, consideration should be given to improving the USC website to make it more useful to both faculty and students. One possibility might be to use business students to help determine how to market and communicate information about existing resources.

- Many of the existing high profile communication resources are available to a small number of students (such as honor students). Therefore, consideration should be given to institutionalizing some of the more effective programs to make them available to all students.

- Student culture may consider many of the existing communication resources such as the writing center and the career center as "remedial" in nature. Therefore, consideration should be given to how to break through the current culture to encourage the students to use and recognize the value of the writing center.

- Some of the most effective communication resources involve professional and/or social interactions. Therefore, consideration should be given to developing a program that involves people outside the university. One possibility might be to use alumni and retired faculty to mentor freshman or sophomore students. Thus, we can value and recognize the experience of retired faculty and alumni through a formalized program. Another possibility would be to develop service-learning opportunities such as helping refugees or underprivileged South Carolinians.

- Many of the regional campuses do not have access to the Columbia campus resources. Therefore, consideration should be given to distance learning as a means of allowing students at regional campuses to make use of communication resources. Such consideration might require a reassessment of activity fees at each of the campuses.

- Ultimately, the goal is to create a scholarly culture where both faculty and students actively engage and participate (e.g., a year-long inquiry course). Critical steps to implementing such a vision includes understanding student and faculty perceptions of that vision, allowing access to current resources as a part of that vision, changing governance structures that impede that vision, and developing resources to sustain any necessary changes for implementing that vision. The university might create or designate one required course (perhaps UNIV 201) as a "Critical Thinking and Communication" course. All students would be required to take the course and to produce a public document such as a photo essay, webpage, video documentary, letter to the editor, etc. as part of their work where the general public could read or have electronic access to it. The course would incorporate several key experiences and skills for students: (1) the opportunity to examine a complex issue from the perspective of different disciplines; (2) the opportunity to master a rich body of literature surrounding an issue; (3) the experience of taking a position on an issue; (4) the opportunity to generate some public document associated with that issue, which would be accessible to readers throughout the state of South Carolina.

- The creation of courses designated as "Communication Intensive"—similar to the "Writing Intensive" courses required by some of USC's peer aspirant institutions. The "CI" designator could be attached to any course in any department that met particular standards for the amount of writing, oral presentation and/or discussion required of students. Students would be required to choose 2 or 3 such courses as part of their graduation requirements, and faculty would receive a lower course cap or some other incentive to occasionally offer their regular courses in a "CI" format.

- An increase in resources for the campus Writing Center, to increase its offerings and expand its presence on campus, to include services such as assistance with oral and PowerPoint presentations, preparation of research posters, readings and presentations by visiting writers, etc. It was also suggested that we create a link between the University Press and the Writing Center to invite students, faculty and staff who use the center to submit manuscripts for publication. Similar centers at other major universities could provide a wealth of successful models.

Next steps: Goals for our work together next fall

Our team agreed to continue to develop the concept of a "Culture of Scholarship" and believe the development of a required course such as 201 would be worthy of exploration with other General Education Teams who have generated a similar vision. We believe it is critical to provide all students first-hand experiences to engage in intentional and systematic inquiry and to learn to communicate their findings/thinking/knowledge effectively to diverse audiences. We envision the creation of such a course would integrate the teaching and learning potential of each work team as it could be designed to reflect

each dimension of the General Education initiative. Our team would be interested in exploring the possibility of a course such as the one we described with other General Education Team members.

Our team finds the possibility of redesigning, enhancing and marketing the Writing Center most promising. Dr. Friend agreed to contact well-developed and successful Writing Centers at other Universities, in particular the University of Texas-Austin. She will speak to the directors to learn how they managed to make their centers successful. She will produce a list of potential speakers who could visit USC and advise our team. Our team would appreciate funding for a university writing center consultant.

Additionally, it was suggested that we begin collaborative efforts across General Education Teams next fall. Since a number of General Education Teams seemed interested in creating a "Culture of Scholarship," we are interested in exploring this notion with an expert in cultural transformation. We believe it would behoove us to bring in an outside expert who might work with all of the General Education Team Members for a seminar to envision the moves that need to be made systemically within and across colleges to truly create a "Culture of Scholarship" in undergraduate education at the University of South Carolina.

