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The Development of CEGEP English Curriculum:

Renewing English Curriculum, Vol. I

Anne Blott and Arnold Keller

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1532 0326

71-1677
701776
v.1

Dépôt légal - 2e trimestre 1991
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec
ISBN 0-9695445-0-2

CENTRE DE DOCUMENTATION COLLÉGIALE

The Development of CEGEP English Curriculum:

Renewing CEGEP English Curriculum, Volume I.

Rapport final d'un projet réalisé au Collège Vanier, grâce à une subvention de la Direction Générale de l'Enseignement Collégial du Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Science, dans le cadre du Programme d'aide à la recherche sur l'enseignement et l'apprentissage (PAREA).

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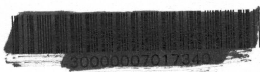

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Chapter I. Preamble: On Renewing CEGEP English Curriculum

The goal of this research is to provide a context for the study of CEGEP English curriculum and its renewal. We make two assumptions:

1) That curriculum is primarily the business of faculty, although other interests have legitimate roles to play;

2) That self-examination must be ongoing if curriculum is to respond to the needs of students.

The vitality of a curriculum depends on the commitment of the teachers who deliver it. Nothing imposed from on high will work, regardless of its abstract merits or good intentions. Only when faculty believe in what they teach do they teach it with conviction. At the same time, one cannot expect faculty to examine curriculum without the requisite context and critical tools. Our analysis of twenty years of CEGEP history helps provide that context; our task in working with faculty is to articulate the critical tools which emerge from the professional experience and insights of our colleagues across the province. This study intends to bring together the context and the critical perspectives needed for a clearer vision of what we do and why we do it. By publishing our results widely in this final report, in several interim reports to the Provincial Committee for English, in our newsletters, and in discussions with interested faculty, we also aim to describe more plainly the objectives and practices of English CEGEP teachers.

Research Methodology

This study examines documents from the Provincial Committee and individual department archives and analyzes documents in both Quebec educational history and the literature of curricular philosophy and practice. At the heart of our study this year, however, is a series of interviews with people who have played and still play a significant role in the development of English curriculum: past and present Provincial Coordinators, department chairmen and/or curriculum responsables, D.S.P.'s, university chairmen, and high schools consultants and teachers.

It is a pleasure to thank them for their time and cooperation in making material available to us.

Centennial Academy: Tom Lake

Champlain College: Arthur Potter, DSP

Lennoxville: Phil Lanthier and Nigel Spencer

St. Lambert: Martin Bowman and Jim Cooke, DSP

St. Lawrence: Don Petzel

Concordia: David Sheps, English Chair; Mervyn Butovksky, English

Dawson: Marie Crossen, Sally Nelson, Greta Nemiroff, Doug Rollins, Patrick Woodsworth, DSP.

Heritage: Terrence Keough

John Abbott: Diane McGee, Anne Pacholke, Edward Palumbo

Lasalle Business College: Chris Schoofs

Marianoplis: Jean Huntley and Judie Livingstone

McGill: Meribeah Aikens, Tutorial Services; Abbot Conway, Admissions; Anthony Paré, Education; David Williams, English Chair ; Dr. Michael Rennert, Dentistry; Judy Pharo, Faculty Advisor, Engineering

Notre Dame: Alice Gagnon

O'Sullivan: Wendy Thatcher

Université de Montréal: Robert Browne, English Chair

Vanier College: Alex Potter, DSP; Pat Conway, Fran Davis.

In addition, we would like to thank our many colleagues in the English departments who, through informal discussions and detailed questionnaire comments gave us support and useful criticism along the way.

<u>Organization</u>

The study is organized in the following way. After a brief introduction, we describe our research findings in specific areas and then state some conclusions on where the research should continue next year. Following are the chapters in our report:

<u>Chapter one</u> gives an overview of our objectives and a summary of our methodology for this year's research

<u>Chapter Two</u> provides a conceptual framework for curricular studies. It offers a taxonomy of ways of looking at curriculum

and suggests what CEGEP English curricula might look like within the perspective of each category.

Chapter Three reviews the institutional history of the CEGEPs, their founding principles, public reception, clientele, and articulation with other levels of education.

Chapter Four narrows the focus of the preceding section by examining the curricular history of CEGEP English departments, particularly the decisions taken and their rationale.

Chapter Five gives an overview of current curriculum, college by college, both public and private. It highlights the distinct philosophy and practices of each school. In its second half, it analyzes the results of our survey of all CEGEP English faculty, along with comments by individual teachers.

Chapter Six contains our recommendations for future study, followed by our **Bibliography** and an **Appendix** which prints the Faculty Curriculum Survey in full.

Chapter II. A Conceptual Framework for Curriculum Studies

A. Overview: What should be taught?

Relationships, Woody Allen told us, are like sharks: they move forward or die. So too for curricula. The central question about education—what should be taught—cannot be asked once and set aside. There are no assurances that what met student needs yesterday does so today, and there is even less certainty that it will do so tomorrow. English departments often have trouble asking what should be taught because English faculty generally lack the necessary conceptual framework to think about curriculum.

Why the question needs asking here and now

The question of what we teach is especially important for the English departments of Quebec's CEGEPs. There have been vast changes in English studies in the twenty-some years the CEGEP network has operated: New criticism is no longer new, the canon has been challenged, and questions of gender and class have been set before us even as society has become more conservative. There have been deep changes too in the communities we serve. The homes and backgrounds from which our students come are different than before, and indeed, the vitality and size of Quebec's English community itself has been deeply eroded. And

finally, we as teachers have changed: We are often middle-aged, often tired, and often insecure about our very jobs.

And yet, the CEGEP English curriculum itself appears to have altered very little in terms of its fundamental assumptions about what should be taught. This is not to say that exactly the same courses are still being offered in the same ways or that individual departments and faculty have become stagnant. But there is a remarkable consistency in fundamental attitudes, particularly in how decisions are made about what will be taught.

1. Two seductive absurdities

Any discussion of curriculum and curricular renewal must first recognize two very different and seductive beliefs about how English departments decide what they teach. Both are finally absurd, but the outlines of them that follow are not entirely parodic. The **first belief** assumes that all students and all faculty and all colleges are sufficiently alike so that a simple consensus can be had about the nature of English studies and its pedagogy. What often follows from this assumption is a list of objectives (with greater or lesser detail) and attendant _ex cathedra_ pronouncements about subject matter, texts, and methods. Such a list can make us think it's possible—perhaps desirable—to teach all students essentially the same material in essentially the same way and at essentially the same time.

Whatever the bureaucratic neatness this view offers, it completely disregards what we know about differences in student learning. It also completely disregards the nature of English studies over the last two decades when (to choose a single example) the very existence of the stable text has been disputed. It is also hopelessly naive about faculty: English teachers, given such a list to follow, will simply subvert it. A single, unified curriculum will not work, therefore, on grounds of learning theory, nor English studies, nor practical implementation. Yet the seductiveness of a single curriculum remains because it offers an apparently simple solution to a complex problem.

The **second belief,** equally absurd, directly opposes the first: Students, faculty, and English studies themselves are so diverse and so various that no common ground can ever exist. Choice, therefore, should drive curriculum. Schools must let students choose courses in which they're interested, regardless of what they bring to those choices, regardless of whether registration procedures make choice possible, regardless of whether students' choices merely confirm them in what they already believe. Faculty too must be allowed to choose what they offer since good teaching happens only when teachers are free to decide the courses. The role of administrators and curriculum committees, therefore, is to ensure the structures that allow such choice. The seductiveness of this view originates in the

legitimate observation that English teachers seldom agree about what they do. The argument extends this to the assumption that it's foolish even to try.

These outlines are, as we've said, not entirely parodic. Most administrators do not want a lockstep curriculum, although it would surely make their jobs simpler. Most faculty do not believe that the multiplicity of approaches to English studies means there never is a common ground. But all too often, curricular discussion becomes polarized in precisely this way. It should be obvious to everyone involved that there must be a middle ground.

2. How can we think about curriculum?

Where is that middle ground and why is it so hard to reach? Part of the problem is that CEGEP curriculum historically has been made developed on an ad hoc basis. (We review those developments in Chapters III and IV: the history portions of this report.) Departments have paid scant attention to the underlying philosophic bases of curriculum. This means that one finds little formal discussion of the conceptual frameworks by which curricula can be developed. There is, for example, remarkably little published about English studies at the CEGEPs. In fact, in compiling his 1985 bibliography on research and documents on the CEGEPs, LeBlanc commented in the McGill Journal of Education that he had made every effort to list as many

English-language entries as possible, but "the reader will note that the list is not impressive" (274).

3. Taxonomies of Curriculum Building

Nevertheless, there is a significant body of literature both about curriculum in general and English in particular. One dimension of that literature is the creation of taxonomies of curriculum building, that is, series of categories or possibilities informing our choices about what we teach.

A single taxonomy will not exhaust all the questions one might ask, but it can suggest a range of possible orientations English departments can take in thinking about curriculum. Of course, there is no "pure" department which adopts one approach and excludes all others. Moreover, to privilege one measure of a curriculum makes others assume subsidiary roles. However, a conceptual framework—theory is too ambitious a word—is a necessary forerunner to curricular examination and renewal.

In the taxonomy of curricular approaches that follows, we present an account of each perspective, statements for and against each, and examples of how English departments might use a particular example.

a. English studies as a way of adapting students to society

One way to think of curriculum is as a school's response to the needs of its sponsoring society. In this view, a curriculum transmits the culture of a community and helps its young adapt to what that culture demands. Such a curriculum is a deliberate attempt to unify a culture by unifying response. Its basic assumption is that society does not need changing, or at least not radically. Rather it is individuals with all their quirkiness and differences who need to conform.[1] This view is obviously conservative and seeks to convey the values of the past, requiring the student to accept them. At its best, it contributes to a coherent and cohesive society.

The obvious question, of course, is who decides which values are transmitted and which values are thereby marginalized. Clearly, in a society with competing interests, there will be many possibilities. Moreover, the simple exercise of authority—a government's, for example—doesn't necessarily ensure that a particular set of values will be passed on. As Graff (1987) points out, different readers respond to works of literature differently; a canon is never, therefore, a simple tool for passing on a particular ideology. In English studies, Matthew

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[1] Socially adaptive curricula are, in fact, the norm. Any government directive would be an example, from telling schools to increase time spent on getting back to the basics, to drug education, to teaching culture. In Quebec, the Régime Pédagogique documents the official government position on what education should be.

Arnold is the most famous proponent of this idea, but it has many other advocates, including the champions of various sorts of literary nationalisms. An English department which saw its prime function as adjusting students to their society first would have to decide what constitutes its canon. This might not be a traditional list of texts (say from Beowulf to Virginia Woolf). A hypothetical CEGEP English department might instead mix Quebecois and English-Canadian texts, as well as books from the ethnic cultures that make up Quebec society. Or it might privilege writers who speak of the English-Quebec experience, however one defines it. A department "adjusting" its students to society might find itself arguing about what constitutes its canon, but there would a clear and deliberate effort to identify the values of English Quebec and teach so that students would accept them.

b. English studies as a way of changing society

Closely related conceptually to the notion of a curriculum that adapts students to a society is one which seeks to foster change in a society. At first, this connection might seem contradictory since obviously where the first is conservative the other is radical. But in terms of curricular taxonomies, that is a detail. Both social adaptation and social reform see curriculum primarily as transmitting the values of some authority; whose values they happen to be is less important, except of course to the particular authority. In both instances, English studies are

an adjunct to the values of society—whether those values need saving or changing.

Curriculum as an agent of social change has been articulated very strongly in the past decade in Britain by cultural materialists (for example, Raymond Williams, Jonathan Dollimore, Alan Sinfield) and to a lesser degree in the United States by new historicists (like Stephen Greenblatt or James H. Kavanagh). In Britain, where universities have been severely cut by the Thatcher government, much literary criticism has been an open call to change society. Consider Terry Eagleton's comment in his 1983 book Literary Theory: An Introduction, that the critic's study of the rhetorical uses of language is not abstract. "It is a matter of starting from what we want to *do*, and then seeing which methods and theories will best help us to achieve those ends" (211). In the United States, that call has been somewhat muted, and the generally leftist politics of its proponents has been mixed in with other politics of gender and race. The manifestation of this phenomenon in Canada has been an increased Canadian nationalism, generally put forward as a defense against American culture.

An English department that saw its role as changing society would first have to agree on how society presently constitutes itself, where are its *loci* of power, and (to some degree) what a new society would look like. Some examples of such a curriculum might be one that gives a greater place to the writing of women,

of cultural and sexual minorities, and other groups the curriculum framers perceive as needing (to use a common term) "empowering." There is little reason to think that such a consensus would be easy to reach.

Again, curricula that define themselves in terms of a community's values—for or against—have much more in common than might be apparent. In all such curricula, the issue is power, either its maintenance or its transfer. In both instances, the danger is always that literature itself is devalued and judged according to how well it serves the demands of some particular interest group. At its best, such a curriculum points out wrongs that need redressing; at its worst, it becomes mere propaganda. To say this is not necessarily to make a positive or negative judgement. It is merely to point out how a department might make its curricular choices.

One of the most influential thinkers shaping our ideas about curriculum this year is Gerald Graff. He comments on the intellectual energy that such power struggles waste:

> The discouraging thing is not that such institutional conflicts have gone unresolved—unresolved conflict being just the sort of thing a democratic educational system should thrive on—but how little of the potential educational value of such conflicts the professional system has been able to turn into part of what it studies and teaches. Instead of a source of paralysis (6).

c. English studies as a way of changing the individual

Instead of putting society at its center, a curriculum can put the individual there. Such is the view most closely

associated with "progressive" educators (for example, A.S. Neill, John Holt, and William Pinar). Rather than a commitment to a particular society or even a discipline, the progressive approach looks to the "whole" person first—her feelings, ideas, and psychological growth (Miller 1977). All persons, goes the argument, are born with unique, native capacities; it is the duty of education to allow them to emerge and flourish. Schools, therefore, should construct activities that are first and foremost personally relevant to the student.

A chief tenet of this view is that students learn only when they have a genuine investment in education, and that occurs only when they exercise choice over what they study. A second central tenet is that success depends on student and teacher responding to each other as "living creatures attempting to broaden and deepen the quality of their experience" (Eisner, The Educational Imagination 70). Education should nourish the student's native abilities. Teachers must be gardeners, not sculptors; their goal is to bring forth whatever is within the student, rather than to impose something from without.

However laudable its goals, there are some clear problems with this position. First, the methods of a such curriculum are based on a weak learning theory. We don't know enough about the human psyche to construct an entire pedagogy based on nourishing a student's psyche. Teachers therefore must improvise methods that haven't been proven reliable or valid. (The literature

records some extreme examples: sensitivity training, meditation, and yoga (McNeil 1977)). In the hands of improperly trained faculty, students may well be harmed.[2] Further, unless there is true individualization—economically beyond the reach of most schools—every student in a class gets same treatment as every other. How can teachers be sure that what is appropriate for one student is appropriate for all? Finally, a curriculum that stresses personal growth can also overstate the needs of the "self" and forget that humans live in communities. What begins as a genuine search for unique consciousness may end in simple narcissism.

These failings are not, however, inevitable. Clearly, a curriculum that doesn't think of its students as individuals won't serve them either. And no doubt there are gifted teachers who have both the skill and energy to be successful in developing the student's inner self. But most teachers don't have those skills. And even if they did, where would they find the time needed to respond to each student?

An English department with a curriculum centered around the individual's growth would offer a great range of courses—from many time periods, many genres, many nationalities. The material

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[2] We can, of course, make that objection about any classroom method. However, it becomes crucial when teachers claim to be interested in the inner growth of learners. The worst that bad Shakespeare teaching can do, after all, is make poor responders to plays. But a curriculum that seeks to change individuals truly can do them harm.

would matter less than the use to which it were put. Indeed, a department could not specify very much since its internal logic would demand that teachers create their own strategies. It is they, after all, who must develop the requisite emotional relationship with their students. It also follows that students would have a significant (if not an equal) say in what is taught.

