

EPC PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION MOTION FOR FRESHMAN SEMINARS
April 19, Special Faculty Meeting

As a topic for Faculty comment and advice, EPC proposes the motion below for implementing the Freshman Seminar requirement. The motion will actually be voted on at the May Faculty Meeting.

Please recall that the Faculty has voted to split the original Section 3 of the New Curriculum Motion, so that now the Freshman Seminar requirement can be implemented independently of the Upper Level Learning Experience requirement; EPC is not proposing that the latter requirement be implemented.

If time constraints prevent you from commenting at the Faculty Meeting, please send a P-mail message as soon as possible to Mark Fowler, Philosophy Department. If at all possible in fact, please send your message by Wednesday afternoon, April 20.

EPC Proposed Implementation Motion: EPC certifies that the resources are now available to implement the Freshman Seminar graduation requirement, and moves that the Faculty approve it as a graduation requirement for all freshman as of Fall 1994.

This certification is based upon three factors: A) verification of adequate resources to implement Freshman Seminars; B) a logistic plan for implementing Freshman Seminars; and C) a plan for Freshman Seminar accreditation. All three are spelled out below:

A) Adequate Resources:

Departments, program directors, and deans have committed to "minimum or base departmental commitments" that total 91 freshman seminars per year. At 15 seats per seminar, this would give us a minimum of 1,365 seats. This is a conservative number because it reflects 26 stable long-term promises. For example, the actual number of seminars next year will be at least 100, resulting in 1,500 seats. In addition, since these commitments are made by a total of 26 departments, programs, and schools, our students will have a wide diversity of seminars from which to chose. Finally, we will have considerable flexibility to adjust supply to demand because several departments have expressed a willingness and ability to offer more seminars in exchange for adjunct-level replacement funding.

B) The Logistics of the Requirement:

Randy Coleman has formulated the following plan for handling the logistics of implementation.

1. When first-year students enroll for Fall classes, they will be asked to list six seminars in order of preference. These choices must cover at least three subject fields, and no more than 3 can be selected from the same department. The Advising Office

will register as many studnets as possible. A second mailing in July will be sent to students who have not been successfully placed. This will include a listing of seminars with openings and a second request form.

2. First-year students who do not complete the requirement during the first term will be given enrollment priority in the Spring.

3. The catalog and advising materials will emphasize that "students must complete their freshman seminar requirement by the end of their first year at the College, and students may not declare their concentration before this requirement is completed." This latter stipulation should provide students with a modest and timely incentive to satisfy the requirement during their first year at the College.

C) Seminar Accreditation:

All freshman seminars must meet guidelines that have been established by the EPC for reading-, writing- and discussion-intensity. The seminar accreditation process will work as follows.

1. In late Spring, 1994 the EPC will promulgate a statement to department chairs and Fall, 1994 and Spring, 1995 seminar instructors outlining the broad objectives of the freshman seminar program, as well as the specific operationalized guidelines passed by the faculty. Faculty members who self-identify their 1994-5 seminars as either currently meeting these guidelines, or as capable of meeting them after some redesign that can be accomplished before they are taught, need do nothing; their seminars will automatically meet the requirement. Faculty members who self-identify their 1994-1995 seminars as apparently not meeting the guidelines may submit proposals to EPC showing how their courses meet the spirit, if not the exact letter, of the guidelines. EPC will consider these on a case by case basis. Seminars that do not meet the guidelines and do not receive EPC approval will not meet the requirement. All other 1994-1995 freshman seminars will be certified on a one time basis as meeting the freshman seminar guidelines.

[Note that 42 of the 50 seminars scheduled for the Fall are already credentialed for "W" credit, which is significantly more stringent than the 5,000-word writing requirement. Moreover, information that we have gathered from a survey of Fall, 1994 seminar instructors indicates that perhaps only two or three seminars do not at present meet the guidelines.] nt

2. Early in the Spring, 1995 term departments (not individual instructors) will be asked to certify that all of their freshman seminars thereafter will meet the guidelines specified by the faculty.