Our current working title, definition and outcomes as of May 2007:

Integrating Knowledge and Service Through Effective and Persuasive Communication:

Graduates of the University of South Carolina will think, read, write, inquire and converse critically as citizens in a diverse, democratic society. Students will identify and competently use appropriate technology, genre and media to communicate ideas in conventional, creative and persuasive ways to varied audiences. Communication and critical thinking skills will be demonstrated in both general education and discipline specific courses within the greater culture of scholarship at the university. Graduates will use these skills to address issues, problems and needs of South Carolinians and the broader Global Society.

Outcomes:

Students will engage in inquiry to articulate a critical, informed position on an issue.

Students will engage in productive and responsible intellectual conversations.

Students will identify and demonstrate appropriate means of communication for varied audiences and purposes.

Students will use logical reasoning in oral and written language to inform, persuade and express creative ideas.

Students will apply communicative skills to identify and address problems relevant to South Carolinians and communities the world over.

Effective Mathematical Reasoning and Problem Solving

June 5, 2007

Summary Report

The EMRPS sub-committee met three times in the spring of 2007: March 2; April 13, and May 4. This was a vital and dedicated group who appreciated both the need for effective mathematical reasoning and problem solving and the inherent problems associated with reaching a consensus on the meaning of such. Although the groups were formed well into the semester, we were able generate insights into this area that have great potential for enhancing the general education skills of all USC graduates.

Our first task was to "develop broad goals and specific objectives for the area."

A review of the minutes of our three meetings will show that the group indeed wrestled with this task. However, in the midst of that process a challenging and distinctive idea arose – the notion of taking an integrative approach to what may be called effective mathematical reasoning and problem solving or quantitative literacy or numeracy.

Thus our broad goal for this area revolves around four interrelated areas: math, statistics, logic, and algorithmic processes. At this time we do not have a carefully worded goal statement for this goal, but it might look something like:

GOAL: All USC graduates will have the ability to evaluate information and solve problems by critically selecting and appropriately applying foundation principles in the areas of mathematics, statistics, logic, and algorithmic processes.

Our objectives in this goal area have yet to be developed but would revolve around knowledge of important ideas (not specifically the application of at this level) within the areas of math, statistics, logic, and algorithmic processes. For example, these intermediate objectives might look like:

Objective: Students should understand the principles underlying the idea of the "normal curve."

Objective: Students should understand the principles of inductive and deductive reasoning.

Important to Note: The group feels that our task, as written, does not call for a third level of information that we consider critical to this process. For the purpose of this report we will refer to that third level as "Indicators." Indicators are more precisely measurable than intermediate objectives. While they may "indicate" that students have the information specified in the intermediate objective, they are not intended to be that which is taught, thus encouraging a culture of teaching to the test.

Consequently, the group feels that the next important step in our process is to determine the "important ideas" in each of the four areas and to define these ideas as core intellectual foundations. With these foundations made explicit, students are to be taught in a culture which concurrently emphasizes these intellectual foundations and critical thinking so that our students have the capacity to solve a novel problem upon its presentation.

The group has a way to go in the complete development of this area, but the Chairs feels that our conception of an integrated approach to EMRPS is consistent with an emerging approach to mathematics education in higher education. Our colleagues in the mathematics department seem to be well acquainted with the new text books that are being developed, and they are excited to share that information.

The future of this initiative is bright. We look forward to considering this task over the summer and coming back to complete the task in the fall of 2007.

Respectfully Submitted,

Don Stowe

During Spring 2007, the USC General Education Work Group, Science and Technology Literacy Committee, met three times, as follows:

DATE	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE
March 2, 2007	Swearingen Engineering Center, Room 3A75	16 members attended
March 28, 2007	Swearingen Engineering Center, Room 3A75	14 members attended
April 25, 2007	Swearingen Engineering Center, Room 3A75	15 members attended

First Meeting

Prof. Medway presented background information related to the General Education Work Groups at USC, their objectives and goals, and the charge to our committee.