Departments like these will argue that rigorous reading is the means by which individuals develop. However, the literature training they offer necessarily must be secondary to the process of personal empowerment. Curricula that stress personal growth, therefore, are like those that operate in terms of society: English as a discipline is not the main focus.

d. English studies as a discipline

Another approach to building curricula is to organize them around discrete units of knowledge. One attends school, goes the argument, to learn a subject. The teaching model implied here is master/apprentice, where the teacher is an expert and the student wants to learn the expertise. Issues of personal growth or societal values are irrelevant, even if they might have influenced the student's decision to seek out the expert in the first place. The first loyalty of both master and apprentice is to a body of knowledge.

Such an approach is problematic applied to English studies because there is widespread disagreement within the discipline about what it does. Twenty years ago, most faculty agreed on a

canon that all students were to read. Twenty years ago, the notion of the text as an unchanging, stable entity was generally undisputed. And twenty years ago, scholars were much more confident (justly or not) citing history. All this no longer holds, and traditional assumptions about English studies are more often challenged than embraced. (See, for example, Lentricchia and McLaughlin's book Critical Terms for Literary Study (1990) for an outline of the current revolution in literary criticism.)

A department that saw itself as training apprentices in literature has two choices: It can pronounce on what constitutes the discipline. Or, following Gerald Graff (1987), it can foreground the differences among competing notions of English studies. There are as many possibilities in the first instance as there are critical stances. The second one, however, can be imagined in the following:

> [An ideal course would try to] define the subject matter, literature, and to discuss the various and competing assumptions about texts, language, meaning, culture, readers, and so forth that we make. Wouldn't it show that these assumptions are themselves constructions, that there is a considerable debate about such things as texts? (James Kincaid, quoted in Graff, 262).

Whatever the attractions of such a course, it is not clear how it would be made appropriate to CEGEP students. Would such a course—clearly theory-based—come at the end of CEGEP, after students have read a substantial body of texts? (And what would those texts be?) Or would the course come at the start of CEGEP, in the spirit formation fondamentale, introducing different

notions of the discipline as part of Bruner's (1966) "spiral curriculum"? This approach is similar to the "integrative seminars" that are used in other community colleges in Canada, like Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton. Or would it be best suited to incipient English majors? Perhaps the thorniest question of all is whether CEGEP teachers are prepared to debate such issues. We will return to that topic when we examine the politics of curriculum.

e. English studies as skill building

Another view of curriculum is the "development of cognitive processes" (Eisner 1985) or "transaction" (Miller and Seller, 1985). In this view, curriculum exists to foster cognitive processes, helping students learn how to learn and giving them opportunities to their strengthen intellectual faculties. A curriculum so constructed would be less concerned with content—facts and theory subject to change—than with the processes of thinking. Although proponents of this model often claim that it is the thinking process itself that is taught, Eisner points out that research shows transfer is not general but specific. That is, we learn specific skills—reading, writing, arithmetic—rather than "thinking" skills per se.

English departments use the cognitive skills model most clearly when they teach writing and reading. For institutional and political reasons, English departments play the major role in

teaching writing, and that will likely continue.[3] However, that institutional practice goes against what we all know: writing is best taught across the whole curriculum, not just in the one-sixth of the time a students spends in an English class. Writing is more than grammar and mechanics, and thinking and writing about history or physics is different than thinking and writing about literature. Just like the psychological approach of "changing the individual" in (c) above, this one therefore begs the question of what CEGEP English teachers are **trained** to teach. It follows that some English teachers may not even be qualified to teach thinking and writing about anything other than literature. The Report of the Parent Commission recommended in fact that **all CEGEP teachers** be required to have a teacher training course equivalent to a complete semester (Recommendation 157). This requirement has never been observed in the hiring of CEGEP teachers, however.

Indeed when "thinking skills" preoccupy English departments as part of writing courses (remedial or otherwise), the skill of reading literature itself can suffer. How much time do we spend away from the thing we were trained to teach? The danger for English departments is that writing courses consume resources, often threatening to transform English programs into mere service

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[3] An employer or university professor does not look at a CEGEP graduate's weak writing and say "Oh, what a poor history or physics teacher this student must have had."

departments. And yet, it's clear that in order to keep allocations high (or at least steady), CEGEP English departments must offer writing courses. The problem for curriculum builders is how much and what kind of skills to offer.

f. English studies and the quest for universal truth

A curriculum that defines itself in terms of society or the individual thinks locally, not universally. That is, it does not concern itself with "transcendent" truth (whatever that might be). But a course of study can be a quest for what is universal, for what is permanent in an ephemeral world. This is what most people mean by "liberal" education. A common strategy of such curricula is the study of the great works of the past, seeing in them the common threads that unite humanity.[4]

In English studies, this often has meant teaching the canon, but not to inculcate social values. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, for example, are said to speak across the centuries, portraying living truths. The same is true of the major documents of Western civilization, from the Greeks onwards. Often, the courses in liberal arts programs like these trace a theme—death, love, justice—hoping to find what light can be shed by the great minds of the past.

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[4] Examples of educators who advocate this would be Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer Adler, both associated with the "Great Books" program at the University of Chicago.

The problems here are similar to those in teaching English as a discipline, again largely the product of past twenty years. Few contemporary thinkers conceive as texts as self-contained constructions whose meanings do not depend on knowing other texts and contexts. Indeed, the very notion of a single, objectively existing text—complete with an author whose intent we can readily state—is often called into question. Pedagogically, this raises the issue of how much of a text's contexts must be taught for its historical moment to inform our understanding. Gerald Graff sums up the problem:

> At issue in the teaching of literature, then, and in the formation of a literature curriculum, are how much of the "cultural text" students must presuppose in order to make sense of works of literature, and how this cultural text can become the context of teaching (Graff 258).

Do the great ideas in fact transcend time? Or are they rather particular expressions of ideas which we understand only when we understand the communities that produced them?

There is also the recurring problem of authority: Who decides what's great? If it is to be individual teachers, is a coherent curriculum possible? If it is to be a committee, why expect a consensus there when it is available nowhere else in society? If there is an authority on high, are other views impossible to teach? Once again, we have the problem that reaching agreement on what constitutes the great books and great ideas never is easy.

An English department which saw its mission as teaching mankind's great ideas would likely have many thematic courses (for example, "Humanity and Nature" or "Love and Truth"). This is, in fact, the orientation of a great many CEGEP courses. Indeed, at times, one might be hard pressed to distinguish a literature course from a humanities course on the same topic. A literature course may have "literary" readings, but that term is notoriously difficult to define. Again, the focus of what goes on in the literature classroom may not be on literature—the subject English teachers are hired to teach.

g. An educational technology approach to English studies

One can also think about curriculum from a "scientific"—or at least rational—perspective. This is the view of educational technologists (among many others, see Tyler 1950; Rowntree 1982; Romiszowski 1981; Gagné 1971). Curriculum for educational technology is a problem-solving process in which one finds the activities appropriate to the needs of both a school and its students. The first assumption, of course, is that goals and objectives can be stated clearly and (often) sequentially. For example, in mathematics, one must teach addition and subtraction before algebra and then teach algebra before calculus. Many fields have clear sequences of skills that students need to master before going on.

However, not all disciplines—English among them—can be so readily structured. There is no absolute reason why literary

training must begin with either genre or chronology. Nor is there an absolute reason to begin with poetry instead of prose, the Fourteenth Century rather than the Twentieth. In writing instruction, the pendulum has swung from teaching grammar first to teaching it at the end of the composition process. It may well swing again.

An English department that took an educational technology approach would begin with a needs assessment. It would find out in which areas students were performing unsatisfactorily (although by whose standards would be another issue). A department would then institute specific teaching to address those needs. For example, if student essays were poorly structured, faculty might give instruction in organization. If incoming students could not comprehend literary texts, the department might require an introductory course that stressed reading comprehension and basic literary skills. Of course, what needed to be done and how to do it would be debated intensely.

That debate would be healthy. The strength of the educational technology model is that it requires departments to articulate what they do and what they want their students to do. Discussion may not produce agreement, but it does bring unstated assumptions into the open. That allows one to plan rationally. Even more important is educational technology's focus on students. Rigorous thinking about what students can or should be able to do after instruction is a powerful curricular strategy.

None of these remarks is meant to downplay the two major weakness of the educational technology approach applied to English studies: the difficulty in articulating what should go on in an literature classroom and the historic reluctance of departments to attempt to do so.

It is interesting to note, however, the parallels in the thinking of the educational technologists and literary scholar Gerald Graff. Both approaches demand that the curriculum planners articulate what needs to be done, what skills taught, what theories (reader, text, meaning, history) foregrounded, which text lists assigned—and which ones challenged. Graff goes further and wants to see those debates brought into the public arena as part of the education of the students. But he, as we have seen above, bleakly foresees paralysis rather than renewal from the exercise (6).

h. CEGEP English as part of the academic continuum

English departments differ from most other disciplines in the CEGEP system in that they are not forced to offer required courses for university entrance. For example, university math and science programs lay out in great detail what a student needs to be admitted. Again, for certification in most career programs in the CEGEPs, students must pass rigorous tests to meet national and provincial standards in their fields. University English programs, however, make no such demands. McGill and Concordia

(where most English Quebec CEGEP graduates go) assume that two years of any CEGEP English program suffices. Where they find deficiencies, the universities themselves provide the remedy. For example, McGill requires all English majors and honors students to take a traditional survey course in their first year. Concordia, at this writing, is discussing an introductory course in (among other things) theory and tradition. Our recent conversations with department heads at both schools make clear that neither will ask the CEGEPs to change curricula (Williams 1990; Sheps 1990).

Interviewing Williams, who was then Chairman of the English department at McGill, we heard that the department did not expect the CEGEPs to provide a first-year literary survey:

> Our experience was that the introductory course at the CEGEP level was too disparate from one place to another. Some knew this, some knew that. We found that by and large the emphasis seemed to be on modern or more modern literature than more ancient literature. So that we felt that there was not enough uniformity in background. So we decided to do it ourselves so to speak. . . . they don't have a kind of historical sense. In fact, the historical sense is really the mental point . . . . But were it the case that the CEGEPs gave a standard set course with a set reading list, we certainly wouldn't do it. We would not ask them to do it again.

And yet it was the teaching of introductory courses that the universities envisaged the CEGEPs doing. It was very clear during the period when the CEGEPs were coming into being that both McGill and Concordia saw them as replacing the first year of university. We will discuss these expectations fully in the history sections of our report. Concordia, for example, lobbied

for mandatory composition and survey courses, matching what they then required of their first-year students. McGill, on the other hand, pressed for a mandatory, single course in which both literature and writing would be taught, with the emphasis on the former. Now, however, with the writing problems and class sizes the universities have to face, McGill might put the writing at the top of its agenda for the CEGEP English departments. "In a wish list I think the first thing of course, is going to be the writing. It's very hard for us in a 3 year situation to try to tackle the writing" (Williams interview) .

Whatever their disagreements in those planning years, representatives from both universities assumed that the CEGEP courses would be suitable preliminaries to further English study, whether or not a student actually chose to go on. For example, the minutes of an advisory group stressed that college-level period courses were to be "introductory" and not as "advanced" as university level course ("Minutes of the Advisory Group", February 28, 1968.).

What would be the curriculum of an English department, then, that saw its role as preparing students for university English studies? One might find mandatory courses in writing, surveys of various sorts (chronological or by genres), and basic literary terminology. Curriculum-makers would have to ask what students needed to know to do further study. Given that most English CEGEP

graduates who go to university go to McGill and Concordia, those schools would surely provide much of the answer.

But can one ask English programs to see themselves merely as "feeders" into the university study of English? After all, relatively few CEGEP students become English majors. Should the great majority of students, therefore, be required to take courses for future English majors? Would not such a relatively narrow focus defeat the purpose of general education? Whether such preparation is useful only for future English majors is an important issue, and we address it elsewhere in this report under Formation fondamentale.

The academic continuum extends in both directions, of course, and CEGEP is really in the middle ground between the high school and advanced education and vocational levels. Our discussion of "CEGEP English in Context" next year will explore these implications in more detail.

B. Curriculum and politics of the CEGEPS

> It might be more realistic to assume that the chronic inability of general education programs to compel faculty support is itself a symptom of the impossibility of superimposed unity or coherence on an inherently refractory and ideologically conflict-filled professional and cultural setting (Graff 173).

Perhaps a taxonomy of curricular approaches should not speak of politics. But that would be naive. English departments are well-known for their disagreements—how much writing to teach, how

much of the canon, how much media studies. Like other organizations, CEGEP English departments reach decisions according to which group within the department can insist on its will. This makes them somewhat different from other CEGEP disciplines where the régime pédagogique is quite explicit about what faculty must teach and the authority of the government prevails.

But this has not been so for English CEGEPs, for reasons we discuss in the history portion of this report. Each department has had a core of people (whose membership can shift) who create curriculum and hire new teachers to ensure that curriculum's continuation. (Indeed, some of the departments we have met are at the stage now of hiring their own former students.) Because the curricular ideas of these groups vary from college to college, there is a very wide range of programs across the network. One find very structured and sequenced programs as well those where students choose all four of their courses. Virtually every kind of course is offered somewhere in the network, and at the larger colleges, even within the same program.

The Cahier—the official statement of curriculum—presents the wide variety of courses as a strength that reflects a healthy pluralism. Most faculty we surveyed agreed. The wide variety of course offerings, moreover, isn't peculiar to the CEGEPs but is the norm almost throughout North America. Graff (1987) has called this phenomenon the "humanist myth": Departments include all

topics and all subjects into the curriculum as pieces in the mosaic of truth and literature.

What do such curricula look like both here and on the rest of the continent? Generally, they include everything for which any one department member can make a case. The most common rationale is "coverage," including periods, national literatures, genres, themes, as well as (increasingly) class, ethnicity, and gender. Everything and everyone has a place at the table. There is a disturbing paradox at work, however: How can one find such collegiality at a time when there are so many sharp disagreements about what constitutes English studies?

Graff argues that the appeal to coverage simply lets everything in without attempting to make connections among the areas covered. Curricula don't change but expand. Courses are added to the current aggregate, relieving pressures; innovators are appeased by becoming insiders; current insiders continue on as before; the school feels virtuous, at once open-minded and current. There are also obvious benefits for a department's politics. No one has to change behavior or confront critics. Faculty members do not have to define themselves or their courses. Confrontations are held to a minimum, and live and let live prevails. However, students are left to make their own intellectual sense of the miscellany of courses. Curricular coherence is not a goal.

What Graff sees in English departments in North America generally is evident in most CEGEP English departments. The philosophic argument for pluralism can be made, but it needs to be made again and clearly articulated. So do the arguments for other curricula. The current Cahier looks all too much like a document that primarily wishes to avoid confrontation. That is not healthy for either the profession or its students. We are not suggesting taking up arms and shooting colleagues. We are saying that our consensus is only apparent, masking reality rather than reflecting it.

Special problems of CEGEP English departments

These perspectives on English curricula show that choosing what is taught is not an neutral task. Every decision—indeed every account, this one included—reflects biases, most often implicitly. We think it is useful to bring those biases out into the open, especially at a time when English departments face pressing problems wherever they are. We think it is particularly important for minority institutions like Quebec Anglophone CEGEPs.

As our community grows smaller, there is the continuing threat that schools and jobs will disappear. Should English departments insulate themselves from the issues of an eroded community? Should they promote their culture in the face of a government with the will to do no more than "preserve" it? Should

they help students adapt to the reality of being a "minority," whatever that means? These are not—to state the glaringly obvious—simple questions. But they will be asked—either by ourselves or others.

The needs of the English community are one of our concerns. But the future of the CEGEP as an institution increasingly is also challenged. One of our aims in next year's work is to gain more perspective on where the colleges are going and what role English will play in them: their links with the universities, and the world of work, for example. The question of "the student-centred curriculum," the primary focus of the English Language Arts curriculum at the high school level, is another one we will return to in our work next year. We must recognize that whatever our critical framework, we are only one sector of the continuum of education in English that each child and young person receives. Next year's research will attempt to set CEGEP English into these broad contexts.

One way of approaching looking ahead at the future is first to look back at the past. And that is where we turn now.

Chapter III. Institutional History of English in the CEGEPs

A. The Parent Report

The Parent Commission, which began meeting in May 1961, had produced 5 volumes of reports concerning all aspects of Quebec education by 1966. The January 1965 special program, Operation 55, instituted two major changes:

1) the consolidation of the 1600 school boards scattered across the province into 55 Catholic and 9 Protestant regional boards

2) the creation of a new post-secondary level, the CEGEP, with formal assent in the Legislative Assembly on June 29, 1967.

The Parent Commission Report provided a "glance into the future": that society would require a consolidation of energies devoted to educational goals in the province. Among its recommendations were those for a two- to three-year course of study, integrated, comprehensive, and free. In his full-length study of the sociological and political forces for change in Quebec's educational revolution, Datey describes the new colleges:

> According to the specific recommendations of the Royal Commission . . . in the new non-university post-secondary sector there would be no privileged type of school like the classical colleges in the old 'system': only one kind of school, the institut [later changed to CEGEP, or Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel], should offer every programme, academic or vocational, leading to every destination whether in further study or in the labour market. In other words the institute should be polyvalent. It should impart a two-year training (grades 12 and 13) to

> students enrolled in it. Publicly controlled, pluralist, and coeducational, it must be structurally distinct from the secondary school and the university. . . . Its minimum initial enrollment should be 1500 and it should be accessible to all . . . (9).

This level of education was to follow up on eleven years of public school and was intended both to prepare some students for university-level work and to round off the general education of the vocational student. Following are essential recommendations from Volume 2, concerning the new collegial level:

(82) We recommend that the state encourage school attendance through the thirteenth year for the greatest possible number of students and adopt the necessary measures to give these young adults an appropriate education of high quality.

(83) We recommend that for this purpose there be established a level of education complete in itself, of two years' duration, after the eleventh year, which shall be clearly separate from both the secondary school course and higher education.

(84) We recommend that this course shall be the preparatory stage required for higher education, in the case of those intending to continue their studies, and for all others, a terminal phase in general education and vocational training , preparing directly for a career.

(85) We recommend that, to emphasize its composite or comprehensive character, this course of study be called pre-university and vocational education, and that the institutions in which it is given be called institutes.

(86) We recommend that the programme of pre-university and vocational studies be very flexible, and that it be based on a wide choice of electives.

(87) We recommend that the programme of each student include basic courses, courses in a specialty and courses complementary to this speciality, each of these courses to comprise about one-third of the total.

B. Original Objectives

The Parent Commission's aims for these new post-secondary "institutes", later called CEGEPs (collèges d'enseignement générale et professionel) can be summarized briefly:

1) to equalize the opportunities of the French and English students' access to higher education,

2) to promote technical and vocational training and modernize course content,

3) to bring the English and French systems into structural harmony, and

4) to mix general and specialized education so that the students in both streams would have flexibility and freedom of choice in program decisions.

C. English and General Education/Formation fondamentale

In 1960, 10 years before the first English CEGEP opened, Willis Rudy had analyzed the liberal arts college system in the United States. He found that for fifty years American liberal arts curricula had been getting more professionalized, while professional colleges were becoming more liberalized in their courses of study. "The end result has been that both liberal arts and professional colleges have moved in the direction of achieving a better balance between general and specialized study (129)."

Two options presented themselves in the American colleges according to Rudy's analysis:

(#1)-devoting two years to general academic courses before beginning specialized professional disciples
or

(#2)-(much more rarely) combining the general and the specialized courses throughout the students' undergraduate years.

Within 10 years of Rudy's study, tens of thousands of students were enrolled in Quebec's new French and English colleges—in which the two streams were mingled in the same classroom.

Rather than a discrete two-year phase of general education (as in #1 above) or a four-year mingling of the two (#2) Quebec colleges were limited to two years of post-secondary work. And within those two years (or three, in the case of the professional programs) planners attempted to assign approximately one-third of the class time to "general education." For the English colleges particularly, what that meant, in practice, was four completely unstructured semesters of English and four equally unstructured semesters of Humanities. Further, these two disciplines evolved separately, and their 8 courses were independent of each other.

D. Implementing CEGEP principles in the English colleges

1. Founding principles

Initially, the colleges were envisioned as all approximating an ideal size of 2000-3000 students. They were to share in the visionary idea of the Parent Commission Report, and achieve a harmony and balance of interests among a variety of students.

In the founding of the first English CEGEP, Dawson College, in 1969, the planners were conscious of these principles of the

Parent Report, particularly of the need to break away from Quebec's highly stratified traditional system of education. Paul Gallagher, one of the chief administrators at Dawson, identified Dawson's philosophy with the Parent Commissioners' recommendations:

> . . . they observed that when different colleges were founded to accommodate students of different aptitudes and interests—liberal arts colleges, universities, institutes of technology, etc.—it was inevitable that some of the institutions would be more privileged than others and that social status would be identified with the kind of school one attended rather than one's performance as a student. Since they believed that one of the school's social roles should be to democratize society, they recommended that all students at the post-secondary level should go to the same institutions which would therefore of necessity be comprehensive in curricular offerings (39).

Beyond this democratization at the local level, however, was the desire to create a system that would be responsive to the needs of the province as a whole and of the community:

> They should be co-ordinated or monitored by the state so that they would not become little autonomous empires answering to no one, and so that a true collegiate, co-operative network could exist. Each Institute should, at the same time, have its own Board of Governors answerable to the community served by the college and with not only the power but also the encouragement to develop programmes and activities particularly suited to the distinctive needs of their students and their "region" of the province (Gallagher, 41)

This regional identity means less, of course, in the large urban English colleges concentrated in Montreal. Nevertheless, there are significant differences in clientele, size, objectives, and curricula in the Montreal colleges.

2. Reception of the CEGEP's: French and English

Historically, at the post-secondary level, Francophones had been at a disadvantage. Despite being the majority in the province, they had only the same number of places as the Anglophones at the university level. Indeed, through the first 60 years of the 20th Century, Quebec was well below the national average in such educational criteria as financial commitment, teacher qualifications, pupil-teacher ratios, and retention rates beyond the age of 14. For example, the percentage of population age 15-19 remaining in school ranged from a high of 68 in British Columbia to a low of 50 in Quebec. Again, in the percentage of population aged 5-24 attending school, Ontario ranked first and Quebec 10th among the ten provinces (Brown, 64). Secondly, the proliferation of post-secondary institutions providing instruction in French produced a wide range of institutions uneven in their standards, outmoded in their curricula, and badly administered generally. Sister Marie-Laurent-de-Rome, a member of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the province of Quebec (the Parent Commission) deplored the chaotic administrative and pedagogical structures in the following analysis:

> Actuellement onze agents différents ont autorité sur l'un ou l'autre des secteurs de l'éducation, et . . . cette anarchie est d'un ridicule achevé. . . . . Il nous faut un système très simple et diversifié. Dans l'état actuelle de notre système, ce sont toujours des groupes qui prennent les décisions en matière d'éducation, mais nous sommes dans une période de changement et nous avons besoin de décisions

rapides. C'est pourquoi le pivot du système devrait être un seul homme, le ministre de l'éducation (8).

Among elements in the old 'system' were 110 French-language collèges classiques, 114 teacher training institutes, and 11 technical institutes. A few of these schools led to university, but only after the students had completed 15 years of schooling . (By contrast, the English pre-university requirement was only 11 years before a 4-year B.A.) It was, furthermore, almost impossible to switch from one system to the other in order to avoid these inequalities.

The CEGEP'S did indeed equalize the opportunities of the two language groups in higher education, but they did so initially largely against the will of the English populace. The newspaper articles of the time tell the story of resistance to the new post-secondary schools in the Montreal Star series "the CEGEPs and the English population" in March of 1970. The insertion of a new 2-year cycle did shorten the French student's schooling from 18 to 16 years, but it also added what was perceived to be an unnecessary two years before the English student could get into a Quebec university.

Long-term research may well indicate that a significant number of anglophone students never have fully utilized the CEGEP's. Instead, as soon as possible—generally after only one year at CEGEP, many students went to universities in Ontario, the United States, and Great Britain. Currently, research indicates that some of the top schools in the United States like Yale and

Harvard have taken graduates of superior English high schools in Montreal <u>without any CEGEP experience.</u> The exodus of English-speaking people from Quebec in the period from the mid 1970's makes it difficult to assess young people's reception of the CEGEP system.

In the English press, the CEGEP's are still not fully accepted—in the way that the English universities, <u>qua</u> institutions, are. As a required two-year level imposed on all students planning to go on to university in Quebec, CEGEP adds a year to what would be expected of those same students in Ontario, for example. Again, the English colleges do not fill the same cultural gap that the French colleges do. Because of the distribution of anglophone populations in Quebec, the English colleges are largely centred in cities. Primarily, of course, they are concentrated in and around Montreal. Culturally and socially, these areas have always nourished English culture. The Montreal region concentrates English universities, libraries, theatres, radio, film, television, newspapers, and books. So the addition of the colleges to this area did not represent revolutionary change that the French colleges did in the smaller towns and outlying regions of Quebec. The French colleges were positively received in general, after initial resistance by the collèges classiques (Datey 61).

André Girard of the Department of Education, University of Montreal, recently commented on the success of the colleges

outside of the major metropolitan centres: " In the smaller centres, CEGEPs ignited intellectual life. They have libraries, university-educated teachers, adult education." (Moore, the Gazette , March 9, 1990). For Girard, however, universal access is not the only question: quality of instruction and preparation must also be ensured. Mass education must not be confused with quality education, he noted, and it is time to ensure quality for those with the ability to do top-quality work. He concluded his remarks by stating that it is time to draw the line, although these days, "everybody wants to be a heart surgeon." Donald Burgess, co-author of a book on the history of education in Quebec, and a McGill professor of educational administration, commented in the same article that the colleges are trying to be all things to all men: preparing students for universities or the job market, while also providing adult education to a completely different clientele: " CEGEPs have to decide their focus, either providing job training or preparing kids for university. And all sectors of society—educators, parents, students , and politicians—should be involved in that decision-making process."

Then Minister of Education, Claude Ryan, gave an address in November of 1989 on "L'Education 25 ans—et Après" in which he described the major challenges of improving the retention rate of students in Quebec CEGEP's and the percentage of students who obtain a college diploma. In his view, "the time has come to

examine both the programs of study and the methods used to measure student achievement at all levels of the educational system" (Education Express, January 1990, 2). He went on to argue that the combination of general and professional students in one stream was an experiment which had failed. Instead, the Minister argued for colleges with a more specialized focus like those in Ontario, the CAATs (FACSimile, January 1990, 1).

3. Physical Conditions and their Implications

Since there were no physical structures to house the anticipated college student population, and since the new colleges would be cutting into the first year of university training, it seemed appropriate to negotiate a temporary arrangement to house many of them in existing university space. The political expedient invoked to get over this difficult period of transition was a phase during which college-level courses were given in universities like McGill, Sir George Williams and Loyola (the latter two have merged into Concordia University in the intervening years). These schools hired graduate students or non-tenured faculty to deliver the curriculum to the college students, largely in isolation from the mainstream university curriculum.

In their history of Dawson College, Paul Gallagher and Gertrude Macfarlane analyze in detail the implications and effects of this transitional approach, taken as it was during the

crucial formative years of CEGEP institutional development, curriculum design and hiring.

> From the viewpoint of student "numbers", this plan had much to recommend it. It, however, had several limitations. In the first instance, it ran directly contrary to the fundamental principle of post-secondary education in reformed Quebec by perpetuating alternative forms of post-secondary education, through the older universities. It was safely predicted that this phenomenon alone would result in institutional rivalry which had been seen as one of the major drawbacks of the "old" educational system in Quebec. This double standard was further accentuated when it was decided that "college-level" students who attended universities would be required to pay tuition fees, while new college students would not be so required; again it was safely predicted that many students would go to the universities for college level studies rather than to the new colleges precisely because they would have to pay tuition fees (if there is tuition, the institution must be better!); the accuracy of this prediction was such that the colleges began without the social and educational heterogeneity judged to be essential for the success of the new colleges. Additionally, the universities made no pretence of trying to alter substantially their courses and programs for college-level students; they made it clear that they would merely introduce "college-equivalent" programs for college-level students, but that these programs would consist of the conventional minimum of adjustment necessary to justify the new label "college equivalent program".

The global consequence of this transitional solution was that the English-speaking community of Quebec ended up with two structurally parallel systems of post-secondary education for a period of five years—five years in which the new colleges would acquire the initial reputations upon which their future success would substantially depend. The transitional solution—although it appeared to solve the problem of numbers of student places, although it was reasonably satisfactory to university administrators, and although it pleased those members of the

English-language community who saw no reason for change in Quebec's educational structures—perpetuated many of the features of the educational system which had prompted the call for reform. These features were competing institutions, unequal accessibility to educational opportunity, and conflicting programs of study (Gallagher and Macfarlane 94-5). The rapid growth of the English college network in Quebec is one of its most startling aspects. Twelve French CEGEPs opened in 1967, and then, the English schools multiplied at a remarkable rate, as all the contemporary planners noted. Here, for example, is Burgess and Henchey's assessment in their history of Quebec education:

> The stress of integrating administration, philosophy and staff of such diverse institutions, the press of rapidly increasing student numbers, and the public expectation and social idealism surrounding the new colleges made their survival precarious (101).

One significant feature of the creation of the CEGEP's stands out from the early years: the chaos of the founding period. Physical plants, transfer of personnel, establishment of new administrative structures, combining several different institutions under one roof were only a few of the challenges. (GEGEP de Maisonneuve, for example, was formed from 9 separate institutions.) Marianopolis began as a four-year Catholic girls' school, granting university degrees through l'Université de Montréal. Heritage in Hull and Champlain St. Lawrence in Quebec City both began in bowling alleys. Dawson, the first English college, opened its Selby campus in what had been the Frosst

pharmaceutical building. At a time when the new American junior college system was growing at the rate of one college per week, Quebec was also trying to create colleges virtually overnight, as contemporary observers saw it:

> On January 2, 1969 Dawson College's inventory was limited indeed—three sets of used office furniture, a meeting table and seven unmatched chairs, two filing cabinets, a limited stock of office supplies, 400 sq. ft. of temporary and borrowed space, several files of correspondence and committee reports, two rented typewriters, a secretary whose services were being retained through Office Overload, Arnold McArthur—the interim administrator—a Director General, five Board members, a small number of former Organizing Committee members who had expressed willingness to help out in whatever ways possible until a permanent staff had been hired. The task was to open a college—hire teachers and other staff members, acquire and furnish facilities, develop programmes, inform the community, develop essential services such as Library and Admissions Office, and admit students (if any would dare to come!)—in nine short months (Gallagher 75-6).

4. Administrative Inexperience and Challenge

It should be noted also that the administrative superstructure, the Department of Education, was itself an invention of the 1960s in Quebec. Quebec had no experience in any province-wide administration of education—least of all with the radically new colleges: polyvalent, public, coeducational and non-confessional.

Given these physical and administrative preoccupations, superb leadership and guidance were needed for the building of coherent and credible curricula. But such leadership and order were scarcely possible. J.A. Whitelaw, one of the early planners of the CEGEPs on the COPEPP committee, refers to the

difficult early years in the late 60's in his 1968 article "The CEGEP Revolt and After." He describes a series of crises, including student strikes, faculty strikes over reclassification, and province-wide strikes on working conditions, salaries, and security which disrupted the orderly development of the college system:

> ...In the Department of Education, the Directorate of College Education was formed at a late date, and its personnel has never been sufficiently numerous to do much more than live from crisis to crisis. There are limits to what a few individuals, however competent and devoted, can do. For whatever reason, the Directorate was unable to recruit the number of persons necessary to do effective operation (31).

Evidence has already been cited about the power of the syndical movement in the colleges. We should note as well that the Collective Agreements between the college teachers and the Quebec government have given and continue to give the major responsibility for overseeing the curriculum to the departments and their chairmen or coordinators.

The 1960's and their aftermath were years of unrest across North America, years when centralized administration or monitoring were unpopular. Instead, the teachers and students promoted individual liberty and freedom of choice. If a student can negotiate his own curriculum, write his own list of readings, and tailor make course content by his own standards, then the teacher wants the right to the same independence from outside authority. This tension between centralized authority

and local college autonomy is by no means limited to Quebec, as Gordon Campbell comments in his study of the community colleges of Canada: " As elsewhere in Canada, the problem is to maintain a delicate balance between centralization, coordination, and control on the one hand, and maximum community involvement, flexibility, and autonomy on the other"(13).