At its inception the group's name was "Scientific Literacy and Technological Understanding." There was a lively discussion on the name or title of our team. While students are generally adept at using "technology," it does not necessarily follow that they have an understanding of the principles underlying the technology or the impact of a given technology. Hence, the team felt that the name of our team should be changed to either "Scientific Literacy and Technological Understanding" or "Scientific Literacy and Technological Impact."

Items discussed included:

- What is the minimum required skill (Science and Math) for all disciplines? To what level should students have an understanding of science? They should at least understand what science can and cannot offer them in addition to its promises and limitations. There should be more focus on the implications of technological advances and how they influence and affect society.

- Math. The student's lack of math skills and overall lack of enthusiasm for their application is disheartening to the professors. It was proposed that if the students feel confident using these skills, they would enjoy class more. Is it possible that the lack of basic knowledge stems from pre-college preparation problems, and if so, how can this be addressed?

- Students need to recognize the global challenges they face and must develop the ability to communicate arguments related to energy, global warning, etc.

- The University's lowered entrance requirements seem to be problematic — can anything be done about it?

- What makes a USC student well-rounded?

It was decided that in order to break into meaningful sub-committees, a clear understanding of the terms "scientific literacy" and "technological understanding" was needed: the goal of the next one or two meetings.

Second Meeting

The primary objectives of this meeting were to develop descriptive statements of the terms "scientific literacy" and "technological understanding/impact." There was discussion on the best approaches to impart to students "scientific principles," "scientific methods," and "understanding of technologies and their impact." The points discussed at this meeting included:

- What is the intended goal of our team? (a) To make certain that USC graduates can understand social and political implications that are raised by scientific issues. (b) Create a general understanding for students so they have the resources and knowledge available to comprehend current issues.

- Focus on imparting nonperishable knowledge. Encourage teachers to try to teach more than just facts and, instead, focus on why things are done (series of facts are short-lived).

- A problem may be in the way we evaluate learning of facts, especially in large classes where students cannot be tested well.

- Students should understand that all technology is based on scientific principles. They need to learn that adapting to new technology can help them; however, they also need

to understand the social implications of what technology promises vs. the risks. For example, issues related to global warming are embedded in scientific understanding.

Though the committee did not have a clear delineation of the terms used to describe the sub-committees by the end of this meeting, the committee was nevertheless divided into three sub-task groups, to wit:

Sub-task Group 1 –   Scientific Literacy
                       Dr. Bill Ranson, Chair

Sub-task Group 2 –   Technological Understanding
                       Dr. Mark Tompkins, Chair

Sub-task Group 3 –   Benchmarking
                       Dr. Leslie Jones, Chair *(has stepped down since moving to Medical School)*

In Phase I, the committee, based on input from the sub-task groups, will develop descriptive statements relevant to our area (purpose of the next meeting), and in Phase II, the committee will develop specific learning outcomes for our area.

Third Meeting

The Sub-task Groups presented slides describing their efforts.

- Sub-task Group 1 presented a definition of "scientific literacy" from the National Academy of Sciences – 1995. A statement of purpose and the attributes of students who are scientifically literate were also presented.
- Sub-task Group 2 presented slides with a broad description of the term "technology literacy."
- Sub-task Group 3 was charged with determining (a) where other universities were with respect to "science and technology literacy," (b) their definitions or descriptions, (c) how their students were meeting the requirements, (d) existing innovative programs, etc. Based on their research, the sub-task group reported absence of anything novel or innovative; the GE requirements at other schools are much like ours: the rhetoric may be different, but traditional courses are being used.

  Key points discussed at this meeting included:

- Numerous discussions have evolved related to science and technology (e.g., global warming and solar energy). Volumes of information are available. But someone has to be curious enough to look for the information and learn about it. The media are performing the educational role for us – is that their function?
- How does one seek and evaluate information about science and technology?
- There needs to be less time spent looking at presented documents and more time seeking information and engaging in critical thinking.

The group agreed that "Science and Technology Literacy" best describes our team.