But rarely, if at all, in education history has a radically new concept of education, a "distinct society" trying its wings, a college a system burgeoning to hundreds of thousands of students within a few years, and a newly-hired generation of teachers all come together at such a time of ferment. Again, surely nowhere have all these factors coalesced also in a society in which the government (including that of the fledgling Ministry concerned with education) was attempting to serve two major linguistic groups. In the case of English education in Quebec, gaps in communication are evident throughout the history of the CEGEPs. In his analysis of the years of revolt, Whitelaw in 1968 had focussed on the newly-formed DIGEC as a potentially stabilizing force at the administrative level: "while the primary role of the Directorate would appear to be ultimately one of coordination rather than direction in the authoritarian sense of the term, it must be in a position to exercise leadership during the initial stages of such a vast undertaking as the creation of the CEGEP system." Still following his analysis, we read that it was the area of "general education" which gave most

scope for improvement, for this was the curricular area of most radical change:

> ...But the "general" options offer much scope for improvement. At a time when there are on this Continent wide-spread attempts to create integrated approaches to liberal arts curricula, the CEGEP, now that they are in business, must proceed to a drastic revision of their general programmes. Full advantage must be taken of new developments in educational technology—functional audio-visual services are still in short supply in the CEGEP, in terms of both staff and equipment. Most of all, the individual college must be free to experiment and to operate its own academic programme (33).

Campbell was asking still in 1971, "How can proper controls be established over the distribution of funds while fostering creativity and distinctiveness among the growing number of CEGEPs?" In his analysis of the tensions between centralization and autonomy of the individual colleges, he cites the theory of the Ministry through DIGEC—its belief that the word "coordination" defines its role:

> For example, certain vocations cannot absorb unlimited numbers of graduates, and it becomes the function of the Directorate to ensure that a programme with a limited market is not offered by a large number of Colleges, especially if it involves expensive equipment. It is also the function of the Directorate to ensure that reasonably uniform standards are maintained, since it has to award a provincial diploma. Thus, while each college sets its own examinations, for example, copies of the question-paper are subsequently handed in to the Directorate, which has the right to conduct spot checks of student examination papers. Each college is responsible for engaging its own personnel and for interpreting the admission regulations set by the Department (51).

But Robert Isabelle could argue effectively in 1982 that the centralizing pull was outweighing this partnership. In his view, the unrest of the early years, as well as budget cuts and

provincial government's relentless acquisition of control, had all contributed to the gradual erosion of effective local management (9-10).

Local autonomy had been extremely strong in the formative years at Dawson particularly, Macfarlane and Gallagher wrote; and the leadership style of those years had very far-reaching implications on the development of all the English CEGEPs. It is important to note, also, that the original Dawson staff became the nucleus of further hiring in the next and second biggest college: Vanier Ste. Croix, which opened in 1970. Further, the original Provincial Curriculum Coordinator for English, Greta Nemiroff, was in that position for the first and crucial 9 years; and the current Provincial Coordinator, Sally Nelson, was again one of the first people hired among the Dawson founding group.

Macfarlane and Gallagher wrote that in 1969-1970, the constraints of the universities and the world of business were well known through their identification of prerequisites; additional constraints, particularly ones imposed by the Ministry of Education for purposes of ensuring inter-college mobility for students either did not exist or remained below the level of Dawson consciousness; Dawson people simply went ahead on their own, which included consultation with the personnel of other colleges, to determine what they ought to do (Gallagher 118-9).

Although none of the original Dawson personnel were hired for particular disciplines, departments, faculties, or any of the traditional organizational structures, the early planners at Dawson aimed at hiring the best people in a generalist sense, and did not necessarily distinguish between teaching faculty and administrators:

> Several basic academic staffing decisions were taken, implicitly or explicitly, before a single appointment was made. The first and most crucial decision was to select the best people and later to fit them to necessary positions, rather than to identify positions and then try to find people qualified to fill them. The implication was that good people, "generalists", could learn to perform satisfactorily in any of several positions and that learning to perform satisfactorily would be the spirit sought in staff members as well as students. A second and related decision was that no distinction in hiring would be made between "administration" and "teachers"; competent academic and professional people would be sought and through the manifestation of competence, energy, and range of interest, some would "emerge" as obvious leaders and would then occupy the leadership positions by collegial consensus. Thirdly, it was decided that the college would not search for "model" Dawson people but would deliberately strive for an heterogeneous staff, mixed as to educational backgrounds, age, sex, experience, and other attributes. The college made an explicit commitment to finding a staff which would have at least as great a variety as was anticipated from the student population; a staff which, some people warned, would be a "collection of mavericks"(Gallagher 82-3).

Sally Nelson, the current (1990) Provincial Coordinator for English, and a member of the first English department at Dawson College (indeed the first English department in any CEGEP), spoke of the early curriculum -building process this way:

> We used the Teutonic model and the reason we did was because we were given absolute carte blanche about inventing our own curriculum. Well you can't sit and really invent a curriculum without getting people together in disciplines.

> And so because we had to invent a curriculum which literally did not exist on paper, it meant that we had to have all these constant meetings with people within our own discipline. And that is what in fact created that (Nelson, interview)."

1969 was an age of revolution and change: in college and universities traditions were challenged, discarded, and replaced with the current trends in thematic courses. This was reflected in the early days of the English courses, as reflected in the following example from course descriptions of the period:

> "Your study will include James Baldwin, Malcolm X, Pinter, Marat-Sade, Cohen , Swift, and Fuller. Various films ..the National Film Board, there will be studies as well of the music of Seeger, Dylan and Baez and the newspaper the Village Voice" (Nelson, personal interview).

5. Curriculum Innovation by Invention

> Those of us who were associated with Dawson from the start well appreciated that we were afforded an opportunity to do somet hing never possible for most people and possible only once for the few who get the chance we were given. We were given the chance to build our own college—not bricks and mortar—but a livin g, active place where all the mistakes of the past and of other institutions could be set aside. We could have a fresh start, unencumbered, as I have often said, by the shackles of tradition (Gallagher, Macfarlane 10).

In its ideals of a general education for all students under one umbrella of Core English and Humanities, the CEGEPs are truly unique. From a curricular standpoint, the establishing of Core can be seen as the greatest challenge of the colleges. Claude Beauregard, among many others, had signalled the remarkable newness of the CEGEP principle and the difficulties of "managing innovation"—itself a paradoxical concept:

> Another radical feature of the CEGEP was the introduction of philosophy, mother language and physical education as common and compulsory subjects for students of both streams. This innovation was based on premises concerning the new culture elaborated upon the Commissioners, which stressed the need for technologists, as well as university-bound students to understand in its broadest terms the world and society in which they live. There is no understating the difficulties encountered in implementing this bold concept (44).

In the English system, it was clear that the new colleges were intended to effect two quite different structural changes:

1) the replacement of traditional university first-year program that many university-bound students would have had in beginning their advanced studies

2) the creation of totally new level of general education for the vocational students.

This was innovation on multiple levels: substitution of the unknown for the known and invention of a new curriculum for both the students who would otherwise have taken 1st year courses and those who would not have gone beyond the level of general education already achieved in high school.

James A. Whitelaw, one of the key players in the formation of the colleges on the task force of 1965-66 (COPEPP), commented on the lack of coordination between the university and college levels, despite the fact that the colleges were to replace a full year of what had been university-level work. The universities had quite definite ideas on what they wanted the CEGEPs to do, but once the curriculum was out of their hands, they had very little further contact. Whitelaw's analysis, in "From CEGEP to

University—Problems of Articulation in Quebec," outlines the lack of meaningful coordination between the two levels:

> While most of the universities had, through membership in a Department of Education planning committee [COPEPP], taken part in preparation of the General and Vocational Colleges Act which provided the legal basis for creating the CEGEP's, they were not involved to a significant degree in the curriculum operation, and they were rather out of touch with events when they were invited to attend a mass meeting of representatives of all departments and faculties, held at St. Hyacinthe in March 1967. At this remarkable gathering, university representatives were requested to agree upon "profiles" or pre-requisite patterns to be required for entry to various undergraduate faculties, programmes and departments. Many of the resulting "profiles" were compromises, which were, as usual, easier to achieve in engineering and the sciences than they were in arts.

In English, the profiles were fairly specific, and for the five years when the CEGEP English courses were taught at the universities of McGill, Loyola, and Bishops, they followed the lines laid down for them. But there was no way to monitor how the curriculum was evolving and would continue to evolve in the new CEGEPs. Whitelaw continues the story:

> During 1967 a committee composed of representatives of all the universities and of the department of education hammered out an agreement regarding admission to universities. It will be seen, then, that the curriculum was drawn up with little university participation, while the admissions policies were determined without CEGEP participation (52).

Gallagher and Macfarlane also commented on the rivalry—perceived or real—between the new colleges and the established universities:

> Unquestionably, the new college would be seen as an upstart directly challenging the mores of more mature institutions. Because it would quite explicitly come down strongly in favour of innovation and constructive change, it would be

> seen as implicitly critical of its sister institutions. Older colleges, the universities, and secondary schools would hear the message of the new college and spontaneously see it as a hostile, aggressive rival challenging for its place on the public scene (25).

For a variety of reasons, then, the universities played little role in helping to define the English curriculum in the new colleges. Historically it would be interesting to study the CEGEP's instruction in the discipline of English vis à vis what might have been taught, as before, in the universities and other institutions. For the student in the general or pre-university stream, his elementary and high school education in English would have been followed up by university-level studies in established schools like McGill, Concordia, Bishops, etc. Instead, once the CEGEP's were introduced, Core English (4 semesters of 4 different courses) was substituted in eight different colleges with widely varying curricula in English studies. The colleges in any case were free from the start to develop a curriculum for English by their own rules.

E. Factors of Radical Change

None of the planners meeting around the table in the 1961-1967 period could possibly have anticipated the changes that Quebec society has undergone in the past thirty years:

1. The post-high school training in English is now doubled <u>before</u> university entrance

2. The proportion of students in the pre-university or general stream is more than doubled (70% vis à vis the 30% anticipated when the CEGEP's were created

3. The demographics of the English CEGEP population changed through the 70's with the exodus of English families from Quebec and the choice of many students to leave the system after only one year of CEGEP.

4. Province-wide, since the institution of the CEGEP's, which are non-confessional and open to all" qualified" graduates of any high school, French or English, the English-language CEGEP's receive students with varying backgrounds in English studies.

In this respect, it is interesting to read Gertrude MacFarlane's comments in her study of the origins and curricular design of the Lafontaine campus of Dawson College:

> Given that all students would take the same courses, and given that students would enter the college with a great variety of backgrounds, interests, and aptitudes, and given that the purpose of these "core" courses was to provide a general or liberal education dimension to the total curriculum, what should the content of such courses be? The academic administrators, in consultation with teacher colleagues and university personnel, encouraged a simple but potentially effective solution: have the teachers agree on the general purpose of these courses, but leave to them—individually and in groups—the liberty to define their own content (in terms of their own backgrounds and interests) and their own approaches (in terms of how they considered they would be the most effective teachers). With a very heterogeneous teaching staff, it was optimistically concluded that collective interests and aptitudes would produce a balanced set of core curriculum offerings. This desire for balance in time shaped the selection of the second wave of Dawson teachers, at least in the Arts areas. The original teachers quite consciously recommended the

engagement of teachers quite unlike themselves so that the first teaching staff would indeed be as heterogeneous as the anticipated student body (118-9).

5. Specifically, the student body also changed radically in the view of many CEGEP administrators and teachers. Again, Gertrude Macfarlane's perspective on curricular innovations at Lafontaine outlines one response to the perceived needs of a changing student body:

> When Dawson opened its new campus in its fifth year of operation, another aspect of student body complexion became all too apparent. This new campus, although located in the centre of Montreal, was most easily accessible by public transportation to the students in the north end of the city, most of whom were either first or second generation Canadians. In consequence, the new campus personnel found themselves confronted with an unanticipated reality—a very high percentage of students who were barely literate in English. . . . Dawson's teaching took on a new emphasis—a concern for basic learning skills, a recognition of the variety of cultural traditions in Montreal, a need to give greater consideration to the motivations and attitudes of this new "category" of students. Among the practical consequences of the recognition of this new phenomenon was the significant increase in remedial (and advanced) courses and activities and a new respect for the College's Learning Centre. . . (144-5).

Particularly in the English colleges, the make-up of the student body has become extremely heterogeneous. Just as, since 1945, the English public school system had absorbed a disparate cultures and backgrounds, so too the new college system of the 1960s and 1970s was to open its doors to broad-based clientele.

6. The introduction of the French Immersion system in PSBGM in the mid-1960's (beginning in the South Shore schools)

has gone from an experimental project to the major focus of schooling in the English Protestant schools. What this means, in fact, for the majority of the students coming from that system is that they do not study English language and literature systematically until high school, if then. Certainly, there is no longer any attempt to structure a curriculum around the tradition of Canadian literature in English. Similarly, the CECM does not structure the curriculum of English studies in any traditional pattern.

7. The new "whole" language approach to the teaching of English, at the elementary and high school levels, which is going to have a profound effect on the students' knowledge of the discipline and approach to learning it. This approach will be examined in detail in Volume II of this study.

8. The college system was founded to reduce the number and variety of institutions giving post-secondary schooling. The reality today, however, is that the English colleges and CEGEPs themselves are stratified, and represent almost as much variety as the systems they were supposed to replace. A quick sketch of English colleges would show them to a range in student numbers from the low hundreds in the secretarial colleges to 800 (Heritage) to 6000 + at Dawson. Again, the colleges are far from that ideal mixture of vocational and pre university students. A college like

Marianopolis is private, exclusively pre university in student body, and populated largely with students from private schools. On the other hand, Dawson and Vanier each approach 3 times the ideal size foreseen by the Parent commission, and have 30% vocational students, while the smaller colleges like O'Sullivan and Lasalle are exclusively vocational.

F. Conclusion

The original objectives of the Parent Commission proved difficult, especially in the early years, to implement in the English CEGEPs. We have outlined some of the difficult conditions of those years and sketched some of the unforeseen changes in the history of the first institutions.

It may be significant that two of the most experienced administrators in the first English CEGEP, Dawson, featured a set of curricular recommendations for some far-reaching reforms in their 1975 history of those early years, Dawson College: An Experiment in Democratic Education. After the initial period of free-wheeling innovation, both Gallagher and Macfarlane were clearly ready to establish a more ordered development for the English CEGEPs. We print this fascinating list for the record here again:

Gallagher and Macfarlane's Curricular Recommendations:

a) CEGEP education must be viewed as general education for all students leaving high school, in accord with the Parent Commission recommendations;

b) there should be a common first year (or two years) for all CEGEP students;

c) planning for post-CEGEP education should be directed to specialization either in the university, in further intensive specialized occupational training, or on the job;

d) there must be a much greater effort to sensitize the public, the high schools, industry, professions, and the universities, to the purpose of CEGEP education and the reasons for it;

e) intensive efforts must be implemented to form recognizable links between education at the high school level, the CEGEP level, and the university level;

f) intensified study and general attention must be given to the common Humanities and English courses, not only to content but to the preparation of teachers for offering these courses;

g) consideration must be given to separating out the creative arts disciplines from the CEGEP, which have a general education emphasis;

h) if science and mathematics require so much specialization, attention must be given to the extension of

these areas to three years at the CEGEP level to include general education;

i) attention should be given to planning of budget and staffing over two year periods, rather than annually, in order to provide more flexibility in course offering and hence accommodation of students in a more imaginative way (219-20).

As part of the historical picture, these recommendations are striking evidence of a desire for orderly planning. As structural reforms they anticipate some of the issues still under inquiry in the 1990's.