Goals for Fall 2007

My goals for next semester are:

- To have one meeting with the Sub-task Group Chairs to finalize the descriptive statements for science and technology literacy.

- To delineate the outcomes of general education related to Science and Technology Literacy.

- To explore the concepts of science and technology literacy in a brainstorming session with the chairs of departments in the A&S.

Global Awareness and Multicultural Understanding (GAMU)
Work Team Report
General Education Initiative
June 2007

Prepared by Dr. Martin S. Roth, Team Leader

I. Summary of Activities
  A. Meetings
      1. March 5   10 members present
      2. March 23   7 members present
      3. April 30   8 members present
      4. May 16   10 members present
  B. Sub-committees
      1. Definition & Outcomes   4 members
      2. USC GAMU-related courses   3 members
      3. Benchmarking   9 members

II. Definitions and Outcomes
  A. Definition:
      A graduate of USC will be aware of contemporary issues around the world, with
      an appreciation for their historical contexts and an understanding of the natural,
      material and sociocultural systems that shape them. Graduates will recognize
      and appreciate diversity as a characteristic of South Carolina, the nation, and the
      world. Emphasis is placed on developing the ability to effectively interact with
      people from diverse cultural backgrounds for the achievement of common goals.

      Our definition distinguishes Global Awareness (GA) from Multicultural
      Understanding (MU). GA involves students becoming aware of and appreciating
      contemporary world issues – seeing the world beyond our national U.S. borders.
      MU involves recognizing and appreciating cultural diversity in South Carolina,
      the nation, and the world.

  B. Outcomes:
      1. Students will learn about contemporary issues faced by citizens and
         governments around the world
      2. Students will understand the historical context that shaped these issues
      3. Students learn about the natural, material, economic, and sociocultural
         systems of other countries and how they compare to those in the United States
      4. Students will learn about and understand how cultural diversity influences
         contemporary issues and shapes social behavior
      5. Students will develop an appreciation and understanding of the value of
         cultural diversity for developing and achieving common goals in business,
         political, and social contexts
      6. Students will develop the capability to effectively communicate and work
         with people from different cultural backgrounds

7. Students will develop a commitment to continuous learning about global and multicultural issues and a commitment to applying this knowledge to effect social progress

III. Challenges and Obstacles
    A. Pros and cons of recommendations in terms of costs, faculty and administrative resources, timing (freshman year, capstone/senior year), demands of existing curricula and viability of adding anything "new" were all extensively discussed.
    B. Challenges in assessing outcomes.
    C. Extent to which non-course initiatives can be "required" for all students, student. performance evaluated, and outcomes assessed.

IV. Assistance – No specific resources identified at this time

V. University Models
    A. General Benchmarking: We benchmarked 15 schools varying from large, state, research universities to small liberal arts colleges (Boston College, Georgia, Harvard, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi State, North Carolina, Ohio State, Pomona, Reed, Tufts, Washington & Lee, William Patterson, Wooster). In general, most have some type of "cultural" requirement, which is most often satisfied by students completing a minimum number of credit hours from a list of approved courses (the course menu approach).
    B. Comprehensive Initiative: The University of Tennessee is developing a new program, Ready for the World, which will integrate GAMU into over 100 general education courses and into campus programming and study abroad offerings. This 5 year project began in 2005, and includes $1.5 million in funding for new faculty and initiatives.
    C. Certificate Program. The University of Kansas (Global Awareness Program) offers certificate in GA. Such a program allows and encourages students to do more than meet basic general education requirements in GA. By fulfilling additional requirements, students can earn a certificate that appears on their transcript. In so doing, incentives are created for colleges/departments/majors to offer more courses and/or course sections that address GA. A certificate program could be developed for GA and/or MU.

VI.   Other GE Areas – None identified

VII.   Recommendations

Recommendations	*Pros & Cons*
Language requirement: Maintain current language requirement for all students unless limited by the curricular demands of specific colleges/departments/majors.	**Pros**: Addresses GA and MU. Courses and processes already in place. **Cons**: Students meeting proficiency requirement do not have to

	participate. Not feasible for all colleges/departments/majors.
University 101: Integrate GAMU topics and outcomes into University 101. For students whom the curricular demands of specific colleges/departments/majors prohibit them from taking University 101, integrate GAMU topics and outcomes into their major-specific 101 courses.	**Pros**: "Thinking Globally" session developed by Office of International Programs already exists. Exposing students first semester of freshman year. **Cons**: Not currently a required course. "Thinking Globally" is currently required for Capstone Scholar sections, but is optional for all other sections. New module on MU needs to be developed. Current instructors, who are largely USC staff (not faculty) may have difficulty adequately instructing GAMU topics. Single sessions on GA and MU limit exposure, ability to achieve outcomes.
Courses I – Menu Approach: Expand the current menu approach used in A&S, through which courses addressing GA and MU topics and outcomes are identified, and students select and complete some minimum credit hour requirements.	**Pros**: Easy for students to meet both the GAMU and other college/department/major requirements. Courses already exist. **Cons**: Fewer courses address MU than GA.
Courses II – Major and/or Capstone Courses: In addition to GAMU topics and outcomes being addressed during freshman and sophomore years, colleges/departments/majors can infuse GAMU into major-specific and possibly into capstone courses.	**Pros**: Reinforces GAMU throughout the curriculum. Colleges/departments/majors make certain courses/section are more contemporary and effective at preparing students to be productive world citizens. **Cons**: Will require colleges/departments/majors to revise and/or create new courses. Additional administration needed to track that requirements are fulfilled and to assess learning.
Courses III – New "202" Course: Develop a new course to be taken in freshman or sophomore year after University 101 that integrates GAMU and other relevant Work Team areas (values, ethics, SR, math, science, technology, communication). Integrative case studies,	**Pros**: Addresses multiple Work Team topics and outcomes in one course. Could be a USC "differentiator." Could use blended learning methods (live courses, podcasts, streaming

films, lectures, and other pedagogies can be identified and/or developed.	video, etc.); if no live sessions, students could complete at own pace, and/or during non-course times. **Cons**: Issues with adding a new course requirement across the curricula. Identifying faculty to develop and teach, and associated compensation and course coverage of their current classes. Student evaluation and assessment challenges if non-live delivery.
Experiential Activities and Programs: Various existing non-course (co-curricular) experiential activities and programs can be utilized to achieve GAMU outcomes, including: Internships, involvement in student organizations and clubs, attendance and participation in lecture or seminar series, study abroad experience, virtual course collaboration with foreign universities/students, attendance and participation in a documentary or other film series, community service activities, service learning opportunities, participation in "living and learning" communities like the Spanish House on campus, mentoring exchange students.	**Pros**: Non-course activities and programs do not increase credit-hour requirements. Many activities and programs already exist. **Cons**: Issues with determining minimum requirements (i.e., hours, locations). Issues with administrative tracking and assessment.
Certification: While beyond the "general education requirement," certificate(s) in GA and/or MU would further promote their importance at USC. Once minimum credit and non-credit hours are established to meet the GAMU general education requirements, additional credit and non-credit hour requirements could be established in order for students to earn a certificate(s). If valued by students, demand would be created for courses, activities, and programs that can fulfill the certificate requirement, providing incentives for colleges/departments/majors/offices to add GAMU offerings (e.g., major, capstone courses).	**Pros**: Infuses GAMU throughout the four year USC experience. Provides incentive for integrating GAMU into existing or new major and/or capstone courses. **Cons**: Creates new responsibilities and requires faculty resources for colleges/departments/majors regarding course development, tracking, and assessment.

VIII.   Goals for Next Semester
   A. Evaluate our recommendations vis-à-vis those made by the other Work Teams, and integrate where possible.
   B. Evaluate feedback received from the Provost and the General Education Task Force and further refine and develop recommendations.