Chapter IV. A brief History of the CEGEP English Curriculum

A. The Parent Report and its Effects

One cannot discuss the English curriculum without considering its place within the entire CEGEP system and the report of the Parent Commission. Having already spoken of that report in greater detail in the previous chapter, we summarize it here very briefly. As both product and engine of Quebec's Quiet Revolution, the Parent Commission's curricular goal was to bring together the study of technologies and humanistic education. But its social goal was far more sweeping: It sought to democratize higher education and make it available to all Quebeckers. The traditional elite that had been trained at the classical colleges, essentially by the Church, was to study with the "working classes" at the CEGEPs. And the place where they were to meet most often was in the Core curriculum, of which langue maternelle was a crucial part.

However, whatever the social reasons for creating CEGEPs in the French sector, the creation of English CEGEPs was a far more questionable necessity. English education by the 1960's had achieved many of the Parent Report's goals: It was relatively modern in its pedagogy and curricula; it was pluralistic and essentially secular; and it had a good percentage of students who went on to higher education, particularly in science and business. The system of four years of high school followed by

four years of university worked reasonably satisfactorily. In general, English students completing their bachelor degrees did as well as students from other jurisdictions in terms of entry into graduate schools and places in the work force.

English Montrealers, for example, fared well in the 50's and early 60's in Rhodes Scholarships, Woodrow Wilson Fellowships, and similar metrics of success. From a pedagogical or a curricular perspective, the problems in the English sector did not need the CEGEP solution. Career programs, a major part of the CEGEPs, never attracted as many English students as French. This is not to say that English-speaking students did not need greater access to higher education, especially vocational and professional training; it is to underscore that the two communities had different educational goals. However, since it would have been politically impossible to create French schools but not English ones, the English colleges came into being.

B. The Role of the Universities

One must recall the huge logistical problems in setting up a completely new and unique educational level. These problems inevitably meant that less attention could be given to the curriculum, at least in the early years. In the case of the Core English curriculum, the government first turned to a committee made up of university people to advise on the planning for the "institutes," as the CEGEPs were then called. The very vagueness

of the English rendering of the French institute itself suggests no clear notion of curriculum.

By June 1966, this advisory body proposed a curriculum for English studies in a document entitled Recommendations of the Quebec English Departments on the Institutes. The signatories of the report included its chair, Neil Compton of Sir George Williams and representatives from McGill, University of Montreal, Loyola, Bishops, and several others. In their preface, they cite the Parent Commission as "virtually [the] sole source of assumptions" on which their recommendations are based. One assumption is that the institutes were to have a different kind of student than those who attended the traditional university. The precise differences, however, were not specified. For instance, the Committee did not say what English skills a career student would require that would differ from one who was university-bound.

Not surprisingly, one finds a number of generalities about the proposed English curriculum. For example, there is the need for "active personal study" (with "work outside class equalling time inside class for the first year"). Or there is the need for the "flexibility" to meet all types of students—pre-university, future English majors, and those getting only college degrees. The committee does, however, make explicit that the curriculum should have a clearly demarcated division between first and second years. There were to be common basic courses reflecting

that, albeit with streamed sections. These different sections were to give to the institutes the latitude to appropriately place a student population which was assumed to have "widely varying degrees of competence"(<u>Recommendations</u> 2).

Despite flexibility here, however, the university report proposed a single, first-year course for all students, one combining literature and composition. Two meetings a week were to be devoted to literature and one to writing. The literature sections were to develop "sensitive readers" and emphasize a wide choice of texts "which will immediately interest students." (<u>Recommendations</u> 3). The basic exit skill was to be the ability to comprehend particular instances of literary communication. Writing was also addressed in detail. The composition component would have twenty short essays over the year, half of which would be on literary topics. There would also be a rhetoric and a book of readings as required texts.

In the second year, the institutes could offer some choice. Pre-university students were to get a survey of English literature while others could be offered a genre course with less history (how much or why was left unstated). Options courses, taken by students in addition to the ones just described, were to be available. While attention would be paid to writing, the report averred that "little formal classroom composition work will be required at this stage." Regardless of which second-year

course students took, there were to be seven essays over the year, again on literary topics as well as research papers.

There is obviously a fairly high level of specificity in these proposals, down to the number of assignments in each course, for example. However, the university representatives did not seek to impose a completely unified curriculum. A 1967 "Report of the Committee for English Institutes" (St. Hyacinthe, Feb 20/21, 1967) spoke of a single course for all students but one whose various instructors could modify it to suit the different needs of different classes. There were also to be locally-designed exams and locally-chosen textbooks.

In February of 1968, the Ad Hoc Committee On College Programmes presented its brief which essentially accepted the earlier documents. The basic courses were to be called English I to English IV (one taken each semester), with options in Western Literary Backgrounds, Approaches to Literature (a criticism course), Introduction to Language, The Nature of Poetry, and The Nature of Drama. Although there were to be writing courses (creative writing, advanced composition, ESL, and remedial), the bulk of the writing instruction was clearly intended to be done as a part of the study of literature.

These early discussions exhibit ambivalence about what the curriculum should do. On one hand, there is a quite specific syllabus. The model used was clearly the university, with the basic distinction made between introductory and advanced courses.

At the same time, however, the proposals echo the Parent Commission about a new kind of student. But what that new student is like is left unclear. Given that committee members came from schools with quite different approaches to undergraduate English teaching, perhaps the ambivalence merely reflects an attempt to get consensus.

But another factor contributing to this ambivalence was that the universities had power only to recommend. This meant that, except for the transitional period when they had their own CEGEPs (from 1968 to the early Seventies), the universities were to have no real say about what was going to be taught. They recognize this when they write that "certain of these proposals may prove in time to be impossible, or beside the point." Their mandate was to be a "consulting and recommending body to offer what help it can" (Recommendations 1).

While such comments were no doubt meant to be generous to whoever would make curricular decisions, the fact remains that the universities had little commitment to the CEGEPs. English faculty often perceived this new level as a threat to their own positions, or at least an annoyance. For example, no regular full-time Concordia faculty members ever taught at their own CEGEP (M. Butovsky, 1989). Although this wasn't always the case at other places, CEGEP staff at the universities did come mainly from conference leaders and composition teachers, persons who, for whatever reasons, were not to be offered regular posts. That

said a great deal to faculty and the community-at-large. Further, CEGEP staff was given great autonomy to design courses. One concludes that the universities wanted little to do with a problem that would soon be transferred elsewhere.

And given the pressing logistical problems of simply starting new CEGEPs (both French and English), government energies were unlikely to be spent deciding the details of curriculum. The difficulty was merely getting the schools open. On the English side, moreover, the Ministry of Education was obviously reluctant to intervene about the teaching of English. (Indeed, its position over the years has generally ranged from neglect to bemusement.) There was, therefore, little Ministry involvement on issues except for those dealing with logistics. From the outset, the English programs at the CEGEPs could do what they wished as long as they didn't openly contravene government regulations.

C. The Social Context and the Creation of Curriculum

The Quiet Revolution's nationalism and social change were only indirectly a part of English Quebec. However, there were still enormous changes taking place in that community when the curriculum was being developed in the late Sixties and early Seventies. It was a time of "student power," and faculties at schools across North America went through a period of upheaval. From the standpoint of curriculum, the word heard most often was

"relevance": Students demanded and often received new courses addressing what they perceived as their needs and interests. Without debating the merits of this movement, one still can't ignore its effects. What was old was suspect. And this attitude was especially prevalent at the CEGEPs.

Changes in attitudes were not only a phenomena of students but of CEGEP teachers as well, many of whom had themselves been students in the Sixties. When they were hired, they naturally brought with them their outlooks and ideals about what should be in a curriculum. Sally Nelson, an original Dawson English teacher, recalls the prevailing ethos of the early years:

> We all had differing visions of "the good", but we shared the idea that the old traditional elite education of class distinction, geared to preserve the status quo, the Establishment, was not on . . . . We believed in equality, individuality, general consensus, and mutual respect. The director general, the janitor, the teacher, the secretary, the counsellor, the students, would meet together to solve problems and make decisions" (Nelson 7).

There were, to be sure, dissenting voices about this vision, but in general, it neatly sums up the attitudes that people brought to creating the curriculum.

D. The History of English Departments

1. Dawson College: the First CEGEP English Department

As the first of the English-language CEGEPs, Dawson College created the paradigm for curriculum development that other CEGEP English departments followed. Dawson valued "openness" in its structures, hiring, and curriculum. Sister Sylvia Macdonald, who did much of Dawson's early hiring, believed that students did not

learn equally from all teachers and that more faculty diversity was essential. Sally Nelson recalls Macdonald's recruitment of faculty:

> She hired about 50% men and 50% women, she hired people from many different countries, she hired people of different race, religion, ethnic background, class, and so on. We had a very diverse faculty, and because of that I think it's been one of these things that has affected what this college is. (Nelson 1989)

Faculty, Nelson notes, had carte blanche to create its own curriculum: "Everybody simply listed some courses they would like to teach and then we taught them." Whatever curriculum the university committee had proposed (and whatever DGEC thought of it) was not going to be put in place. Indeed, for most of the participants in the curriculum process, the university guidelines were simply irrelevant.

This is not to say that there was unanimity about what should be taught. But there was widespread agreement about the process of curriculum development: What will be taught will be chosen by whoever will teach it. There seems little else that could have been done when the CEGEPs first opened, given the conditions that prevailed. For example, there were fewer than six months between hiring of faculty and the first classes. It was difficult enough for individuals simply to design courses without entering into the usual English department arguments about the place of the canon, how to teach writing, how much student choice to give, and so on. The curriculum was just one more problem in a host of problems faced by just opening a college.

However, it would be misleading to say that the wide variety of courses was simply a response to logistics. After the pressures of the first years passed at Dawson, there still remained very deep divisions about the nature of English studies itself, a debate that by no means has been resolved. Again, Sally Nelson:

> The thing about English is that you can teach English from a sociological perspective, a Marxist perspective or whatever, and you get all these people in the department who are so different and it's the nature of the beast (Nelson 1989).

This perspective has dominated English departments throughout North America. So one could not expect the mere passage of time to produce agreement at Dawson about what should be taught.

2. Dawson-Lafontaine

A few years after Dawson opened at the Selby campus, some of its faculty and administrators opened a second one at Lafontaine. That group sought to create an interdisciplinary curriculum and structure. This meant, according to Doug Rollins who did much of Lafontaine's hiring of English faculty, that they weren't hiring just literature teachers but literature teachers who were also interested in other things—film, politics, music, for example. A whole new set of structures was established as well as a new curriculum to reflect this. However, it became evident very quickly that Lafontaine had a different student population than Selby's, one decidedly weaker in English skills. This led to a more structured curriculum, with basic writing courses at its

center. Indeed, within two years, all incoming students were tested and placed in different levels of English classes.

The Lafontaine department established a one-semester composition and literature course as its entry level. Doug Rollins recalls the efforts in creating—and then retaining—a common curriculum and a common exam:

> And we did for a while. But, of course there was all this sort of "we're not long out of the '60s," so people began to first of all not like the text they were using; so they would chose their own text, but still they were dealing with the common exam . . .
> So that fell by the wayside. The common text fell by the wayside first. And then the common exam followed a couple of terms after that. We revised the exam a couple of times and tried to make it more general [for] people using different stuff and different approaches . . . and then I guess we just decided that we all knew pretty much what it was we wanted to do and those that wanted to use the common exam would use one. And then gradually nobody used it. (Rollins 1989).

While it existed, the course required all faculty to teach a number of common topics (poetry, essay writing, grammar, bibliographies, documentation, etc.). There were stipulations as to how many writing assignments should be done and their length (for example, about six marked assignments a term per student, each between three to five hundred wor ds).

In time, the faculty recognized that one entry level course didn't satisfy needs and almost immediately developed ESL courses for its significant numbers of Vietnamese and Chinese students. There were then two levels of ESL, a remedial course for native speakers who weren't ready even for the standard entry level course, and the literature and writing course itself. Students

with poor entry skills had to pass lower-level courses before taking the mainstream composition and literature course. And they all had to pass that before they could choose another literature course.

Although the department continued to specify general course goals, reading lists were left to teacher preference. Most often, the course attempted to introduce students to the various genres. Writing, Rollins remarks, always received much attention: "The idea was that to pass, they could all write a paragraph with coherent sentences without fragments or run on sentences. That was our bottom line" (Rollins 1989).

Thus, while final selection of material and course development was left to the individual teachers, the common goal was clear: "What we were trying to do was to take them from where they were and move them as far as we could—to meet some ideal of what we had that the collegial level reading and writing should be. I think that's what we're still working at . . . that's when we had the common text idea." But commonality proved a difficult goal. At the same time that there were shared course descriptions, there was a continuing movement towards greater freedom for teachers to choose what was to be taught. Again, Rollins:

> [We came to believe that] the objectives could be fulfilled without the restriction of having to deal with material that maybe they [faculty] didn't particularly care for or that they thought wasn't suitable for a particular class they had. Classes have different personalities.

This notion—that classes differ significantly and only teachers could adequately respond—has emerged as the dominant position among English departments, even at campuses like Lafontaine where more structured curricula existed. Thus, faculty choice remained the major component in curriculum building. When the campuses merged in 1988, the Lafontaine program was absorbed into the Selby program with its larger class sizes and absence of sequence.

3. Vanier College, Ste.-Croix

Vanier College was the second English-language CEGEP to open, and a significant percentage of its staff came over from Dawson. The Vanier-Ste. Croix people sought to retain the freedom and flexibility of Dawson's curriculum, although the College itself ran in a more structured fashion. The first head of Vanier's English department was Greta Nemiroff, who served as Provincial Coordinator for many years and is now Director of Dawson's New School. Nemiroff had been one of the people to set up the Sir George Williams Collegial program and came to Vanier in 1970.

She brought with her a very different kind of thinking than what prevailed at the universities. Her starting assumption was that university students were really not responding to the traditional material and were instead learning by rote what kind of answers to give. Her own students, she found, responded much better to genres like the short story because "somehow, they

could encompass it better, they could understand it better" (Nemiroff 1989).

Nemiroff points to a changing student population which necessitated a diverse curriculum:

> I also felt that very often we had at Sir George many students who were second-generation Canadians whose first language was not English; it was not the language spoken at home, and that somehow they felt that their own roots were devalued. I was also concerned about the fact that there were increasing, especially after the computer incident at Concordia, numbers of West Indian students who felt totally remote from what they were learning. So, I began to think what is the motivation? . . . One of the things I wanted to do was to find a way of validating their own roots. So one of the things I looked for [at Vanier], for example, was someone capable of teaching West Indian literature.

This is obviously very different from the university advisory committee's notions of a CEGEP literature curriculum. Literature was important at Vanier, of course, but so was a particular perspective on social issues. Although the Vanier curriculum included much "exemplary literature," there was far less emphasis on the transmission of the "traditional canon" or its values. And this has continued.

Like Dawson, Vanier was shaped by the people who brought with them their own notions about literature. Like Dawson again, the Vanier faculty had the power to implement those notions. There was no visible DGEC involvement in the process—nor even much involvement by the College's academic deans. For example, Nemiroff discusses the guidelines used in setting up the curriculum:

> I think that our guideline was to cover genre, to give a chance to focus on writing and reading skills for people who needed them, to give diversity, and to make available for people a diversity of literature in terms of its roots, of English literature written in English . . . and also to make available a certain number of works . . . in translation.

Who was telling this to faculty? Nemiroff replies, "I was telling myself that" (Nemiroff 1989). Again, individual teachers built their own curriculum. There was, to be sure, debate and disagreement; but those debates were not resolved as much as postponed by permitting individual teachers to teach what they wanted. There was no level above the department curriculum committee discussing those choices. Although the Ste-Croix courses changed over the years, the process by which the decision to offer them remained constant. Like Dawson, this meant that there was a very wide variety of courses offered, traditional and non-traditional both, reflecting the particular interests of the faculty at any given time.

4. Vanier-Snowdon

The Snowdon Campus of Vanier opened in the fall of 1973 as an autonomous unit. Although in many other Snowdon departments the faculty came from Ste.-Croix, the entire Snowdon English department was new to the College. This meant that the Ste.-Croix model was not necessarily going to be followed, either by administrative _fiat_ or by departmental inclination. During its first year, Snowdon curriculum did follow a "cafeteria" model

with a wide variety of courses designed by teachers acting alone. Most hiring was done in the summer of 1973, leaving little time for curricular discussion. The courses in the first year, therefore, were typical of other CEGEPs, often emphasizing theme and genre. During that first year, however, several teachers became dissatisfied with what was being taught. What most department members wanted—though by no means all—was a curriculum which would introduce the student to the major works of English in a more structured, sequential way.