End of Year Report, 2006-07
Work Team on Values, Ethics, and Social Responsibility

Team Leader: Allen Miller (Languages, Literatures, and Cultures)

Team Members: Avery Fouts, Cam Byrd, Catherine Porth, Cliff Fuhrman, Colin Bennett, Dan Sabia, David Crockett, David Weaver, Dean Kinzley, Hayes Kathleen Whitcomb, Lynda Nilges, Mary Hjelm, Maryah Fram, Mathieu Deflem, RIG Hughes, Stephen Bajjaly, Thomas Crawford.

Process: We had four meetings, one of which was a cancelled due to the lack of a quorum. Average attendance at the other three meetings was 10 people. We also had e-mail discussion as well. Two members (Porth and Nilges) were unable to attend owing to scheduling conflicts. David Weaver resigned from the committee due to other obligations. Stephen Bajjaly and Colin Bennett did not participate.

At our first meeting it was determined that we should first try to define a statement of values and then discuss how those values could be taught and subsequently actualized in terms of ethical reflection and social responsibility.

Results

Values Statement

The teaching of values necessarily implies critical reflection upon them. We are committed to the value of intellectual inquiry, the appreciation of artistic endeavor, and the cultivation of good judgment in matters affecting the natural and human world. We are committed to a concern for social justice and respect for the values and rights of others.

In moving from abstract values to the more concrete concerns of ethics and social responsibility the team identified three areas of concern.

Three Concerns

1. How do we set up a manageable system of service learning that does not degenerate in to tokenism?
2. How do we set up a research component that is in harmony with students major areas of study?
3. How do we foster reflection on ethics and values but not become the instruments for the inculcation of a hegemonic ideology?

The team agreed to the following three-point plan to address these concerns.

Proposed Ethical Action Plan

1.   Institute a new required Sophomore course: USC 201—Foundations of Ethical Reflection. This will be an interdisciplinary course, taught by a diverse faculty on the foundations of ethical reflection and value formation on a variety of issues and themes, drawing on texts and traditions from the arts, religion, literature, philosophy, and the social sciences. Students will learn to understand where their values come from, the diversity of value traditions available, and develop the ability to critically reflect on their values and the ethical choices they imply.

2.   All students will keep a service-learning portfolio, documenting at least 15 hours of service to an underserved or underrepresented population per semester. The student also prepares a five-page report detailing their service and what they learned from it each semester. The administration of the portfolio will be organized through the Dean of Students office.

3.   Each major will develop a capstone course to be taken by all graduating seniors. This course will require students to do research on the values implicit in their course of study, and the relation between those values and the students' own understanding of their ethical obligations to the larger community. This does not necessarily need to be a new course, but can be incorporated into an existing capstone course or sequence.

Continuing Concern

The team feel strongly that general education revision cannot just be a matter of adding additional burdens to students and faculty, but must represent a fundamental rethinking of the enterprise.

Goals for Fall Semester

1. Begin to coordinate our proposal with cognate proposals produced by the other work teams.

2. Examine how the goals behind our three major proposals are currently being achieved at our peer and peer aspirant universities.

Respectfully submitted,

Allen Miller
Team Leader.

General Education: Lifelong Learning

Cynthia Colbert, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Art
Sarah Bolick Smith Professor of Fine Arts
Louise Fry Scudder Professor of Liberal Arts

On the first meeting of this subcommittee, with 14 members in attendance, we agreed that the reason we had each undertaken studies for terminal degrees was that one professor in graduate or undergraduate school who took each of us aside and said, "You know, you are really bright and capable. I think you should consider our Ph.D. program." For us, this statement was either the confirmation of a hope or dream, or it was the confrontation of a step that had not yet been considered. It was interesting in this diverse group of highly qualified and accomplished professors representing the sciences, social sciences, arts, mathematics, business and education that so many shared this experience. We were, for the most part, strangers. The telling and retelling of this experience broke the ice for most and allowed us to create a common bond.