(One of the most fascinating elements of this history is that the Snowdon Humanities department at the same time was developing a structured approach to the teaching of its courses—again differing from the Dawson-Vanier Ste. Croix pattern.)

The following year, therefore, the English department required a two-semester introductory course for all first-year students. In the second year, students could continue to choose, cafeteria-style, from any of the courses offered. The second-year courses shared no common ground beyond their being designed by individual instructors choosing to teach what they wanted. There was also a remedial program. Thus the curriculum was three-tiered: An "average-ability" student started with the mandatory introduction before choosing courses in the second year. A weak student began with a remedial course, went next to the two-semester introductory one, and then chose freely.

Although the syllabus was significantly modified over time, this essential structure was maintained until the department was merged with Ste. Croix in 1989. The material taught in the introductory course changed as a result of continuing debate. Although the course was not initially endorsed by all faculty, support increased steadily over the years before the merge.

At its inception, the introductory course had a clear historical objective. There was a common text (the Norton Anthology) and common reading lists from which teachers could make their own selections. The reading lists were necessary for both pedagogical and logistical reasons. The department, of course, wanted all students to study the traditional canon (although which parts varied from teacher to teacher.) In its first year, the course was taught by combining a large lecture (of about 100 students) with small groups meeting with conference leaders. The presence of conference leaders made coordination important, since they would meet groups of students taught by several different teachers. Each of the teachers wrote one or more study guides for a common core of major works assigned in the course, and these were used in the seminars to help guide discussion. In addition, a self-instructional programmed writing course was instituted to concentrate on the mechanics of writing, also requiring cooperation among teachers.

The course in that teaching format was generally unpopular with students, faculty, and conference leaders, who each had

different complaints. Students did not like the lack of choice (which was given at Ste. Croix and elsewhere) nor the relatively large class sizes. Faculty did not like the necessary coordination among sections. And conference leaders did not like their workload nor their poor pay. The structure of the course was therefore changed back to regular class sizes, but the syllabus remained in place.

Over the years, the course lost its historical characteristic and became increasingly organized around genre. Only poetry continued to be taught chronologically, with material being divided before and after 1660 in the two semesters. A writing component was also required, and faculty devoted about twenty percent of formal class time to teaching writing. There was a specific list of topics, organized by semester, but not all teachers followed it. Indeed, in many cases, different sections of the courses often shared very little.

The Snowdon experience is similar to Lafontaine's in that common texts and approaches gave way in time to demands for greater teacher choice. Not surprisingly, as more faculty joined Snowdon, it became increasingly difficult to reach consensus. Faculty often disagreed about what precisely should be taught, and the first-year course was redesigned not to pursue a particular vision of English studies but to achieve compromise. Despite debate about the syllabus, however, there remained wide-

spread agreement about giving students choice only after a basic, introductory course.

5. Champlain-Lennoxville

Champlain-Lennoxville began full operations in the Fall of 1972. Unlike Dawson or Vanier, the Lennoxville adminstration had clear ideas about English studies. Essentially, it wanted more traditional courses and structures than either Dawson or Vanier had. The administration used its control over the initial hiring to affect curriculum, looking for sympathetic teachers who could also cover the various genres. In addition to wanting traditional "coverage," they also put in place a mandatory composition course. The resulting program looked very much like first-year university programs in the pre-CEGEP days.

But by October of the first year of operation, faculty recognized problems with this arrangement. Lennoxville drew students from a wide variety of backgrounds, many of whom of were not native speakers of English. For them, one semester of writing was not enough. Faculty soon began to lobby for changes to the structure that had been put in place by the administration. Indeed, once faculty was hired, they largely took over curriculum development.

Phillip Lanthier, Lennoxville's first chairman, remembers the department's response to a DGEC suggestion to reduce the number of courses to four:

> There was pretty nearly unanimous agreement that we wanted a variety of numbers; we wanted a variety of course categories. We wanted to give as much individual freedom to the individual campuses and teachers to do what they felt best, what they felt competent in doing (Lanthier 1989).

From early on, Lennoxville faculty questioned curricular decisions made at higher levels. But the impetus behind curriculum development was not solely instructor preference for teaching particular areas of literature.

In their first year, Lennoxville faculty wanted to replace composition with an introduction to literature that would also include writing. As a department, they felt strongly that they could teach only so much composition without compromising the literature. By the mid Seventies, Lennoxville had developed such a course, taught by all faculty and using a common text. This later became a two-semester course, which all incoming students took. The course was organized generically, with all teachers, for example, doing short stories in the first semester, poetry and drama in the second, and a novel somewhere along the way. The common text was maintained not only across sections but across semesters as well as a common exam.

> There was a [wish] . . . to establish some kind of common agreed-upon understanding of what our students should be able to do by the end of the first year of CEGEP. Because we were getting complaints among ourselves: "Look, I'm getting them in Shakespeare, and they don't know what point of view is (Lanthier 1989).

In time, however, as we've seen in other colleges, the common text and exam approach were eventually abandoned; more and more,

teachers wanted to select their own material. Further, more non-native English speakers came to the college. By 1978, a placement test was introduced to direct students into appropriate levels of literature and remedial courses. This latter group of courses were necessary because the department felt it could not teach language skills using literature with particularly weaker students. Thus, at least in part, the department returned to its original curriculum that separated literature and language. But at the same time, the Department also strengthened teacher choice as the key element in designing the literature curriculum. Thus again, one sees how difficult it is—even for relatively small departments—to maintain the consensus for a common course.

6. Champlain-St.Lawrence

A very different sort of CEGEP program came into existence in 1971. Champlain-St. Lawrence grew out of St. Lawrence College, a four-year, English language institution whose degrees were granted by Laval. When St. Lawrence became one of three campuses of Champlain Regional College, its English faculty moved _en masse_ to the new school. This approach was, of course, very different from Dawson and Vanier where entire new faculties were hired.

The Champlain-St. Lawrence English curriculum began as a hybrid—partly something new, partly a continuation of the former St. Lawrence curriculum. The department redefined its goals when it became a CEGEP; obviously, going from a four-year to a two-

year program demanded major changes. But another factor was the CEGEP divisions between core, concentration, and complementary courses. Donald Petzel (an original faculty member at Champlain-St. Lawrence) notes that despite these structural changes, "the guiding principles of the English program were those of the college at St. Lawrence" (Petzel 1989).

English at the old St. Lawrence College was obligatory, with choice permitted only in junior- or senior-year courses (particular authors or advanced poetry, for example). Composition was required of all freshmen, and sophomores took a compulsory survey from Beowulf to Virginia Woolf. It was, generally speaking, what was then the norm for a college curriculum across North America. The department offered a third layer of optional, specialized courses for those who wanted to continue in English.

In the few years following St. Lawrence becoming a CEGEP, faculty recognized that incoming students were weaker than those of the four-year college. This recognition, along with the new CEGEP structure of core, concentration, and complementary courses, led to a redefinition of core English. With only two years available instead of four, the department believed it couldn't, like other CEGEPs, give courses in major authors. Such material had to be incorporated into the survey.

But as students seemed to be less and less prepared, it became more and more difficult to teach the principles of literature and the historical background necessary for the

survey. The decision was made, therefore, to concentrate on genre. Don Petzel speaks of the rationale:

> As far as literature was concerned, [we wanted] that the students would have a basic ability and an acquaintance with the . . . literary genres, namely short stories, novels, poetry, and drama. So that when it came for us to set our [Core] program . . . [we said that students] must take a course from each of those genres . . . And careful readings and analyses would then be expressed in writing, so the written invention of the core was going to be written analyses of the works of literature themselves. And that's how it stayed for quite a while (Petzel 1989).

Moreover, there department prescribed a sequence for these courses. The result was far more structure than at most other CEGEPs.

A second change occurred in the mid 1980s. The department felt that because students were getting weaker in grammar, formal time must be devoted to writing. There is still disagreement in the department about whether teaching formal grammar makes students write any better. Despite some faculty reservations, three-quarters of the first-semester sections do teach formal grammar, although with differing approaches.

The process of curriculum building at St. Lawrence was very different from other English CEGEPs. To begin, the relatively small staff (about six or eight persons) began with quite similar professional backgrounds. Moreover, they were, by temperament and by geography, removed from the foment of Montreal. The process of consultation among faculty could proceed, for better or worse, with a fairly widespread agreement about the boundaries of

discussion already in place. This is not to say the St. Lawrence curriculum has been static; it has changed over the years. But the department has operated by being able to agree on its first principles. And this philosophic base has remained constant and very much different from Vanier or Dawson—or indeed, the other Champlain campuses.

Hiring has reinforced this common philosophic approach since it was a process of finding people who were sympathetic to the basic tenets of the program. Again, this is very different from other the CEGEPs which generally made deliberate attempts to represent different ethnic groups, achieve a balance between male and female faculty, and ensure coverage of different genres. Again, the small size of the St. Lawrence English faculty and its homogeneity have enabled this to continue.

St. Lawrence's different curriculum has not led to problems with the rest of the CEGEP network. Donald Petzel recalls his disagreements about principles with Greta Nemiroff:

> Greta and I first came head to head on this question. And both of us sat down one day and said look, we're going to work this thing out so you can do your thing and we can do our thing, and that's what we've done. We've lived that way (Petzel 1989).

Despite profound differences about curricular philosophy, one side was not trying to tell the other what to teach. In fact, the very opposite was true. Petzel recalls an early meeting at the Provincial English Curriculum Committee:

> We realized after one session that . . . we have a problem. She [Greta] says, "You seem believe in absolutes and I

> don't." I said, "Yes, it seems that way. And so we, well, we have to make some kind of accommodation here and there in the house of literature in Quebec. . .". We tried to understand, we tried to make our positions clear. Her position was that, well, we have too many people from different areas and so forth, and we need to do different things.

Indeed, the period of rewriting the curriculum (which began in the early 1980s and which we discuss below) was one in which the different English departments recognized large differences among themselves. The object of writing a new curriculum was to accommodate these differences, rather than come up with a single, unified curriculum. Don Petzel:

> It certainly was, by all means, a thing to avoid coming up with an across-the-board curriculum that would apply to everybody. Because there were, as I say, some fundamental disagreements in principle. Here we were with four courses for Core, and here most other people were wanting to have whatever you would like.

The argument most CEGEP English departments put forward was that if courses were valid in themselves, they would provide a valid education for people, according to the way the individual college saw the needs of their students. But St. Lawrence disagreed:

> To us, there is such a thing as human nature that we all share equally. And that therefore the demands of the intellect of the human being are basically the same. And we don't see this possibility of having wide diversity and ensuring the same kind of education. It's hard for me to see that. I mean, that doesn't mean that things shouldn't be evaluated again or re-evaluated and courses be tapered or changed to circumstances to some extent. I guess our difference is this that we see circumstances as circumstances as accidents as accidental of the times and not fundamental not, that we should determine the basic orientation (Petzel 1989).

That has remained the position of St. Lawrence, but it seems possible to maintain only with a relatively small group of similarly-thinking persons. Such was not the case at the larger schools.

7. Marianopolis

The Marianopolis CEGEP began in the early 1970s. Like Champlain-St. Lawrence, Marianopolis previously had been a four-year, private Catholic college. Affiliated with University of Montreal, it gave degrees in Arts and Sciences. Like St. Lawrence, the faculty who was in place became the core of the new CEGEP. But enrollment quickly grew, and Marianopolis went from about fifteen full-time faculty in 1970 to the equivalent of about twenty-five professors by 1972. Four of these were English teachers.

According to Judie Livingstone (an early faculty member and later the Department's representative to the Provincial Committee), the English curriculum began as a hybrid between parts of the old four-year curriculum and something new, based on the Dawson model:

> There were 299 numbers in the computer. Colleges could simply develop a course and plug in a number. I taught a course called Man and Woman which was handed to me [because] our department chairman thought was a good one to have at the CEGEP level . . . And it just had a number, 101 let's say. The number internally had nothing to do with that number existing anywhere else. Our numbers had to only be from 1 - 299 and it could be any kind of course (Livingstone 1989).

For the first couple of years, Livingstone recalls, curriculum was developed by the department chairman talking informally to Dawson people. The chairman then handed the resultant curriculum to faculty. Livingstone notes that the Marianopolis curriculum essentially was what had emerged as "English mother tongue" at Dawson.

By the fall of '71, the college began a restructuring, abandoning the department model in favour of "areas" (like Liberal Arts, History, and Social Science). English remained an autonomous area. There was little contact at that time among CEGEPs about curriculum, and so Marianopolis developed along its own lines, using the 1-299 numbering system as a guide. Although the department did work on curriculum, its major task by 1973 was hiring:

> We hired eight people one year, five-to-eight people in '73, and another five in '75. We basically brought people in, sat down in workshops, and talked to them about devising courses within the description that existed in the 1 - 299 numbers.

To a large extent, curricular decisions were made by the difficult job of having to hire teachers rapidly. The curriculum was formed, therefore, partly by the academic interests of available candidates and partly by the Department's sense of the need to cover important areas. Livingstone recalls the process:

> We are talking about three or four women sitting down with this booklet of 299 possibilities, or suggested possibilities; and what we, to be very honest, what we did in terms of interviewing was assess people that we felt would be good in a classroom. They were enthusiastic, they had a Masters; they in some cases had some teaching

> experience and in some cases they hadn't. We talked in the interview of what they thought, what they would be comfortable teaching. We tried to give a selection in terms of the genre, maybe more than anything else. One of the members of our group was very concerned that history, historical periods, be covered. And so we tended to try to find people who could teach Shakespeare, who could teach the Romantics, who were interested in teaching the traditional survey . . . It was very much . . . going with personalities and then attempting to develop a curriculum from very grass roots. But the basis was people that we thought would be keen teachers.

As individuals established themselves in the College, curriculum naturally changed. The benefits of still being a relatively small, cohesive group—and with the energy of a new institution—led to much discussion:

> We went through the traditional things of thinking up courses with clever names . . . because we were dealing, certainly, with a different student body. And for Marianopolis at that time from '73 to '75, we were really almost working on the pulse test. We desperately needed to establish a student body to survive, and we had . . to draw students and get rid of the image of the place as a four-year girls' finishing school.

Livingstone describes Marianopolis standards at that time as "very, very basic, Secondary Five certificate or almost." About a year after becoming a CEGEP, the English faculty realized they had a literacy problem because of many weak students coming in with barely-passing high school grades. There was, therefore, a major increase in the writing courses (about twenty percent of all offerings). Writing courses first were taught as basic composition, with a grammar component and the standard five-paragraph essay at its core. That evolved in many different

directions as the department argued out how to improve writing skills.

Another hiring anecdote illustrates the difficulty in maintaining a clear curricular policy:

> Before '75 . . . we had evolved a faculty that was basically either . . . covering most of the major periods of English and American history, but we didn't have anybody doing Eighteenth Century. There was discussion whether we should make an effort in our five-person hiring of '75 to fill that gap. I can't even remember how the argument resolved, but it somehow became less of an issue once we started interviewing because the personality of the person we were interviewing became more crucial than looking for that particular quality on the CV.

This has been a common experience for most English CEGEPs. Over time, the curriculum more and more developed from the individual pursuits of faculty. When professors wanted to teach new courses at Marianopolis, they submitted them to the curriculum committee which assessed whether the courses met area goals. "As a result, the curriculum inevitably reflects the interest and the variety reflects the kind of faculty that we have" (Livingstone 1989). This does not, of course, enforce particular notions of what students should be taught. The Marianopolis experience of curriculum building has generally been the norm throughout the CEGEP network.

8. John Abbott

In keeping with most of the big polyvalent CEGEPs, John Abbott's English department began (in 1970-71) with an unstructured curriculum. The original list of course numbers was

scanned to give individual teachers the courses they wanted to teach, as Ed Palumbo recalled:

> The curriculum, when I arrived, was a long list of numbers. And I don't remember details. Titles and numbers and pretty much it was not in order, you looked for a course that approximately matched what your interest was and applied it. And that's an important thing, I believe, to understand about the curriculum. Because I think because it began that way . . . the French/English Cahier meant that there was never really a central curriculum that had a pedagogical philosophy, an academic philosophy you could operate with. There were just plural philosophies that, at various times impinged on curriculum development (interview 1989).

Again, in common with other departments, it began to introduce a series of writing-intensive courses in the early 1970s because of a growing number of students with weak entry skills. Indeed, John Abbott has been very active in the system in its design of writing courses and systematic testing. The faculty had to adjust from their university-level expectations to the reality of the students:

> Twelve, fifteen years we were looking at a situation where we were arguing whether 3 more essays put in lit class would accomplish the job. I mean we weren't really looking at writing classes per se. Our own personal histories with these things would be with graduate slave labour courses where most people went to school. It wasn't as respectable. I think we had a few meetings here, I remember one, it must be in '78, a very kind of acrimonious meeting that was very important, I think, in the history of these courses, because a lot of people began to realize that it might be, the teaching of writing might become respectable if respectable people did it. And as a result, it became the rule here that, I'd say the majority.

With its large student body and location, John Abbott has an independent spirit and sense of community. The faculty continue

to build the courses around the idea of free choice, and support that approach:

> Our students basically have a free choice of courses. Courses are not structured in any particular order. For most students when they come here they decide what they want to take or what fits their schedule or combination of both and they take those. We have some limited placement testing. When someone comes in they may be recommended to take what might be considered a remedial course, Effective Reading and Writing which is the 107 or Composition and Literature which is the 108, or Uses of English which is even below (Diane McGee, 1990 interview).

9. Heritage College

Heritage College began as part of the CEGEP de Hull in the early Seventies and then became part of CEGEP Outaouais, until getting its own charter. The original curriculum, notes Terry Keough (former chairman and a member of the Department since 1971), was put in place in 1969 by a staff of three English teachers who taught a mixture of topics, the small number of students being a limiting factor on what could be offered.

Heritage's curriculum has remained very stable, maintaining a mandatory two-year structure from its start. Originally, first-year students did a chronological survey of English literature, followed in the second year by a survey of Canadian writing. (A survey of American literature was later added as a possible second-year alterative.) These survey courses stayed intact until 1983-84, when some faculty expressed concern that the material was causing relatively high failure rates. As a result, the Department introduced a genre-based first-year course, teaching

more modern short stories and poetry. Although failure rates did not drop, those instructors who wanted the genre approach have maintained it for their sections. The majority of the six faculty members, however, continue to teach from a historical point of view.

Clearly, Heritage is different from most other colleges in the system in terms of the range of offerings and in terms of teacher preference in designing curriculum. The Department as a whole has specified what things students should be able to do after two years, and it has worked out a rough sequence for teaching them. There is substantial agreement about what skills should be taught at each level. The department has monitored itself informally, depending partly on the good will of each person and partly on peer pressure.

Like Champlain-St. Lawrence, size has had a great deal to do with Heritage maintaining its cohesion. For example, there has been little problem with people not teaching what has been agreed upon:

> On the whole we haven't had that difficulty. We all know each other extremely well. We have been together for a long time and are a small group, and most of us are medievalists, as it turned out (Keough 1989).

And indeed, much of the curriculum has been a function of hiring people who were evidently "traditionalists." This permitted a forceful articulation of the mission to teach both fundamental skills and the cultural bases of society. Again, as is the case

at Champlain-St.Lawrence, faculty shares values and is small enough to maintain itself as a coherent group.

M. The Cahier descriptions of English

1. From 1973

The different curricula we have looked at are the products of different curricular philosophies. Despite this, however, there exists a curriculum to which all CEGEPs are legally bound. Indeed, one can read statements for all programs and disciplines in the yearly editions of the Cahiers de l'Enseignement; those statements constitute the official descriptions of what is taught across the CEGEP network. Like the Secondary V Certificate, moreover, the Diplôme d'Etudes Collégial (the DEC) is signed by the Minister of Education, thus ensuring—on paper at least—a degree of common ground and common standards among colleges. But English studies presents an anomaly in that quite different programs exist despite a single legal statement. Regardless of the Minister's signature on a DEC, the colleges follow the university model where each institution decides on its own courses and standards.

And indeed, it was not until 1973-1974 that there was a formal statement of English curriculum in the Cahier, even though the CEGEPs had been operating for several years. The 1973-74 Cahier de l'enseignement collegial, with contributions from the Provincial English Committee, provides the first official

description of 603 (that is, English language and literature) courses. Beginning with a statement of General Objectives, it avers that study in English courses gives the student the chance "to develop an as individual in a verbal society." It follows, the statement continues, that English courses are to "focus on the word" and the way it links the individual with the community. There are three categories of courses to achieve this linkage: rattrapage, core, and options.

English-language rattrapage consists of non-credit classes for "students whose proficiency in English is not sufficient for any CORE courses" (Cahier 1973, 0-113). Students receive no mark other than a notation showing that they actually attended the sessions. The exact nature and number of these courses was to be determined by the individual colleges. It is worth noting that from the very start of the official curriculum, one sees concern for weaker students. In fact, however, very few non-credit courses were ever given because DGEC generally did not fund them. Money, therefore, had to be generated from within the college, thus making non-credit study a rare exception.

Turning to Core courses, the 73-74 Cahier states that their primary objective is "to introduce the student to the study of language and literature (Cahier 1973, 0-114)." Core courses "develop and encourage insight and sensitivity into the Human Condition" as well as provide new interests to the student "with a view of his ever-increasing leisure." Again, how this will be

done is left to individual English departments; each will develop a curriculum that "will reflect the interests, talents and resources of its faculty" (Cahier 1973, 0-114).

Content of CORE course is broad, dealing with "several forms, types, themes or periods of literature." Methodology includes "lectures, tutorials, seminars, panel discussions, and oral presentations." Evaluation is based upon "the teached [sic] methods and the contents of each particular course." Sample categories (among others) and their courses listed in Cahier show diversity: Canadian literature ("The Literature of Terror"); Science and Literature ("The Ghost in the Machine"); The Short Story ("A Lonely Voice"). The distance from this list to traditional university curricula is conspicuous.

"For students with a special interest in literature," the 73-74 Cahier also includes Option courses, the content of which is similar to Core—themes, periods, authors, national literatures—but with "advanced study." Again, a wide range of methodologies and evaluations is possible. Sample courses included Shakespearean tragedy, western literary backgrounds ("From Mystery to Metaphor"), and creative writing.

What emerges from this first official statement of curriculum is that there is not a curriculum in the classic sense of a path—literally, a course—from one point to the next. The description of categories is broad enough to include virtually hundreds of different literature courses, some (like media

studies) bordering on other disciplines. The evident goal of such a curriculum is not coherence but flexibility: Colleges can offer whatever courses their departments wish, and students can take whichever ones of those they like.

The first _Cahier_ description for English studies thus sets a precedent for how curricula would be developed and described. Faculty will design courses which they want to teach and which—as we have already seen—"reflect [their] interests, talents and resources." The legal descriptions of the curriculum must be broad enough to ensure this. Implicitly, this process affirms the pluralism of English CEGEPs and assumes that English studies flourish when many different interest are present. Implicitly again, the process rejects a unified curriculum and any of its trappings. For example, the behavioral objective movement of the late 60's and early 70's—so much in evidence elsewhere in _Cahier_ descriptions of other disciplines—simply is not part of the English course ethos. There is no statement in the 603 part of the _Cahier_ of what students should be able to do after they complete the curriculum; indeed to specify that would be to go against the very spirit of what is written.

2. The Cahier of 1975-1976

The statements of English curriculum were not changed for two years. The _Cahier_ of 1975-1976 retained the earlier general introduction but added that Core curriculum "serves to deepen the students' understanding of their cultural heritage" (_Cahier_ 1975,

0-114). This might imply a return to more traditional reading lists with a historical—or at least chronological—approach. However, that heritage was described as being so rich that it demanded a "varied curriculum with a diversity of methodological approaches." Again, individual departments were to interpret that diversity—how much of it to represent in their courses and how much of it to require students to take.

Departmental autonomy—or at least great flexibility—continued to be central to curriculum-building. For example, there was an increasing sense that student problems with writing were becoming more severe. In response, the 1975-1976 Cahier introduced the "integrative approach to the teaching of English" (Cahier 1975, 0-114) which stressed the need for students to be provided with "models of exemplary writing." Although departments would focus on writing more than before, there was to be no imposition of composition or indeed any statement of requisite skills. The teaching of writing was to be a part of Core literature and done in ways the departments themselves saw fit.

The 75-76 Cahier does introduce a major change, however, by classifying Core into two categories, general and specific. It places limits on the number of specific courses a student can take. For example, there is a maximum of four courses from any one category in Group A and one from each category in group B.

Nonetheless, the broad range of material, often overlapping from one category to the next, subverts any distinctions.

The general categories included courses in national literatures, each one covering "at least several genres and authors" and introducing students to the literary heritage of specific cultural groups. The goal of these courses was to develop "awareness and sensitivity to the particularity and universality of the human condition as expressed in literature" (Cahier 1975, 0-114). How that was to be accomplished is left unsaid, but it is clear that the traditional canon would be an inadequate representation of more than one "cultural group."

Other courses in the general category included historical surveys, thematic courses, and linguistics and literature. Historical surveys, however, could also be organized around genre or theme, thus blurring the distinction between them and thematic courses, which in turn could be variously organized around the development of "a significant theme or any coherent group of themes" (Cahier 1975, 0-114).

The general category also included "linguistic" courses which had a "more practical orientation" in that they taught grammar and usage. These courses were to be sequenced but the sequence and contents "will be decided by individual departments which are cognizant of the needs of their own students" (Cahier 1975, 0-114).

Group B (Specific Categories) included courses in poetry, the short story, essay, novel, drama, great works, specific authors, literature, and other media. The _Cahier_ restricts students to a single course from this group so that the curriculum would first "serve the interests of general education" (_Cahier_ 1975, 0-118). "Effective writing" courses (that is, remedial ones) were also put into this category. The intention apparently was to limit students to one remedial class.

All these changes, however, demonstrate that the 1975-1976 _Cahier_ contains a number of inherent curricular contradictions. It wishes to provide greater structure while retaining flexibility. It introduces the notion of "cultural heritage," implying the existence of a more traditional syllabus than what was in place. At the same time, however, it insists that the study of that heritage requires a varied curriculum and diverse methodology. Similarly, it restricts student choice by placing maxima on the number of courses taken in any one category. It then allows content in those categories to be so far-ranging as to permit the student to study the same material in more than one place. Finally, although the _Cahier_ is increasingly sensitive to the problem of writing, it does not insist on writing courses _per se_; rather it puts the major responsibility for writing on literature courses taught in very different ways. The overall intention is clear: The _Cahier_ is a political document, not a curricular one. It tries to accomplish two quite distinct goals

-permitting the colleges do things in their own ways while simultaneously satisfying the bureaucratic demands of the Government.

3. The Context of the 1984 Cahier

A major revision of the Cahier descriptions of English courses appeared in 1984, based on work begun during the 1980-1981 academic year. This document is still the official statement of the English curriculum. Its emphasis was logistical rather than curricular. One working document on the curriculum revision makes this point:

> While there was no question that each college offered a balanced program of courses well suited to the particular needs of its student population, the coordination of numbers used for various types of courses was something less than perfect (Provincial Committee 1983, 1).

The report notes that although this was "inconsequential" in literature, it was serious in remedial courses. For example, a number used for a low-level remedial course in one college could be used (and indeed was) for a creative writing course at another. Even more confusing, a college itself could use the same number for very different courses. The major thrust of the curriculum renovation, then, was to rationalize the numbering system to provide a "fuller set of language skill courses and . . . a coordinated sequence of courses" (Provincial Committee 1983, 1).

However, the new curriculum was not simply a response to the perceived need to renumber courses. One precipitating factor was an increasing sense that more remedial courses were needed. At the same time, English departments continued their long-standing resistance to becoming merely service departments which taught only composition, thus greatly diminishing the importance of their literature courses.

A second major precipitating factor was the Gadbois Report (Gadbois, 1979) which had suggested a highly structured sequence of courses for all French departments across the network. That report was never implemented, but in 1979, the English Provincial Committee was called upon to respond to the Gadbois document as part of a reexamination of its mandate. Edward Palumbo, who led the Provincial Committee during the period it was preparing the Cahier of 1984, describes the committee's initial reactions to the Gadbois report:

> We got the impression that this would be the model. It was written in French for français langue maternelle, but we got the impression it would be for us to adapt very narrowly. That is, we would simply change French to English and use the same format. And it really would have been utterly unworkable here. . . there was a course in punctuation, some of the kind of accompanying material that described things like a passing grade would mean the student would have fewer than a certain number of errors per page. It was very behaviouristic, very much defining behaviour and models, and I think that's what the appeal to DGEC was (Palumbo, 1989).

The Provincial Committee responded to the Gadbois Report with a detailed and impassioned set of arguments. Collated and edited by Greta Nemiroff and Peter Henbury, the report drew on

comments solicited from every public and private CEGEP. Its arguments against Gadbois' ideas can be summarized as follows:

1. The aims of Gadbois were already being met in the English colleges. Testing and placement was being done, twenty-five percent of students already received formal remediation, and CORE literature already had a one-third writing component. A wide variety of methodologies were in place to meet varied student populations, and therefore, any change would be simply for the sake of change. Where was the proof, the committee asked, that current courses (including those in the French colleges) were inadequate?

2. Gadbois' "lock-step" approach was unworkable both on administrative and pedagogical grounds. His quantified, behaviourist approach would stultify curriculum, especially for literature. His lockstep sequence was wrong because it arbitrarily divided discourse into four fundamental forms.

3. Anglophones didn't require a "last round up" of skills (Gadbois had spoken of "consolidation") but rather a bridge between high school and university. The committee objects to the notion of <u>suffisance</u> [sufficiency] which can be tested because testing would become more important than teaching.

4. Teachers of English didn't work only on marketplace skills but also assisted students becoming "cultivated"; the spirit of Gadbois would relegate literature to a lower place since his language arts approach "diffuse[d] cultural integrity."

5. The Gadbois approach was "quantitative, monolithic, task-oriented" and so "ignores the psychology and needs of young adults" who need a wide variety of courses to explore their cultural heritage (Provincial Committee 1979, 4).

6. The Gadbois report was anti-democratic since it did not allow for needs of local populations. No single approach can use the skills of all teachers or meet needs of all students. Enforcing one approach to the exclusion of all others would "limit and inhibit the academic freedom."

There is some limited agreement with Gadbois:

1. Mastery of language is crucial, indeed, the <u>raison d'être</u> of Core English;

2. A "holistic" approach is needed to improve writing, reading, oral skills; this includes the use of learning

centres for "prescriptive work," presumably in remedial writing.

3. Diagnostic testing and placement are valuable, which is why they were already in place in the English CEGEPs. The same applies to remedial and core courses that deal with writing. A third of the 603 Core courses were already devoted to writing.

Clearly, the Gadbois presentation engendered much anger in the English departments, virtually all of whom wrote briefs attacking it. A letter from Guy Gauthier (then the DGEC professional responsible for English mother tongue) to Greta Nemiroff responded to the English committee's antipathy to Gadbois (Gauthier, 1980). The letter is conciliatory but does insist on clearer definitions than what then obtained. Gauthier begins by stressing the continuity among elementary, high school, and CEGEP studies; this requires that the ends, goals, and objectives of CEGEP teaching must be clearly defined in terms of both the needs of the student and society in general. The letter then makes two key points:

1. CORE English is the terminal step of obligatory courses before university. Therefore, it is indispensable that these courses have "terminal objectives of learning."

2. The diverse background of students necessitates terminal objectives in terms linguistic competence and pedagogy. The place of literature must be defined.

Significantly, however, Gauthier ends by assuring the Committee that DGEC has no intention of establishing provincial exams for English mother tongue, intervening in department pedagogy, or imposing a single pedagogical strategy. What DGEC does want is to

"render the framework clearer with a clear policy and objectives which are clearer as well."