At that first meeting we discussed what it meant to be a lifelong learner. It is not something professors concern themselves with on a daily basis, but it was an interesting topic. Ideas were shared freely. Our operational definition for a lifelong learner includes, but is not limited to the following:

Lifelong learning, as conceived within the conception of general education at the post-secondary level, embodies certain traits including curiosity, thoughtfulness, imagination, and willingness to engage in intellectual exploration. A lifelong learner is a person who has a tendency to inquire further, to find the answer to questions, or seeks to learn more about an idea. This is a person who engages in her/his own culture and the culture of others through travel, being a patron of museums, theater, musical performances, lectures, and other community forums. This is a person who is engaged in the community as a contributing citizen and who is well informed about the world as well as issues that impact the community. Lifelong learners engage themselves in inquiry, are comfortable with technology, and use their critical skills to evaluate information. A lifelong learner is a person who reads widely and deeply. Lifelong learners have a thirst for experiencing and learning new things and are eager to try new activities throughout their lives.

From the discussion of what a Lifelong Learner is, we began to talk about how we could improve the experiences students have at USC to transform them into the tenacious, seekers of information we envisioned. Ideas about service learning, study abroad, and membership is smaller communities within the University were discussed at length. There was agreement that all undergraduate students at USC should have access to the opportunities that Honors College students have. This would include, smaller classes, more personal relationships with advisors, access to funds (through application) for study abroad, a student service that connects students with volunteer opportunities that fit their interests and abilities.

These ideas would require a rethinking of advising loads, championing the smaller courses over the auditorium courses (that earn more income for departments), and honoring/rewarding the work professors do with undergraduate students by being outstanding teachers and advisors.

Members of my committee felt strongly about the disconnect between saying we value teaching and rewarding faculty for spending time and effort on being outstanding teachers. Many committee members said they spent time and effort on teaching in spite of warnings from their administrative evaluator that they should not worry about teaching, and instead devote their time to research and publication. Our discussions about teaching were passionate and left me feeling discouraged about our own academic community on behalf of several of my committee members.

The theme of this discussion carried over into our second meeting where members spoke openly about their perceptions that teaching is not valued or rewarded. Several felt they were good teachers in spite of their chairperson's advice. Some went as far as saying that devotion to teaching was secret they kept from their colleagues and chairs. Almost every member of my committee agreed that teaching does not really count, but also admitted that they care deeply about their teaching. Our faculty members want to connect with students, to teach well, and to be available to students. It appears that the reward system works against this. The University of South Carolina's rewards system for teaching does not encourage faculty to involve themselves with students in ways that would encourage lifelong learning.

Discussion also centered on the culture of USC. The committee members agreed that the general culture of the University of South Carolina does not embrace the tenets of lifelong learning. There is a very strong anti-intellectual element on our campus. Conversations overheard by faculty include students who brag that they have never read a book while here, or that they don't have time to come to class because they have to go and look at a space for the sorority/fraternity party. Another example of overt anti-intellectualism is the number of students who show up for the Freshman Reading Experience without having read the book and who boast about having no desire to read it.

Our committee members agreed that there is a lack of a coherent framework of general education and the non-existence of a lifelong learning culture among the undergraduate students suggests that the intellectual climate of the university cannot be changed through massive, systemic reforms. We recommend small, experimental programs for the typical undergraduate student that encourage educational renewal to take on human dimensions as students work with university faculty who have already established good working relationships with students.

By our third meeting, we were in agreement that USC can not encourage lifelong learning by simply tacking on or substituting courses into the general education requirements. The goal of creating stronger intellectual capital for the state of South Carolina is more important to our committee members than a new math requirement.

We feel that changing the climate of undergraduate experiences is crucial to encouraging students to fully engage themselves in intellectual opportunities offered at USC. We recommend the following:

• to establish a center for professional student organizations (organizations linked to the students' future profession) within the Department of Student Affairs under the area of Academic Support. This Center would link the interests of groups of undergraduate students to professionals working in their respective fields;

• to create 15 spaces on campus that embody aspects of lifelong learning, i. e., places with subscriptions to high-level cultural magazines and furnished in a manner suitable to embrace students' sense of curiosity and thoughtfulness;

• to establish two to-be-named lecture series where well chosen (1) faculty and staff and (2) USC alumni discuss ideas, books, and experiences that changed their lives.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Lifelong Learning Committee.
June 1, 2007