The English colleges' response to the Gadbois report is a classic example of a clash between two opposed notions of curriculum design. On one hand, both Gadbois and Gauthier see curriculum-building as rational and scientific. For them, language and literature study is no different than other disciplines in that teaching requires unequivocal statements of objectives, strategies, and methodologies. Moreover, in theory, the success or failure of a curriculum can be measured accurately and steps then taken to improve it. This position is an anathema, however, to the English schools, whose response focuses on the "psychology and needs of young adults" and the curriculum's role in helping them become "cultivated and productive members of our society in the larger sense." Those needs undoubtedly cannot be measured, nor is there an attempt to define what it means to be cultivated.

Earlier, we outlined two diametrically opposed—and incorrect—notions about designing curricula: The first belief assumes that all students, faculty, and schools are sufficiently alike so that a simple consensus can be had about the nature of English studies and its pedagogy. The second is that students, faculty, schools—and English studies too—are so diverse and so various that no common ground can ever exist. In the Gadbois

report and the Provincial committee's response to it, these positions are distinct.

Although the Gadbois report was never implemented either on the French or English side, it nonetheless had a major effect: We reacted to it very seriously. It looked like a real threat, and it became a provocation for redoing the curriculum and saying that if we had to respond to it, the only response would be to deal with what were the missing links here, the writing particularly and the reorganization (Palumbo, 1989).

As preparation for writing the new Cahier, the Provincial Committee visited various colleges, talked to people, and looked at everything from handouts for essay sheets to course plans. The question they asked was whether the English colleges wanted a single provincial curriculum, and if so, what did that mean in practice.

> And it became obvious that we didn't really have a curriculum. We had curriculums plural that each college had, though they adhered to the same structure technically, bureaucratically. In practice each college had evolved a curriculum that had fundamental differences from other colleges. And it seemed . . . that those differences ensued largely from the fact that the student populations were different. . . . So it became clear that what we needed was a project on curriculum development that really was going to have as one its principle aims to keep the wolf from the door (Palumbo, 1989).

The Committee therefore took the position that there were excellent courses in every department and that renovation of the central curriculum should not obliterate them. At the same time, a renewed curriculum could encourage the development of things

that were absent. From one perspective, the exchanges with colleges across the network meant curricular renovation was to be consultative rather than prescriptive. From another, however, the process merely intended to preserve the rights of English departments to continue what they were already doing, rather than initiate an examination of first principles.

What emerges, then, is a document that at once attempts to satisfy both DGEC's demand for clarity and the English departments' insistence on their local autonomy:

> I would say we had two goals. One of them was to have an organized provincial curriculum in bureaucratic terms. The other one was to not let that . . . organization undermine the individual interpretations of it. That it would be like a body of bureaucratic lore, let's say, that could be interpreted individually, variously by the colleges and that it would be understood that the safeguards over the standards, so to speak would be done not provincially but locally, by departments (Palumbo 1989).

To quote Palumbo again, "the project was fundamentally a bureaucratic one."

The committee wrote and rewrote course descriptions, trying to achieve a general statement about what the departments did. That meant, of course, being sufficiently broad and nonspecific. The "one-and-the-many" problem involved trying to write course descriptions that would allow departments to continue to offer their courses and to supply numbers for them. Palumbo puts the spirit of the process very neatly:

> Once you identify the goal here as preserving established curriculum, or at least not undermining their normal course of evolution, then you've got really more, I think, a bureaucratic than a pedagogical document. That's what

> you're dealing with when I say " wolf from the door," something that will allow the continued evolution of what are very different departments (Palumbo 1989).

4. The 1984 Cahier

The finished document emerges, therefore, from a series of political forces that sought to satisfy both the colleges' desire for autonomy and the government's desire for structure. From that perspective, it succeeds admirably. It addresses the lack of coherence in the numbering of remedial courses, a consequence of the placement testing that began in the 1970's. It also addresses the place of literary and cultural components in general education and writing instruction's key role in their teaching. The Cahier's framers had three major concerns:

1) the need for a program of 'skills courses";

2) the maintenance of the traditional Core curriculum;

3) the need to respect differences among populations at different colleges.

Thus the curriculum at once tries to ensure local autonomy, while at the same time providing system-wide uniformity in terms of course numbering.

What the 1984 Cahier does not do—indeed the last thing it intends to do—is specify its definition of acceptable standards or necessary texts. Neither does it attempt to articulate more than generalities about what constitutes the literary and cultural components of general education. A report on the proposed curriculum revision, for example, speaks of "the

traditional mission of the colleges to offer their students a serious and high level introduction to their literary heritage and their cultural tradition" (Palumbo 1983, p. 4). The same report speaks about Guides Pédagogiques that "will contain elaborate treatments of methods available." Those guides, however, have not been completed or perhaps begun; at any rate, they are unavailable. Nonetheless, their possible future existence renders detailing of examples in the Cahier itself unnecessary. Indeed, because "detailing of examples . . . might be misleading, such detailing has been eschewed" (Palumbo 1983, p. 4).

The general objectives of the 1984 Cahier begin with the relationship between the power of thought and the power to verbalize. Society, it states, is verbal, and the study of English language and literature enables students to develop within that society. Echoing previous Cahiers, the 1984 one sees the primary purposes of the four mandatory core English courses as: 1) introducing students to the study of language and literature; 2) developing skill and pleasures in reading, writing, and speaking; 3) and fostering an understanding of culture as it is revealed in literature.

There is also a continuing concern with writing skills and the argument that they are best taught within "the context of literature." One third of teaching in all Core courses, therefore, is directed to communication skills and two thirds to

literature. However, to help students who need more writing, there are also language courses in Core. "It will depend upon the initiative of each college to create a balanced curriculum, consistent with the need of its students" (Cahier, 1984, 10). Broad student choice will help the student meet the objectives of general education which is "to become skilled in the use of language, and to become sensitive to literature and to one's culture."

The number and scope of the courses are comprehensive, to say the least. The objectives of the General Literature category, for example, speak of deepening the "students' understanding of their cultural heritage." As with the 1975-76 Cahier, that heritage is rich and necessitates a varied curriculum with a diversity of methodological approaches. Again, writing skills are stressed—one third allocation of both content and evaluation is given to writing.

The 1984 Cahier also re-sequences earlier categories in order to provide "all of the various course possibilities of the current curriculum [i.e., pre-84], a brand new sequence of skills courses, and a logical coherence of program that offers system-wide uniformity of number use."(Palumbo 1983, 5). Both uniformity of numbers and curricular flexibility at each college is achieved. We can see that flexibility by looking what is listed:

1) National literatures (Canadian, Quebec, British,, American, works in translation);

2) Historical periods (classical, medieval, renaissance, and so on, until Twentieth Century);

3) Thematic studies (including courses in archetypes, mythology, philosophy, society, and politics);

4) Surveys of literature (such as Origins to 1900, 1500 to the present, regional literature, literary forms and groups); and

5) Literature and other media (music, art, theatre, film, mass media).

The Cahier thus accounts for virtually any kind of literature course one might want to teach.

The General Language Categories deal with "serious deficiencies in language skills" by means of remedial courses. These pay special attention to student motivation through audio-visual devices, short writing assignments, reading material, and tutorial help. Unlike other categories, writing instruction has a four-level sequence representing "increasing degrees of difficulty." Courses are for students who do not possess basic competence, to those not yet writing at the college level (although attending CEGEP), and to mainstream and advanced writers. As with the literature, the writing course descriptions provide numbers and structure for the various programs already in place at the colleges.

Two other categories exist. In "Specific Categories," students can study poetry, short story, essay, novel, drama,

great works, and specific authors. Option courses (taken in addition to Core) are "intensive studies" of topics like literary motifs, periods, literary criticism. short story, novel, drama, specific authors, and world literature. There is also the opportunity for independent study, creative writing, and linguistics under this rubric.

To repeat, the sheer number and scope of the courses in the 1984 Cahier is considerable. It is hard to conceive of a literature course given anywhere in North America that could not find a number here. This, however, influenced the reception of the 1984 Cahier. Although most DSPs were willing to accept it, there were exceptions, notably from Champlain. It was clear that the document's major goal was to provide sufficient numbers for courses already being taught. Its writers intended the course titles to be the raw material from which individual colleges would form their own curricula.

However, the Cahier obviously is vulnerable to the complaint that a simple aggregation of courses does not constitute a curriculum. One can (and should) dismiss as absurd demands for simple-minded quantifiable statements about student ability at the completion of studies. That said, we still need to articulate what we want students to learn, even allowing for differences. Such an articulation is not to enforce bureaucratic neatness or ensure a lockstep curriculum. It is to foster for teachers

themselves a clearer and more coherent idea of what they themselves do.

The _Cahier_ description of English deliberately avoids this. Despite this, it was a bureaucratic and political success. It is obviously much less specific than course descriptions in other disciplines—or even its counterpart in French as a mother tongue. Still DGEC endorsed the _Cahier_. The politics of that decision, we suggest, were tied far less to the Ministry's accepting a differing curricular philosophy than to Quebec's ongoing language confrontations. DGEC did not want to become embroiled in debate with English colleges about what they should teach of their own language and literature. The intense hostility English colleges showed to the Gadbois report made it clear they were not passively going to accept government demands for curricula whose objectives and outcomes could be quantified—or even very much specified. And given that the government considered the state of French language teaching to be perilous, there was little reason for it to expend energy on improving the very language that threatened French. DGEC, whatever its opinions on how curricula should be designed, simply retreated from the fray.

Chapter V. Current Practices

A. Current Departmental Curricula of CEGEP English Studies

At present, students throughout the province of Quebec are following courses of studies in CEGEP English laid out for them in a variety of institutions. The Parent Commission and subsequent planners foresaw a network of free, public, comprehensive or polyvalent Institutes of 1500-2000 students. However, twenty years later, in 1990, CEGEP English courses are given and accredited in colleges which can be free or private; exclusively pre-university, exclusively vocational, or a combination of the two; and ranging in size from 100 students to over 6000. In addition, the workloads, class sizes, and curricula vary enormously from college to college. The descriptions of these curricula below are based on interviews and departmental and college documents. We have not attempted to discuss every single institution in the province which gives CEGEP English courses, but we have given an overview of all the major public and private colleges here.

1. English in the Public Colleges

a. Heritage

Of all the major colleges in the system, Heritage is one of the most highly structured. This means not only that the students have a limited range of courses to select from, but that the teachers in the department have agreed to limit the number of

courses they teach as individuals and have agreed as a group on common curricular principles.

The department's curriculum has evolved over the years, but continuing as its core in the first year is a two-semester survey of British literature, taught either on historical or generic principles (104 and 204). In the current Heritage *Calendar,* this course is listed as the department's " core English program for all first-year students." For their second year, students have a choice of two-semester survey courses in Canadian Literature, World Literature or American Literature (302 and 402, 303 and 403, or 304 and 404 respectively). The World Literature course was to have featured classics translated from other languages, including for example *Don Quixote, War and Peace, The Decameron,* and *Gilgamesh* , but it is not offered currently.

Following is the brief description for British Literature I and II from the Heritage calendar:

> An introduction to literary studies. English 104 and 204 may be organized on historical lines (from Anglo-Saxon England to the 20th Century) or on the basis of genre (novel, short story, poetry, drama). The development of the critical techniques necessary to make an intelligent assessment of the major works and genres is stressed. These courses form the core English Program for all first year students (80).

The Provincial Committee representative describes both the structure and content, skills, critical and cultural terms agreed upon by the teachers in the department:

"There are really 3 tracks, I suppose, because there's the Norton historical and the generic and the modern generic. Now, the thing that we agreed to when we changed this was that we would operate on a four level basis. First, second, third and fourth level. In the first level we agreed that certain things would be taught, skills and terms and things of that sort. In the second level we agreed that certain other things would be taught, and the third and the fourth. We also agreed that in the first level we would do only short papers, maybe 3 pages, double spaced, 5 paragraph essay, we'd teach that thoroughly. And with no research (Terrence Keough, 1990 interview).

In addition to these foundational literature courses, the department offers the weak entering student a limited number of places in a complementary writing course given as a option (914 or 916) and running concurrently with the first literature course (104). There is also one option course per term: one of the Specific Category group, Romantics, Victorians, or Shakespeare, for example—again complementary to the foundational literature classes. It is in this group of option courses that a more specialized approach can be seen, although again the courses are largely historical and generic in orientation. (Other courses in the option group include The Arthurian Tradition, The Canadian Short Story, Modern British Novel, 20th Century Drama, and the American Novel.) No thematic courses are given by the department, and the only option course with works in translation is Modern Drama.

Unlike the majority of departments in the system, Heritage has never adopted the approach of offering the widest possible choice of courses to the students. Instead, the faculty

determined the best curriculum for the students and organized their teaching around that. The individual teachers engage the material differently, with different styles and focus, but the general objectives are shared by all 8 teachers in the department. On the subject of choice, Terrence Keough questions whether the average student is even prepared to make intelligent choices of material to which he has never been systematically exposed:

> "Students want fewer choices rather than more choices. Making choices is hard work. And it's difficult to make a choice if you've got no basis upon which to make it. These kids are 16 or 17. They don't know what they should be having it seems to me, and my argument beyond anything else has been on these lines. If you teach them children's literature, they leave this place without ever knowing who Wordsworth is. . . . . I think that at this level we should be teaching the general surveys of material and I feel very strongly about this.
> . . . .
>
> The real problem is that people start teaching whatever they feel like teaching and they forget about what the students need. And they forget about the fact that when you're teaching A there's no time to teach B. And that's the good reason to teach A rather than B. Not that one is superior to the other except that from a basic cultural sense—and quality (Keough, interview)."

Heritage's location across the river from Ottawa, Ontario makes it unique in another respect. All of its core curriculum courses are accepted with full credit by the two English universities in Ottawa: Carleton and Ottawa.

b. Champlain Lennoxville

The calendar description of the Department's English program begins with a strong statement on the importance of skills and then goes on to link them with the literary context:

> " Students who achieve proficiency in writing are better prepared to deal with the demands of other courses and possess a skill which will prove invaluable in the working world. It is especially important that as citizens students learn how language can be used for both good and ill. Those who master the techniques of written and oral expression can play a fuller and more responsible role in the human community.
>
> Learning such skills is best done within the context of the literary tradition which enriches language and expands the imagination. Champlain. . . offers a wide range of periods. . . cultures . . . [and] critical approaches. In learning how to read with care and concentration, students will experience not only a delight in the ways in which language can be made to work, but also a deeper illumination of the world we all share."

This department is also small in number: 8 faculty, many of whom have taught there since the early 1970's. Its long-time representative on the Provincial Coordinating Committee outlined a series of changes in the English curriculum since the beginnings, with a gradual evolution first into generic survey courses for the first year students. By the mid 70's the department was offering Literature and Writing Skills I and II, with common text, departmental agreement on the course objectives, and common final exams. In keeping with the Cahier descriptions generated by the Provincial Committee, the course integrated literature and writing. The course was required of all incoming students: "It was taken by all incoming kids.

Literature and Writing Skills I and II. You did the short story and a few other things in the first semester, and you taught poetry and drama in the second. And used the same anthology from one semester to the next (Lanthier, interview)."

The members of the department also agreed to develop common final exams for all the first-year students. The impetus for the common final exam was to establish standards for all the students in their first year of college-level work in English: "To establish some kind of common agreed upon understanding of what our students should be able to do by the end of the first year of CEGEP (Lanthier, interview)."

In common with many other departments, Champlain Lennoxville began to develop more writing-intensive courses at the end of the 70's. The Composition component became a course in its own right, required of entering students, to be followed up by a one-semester introductory literature course:

> "The vast majority of students entered a course which was just fundamentally composition. We try to keep the numbers down and we use as a model over the semester a rhetoric model approach, again a standard North American thing. Get them to purchase a collection of essays so there's some reading that gets done and we have a grammar and so forth and so on and that's the way we teach composition to a vast number of students (Lanthier interview)".

Again, the department continues the model of requiring common final exams worth 20%, both in the literature and the composition courses.

Lanthier commented on the early days of the cafeteria approach and course specialization:

> ". . . when we started the CEGEP systems were conceived of, and the first English departments set up as very wild deck English programs where everyone got in there and simply took off from whatever they'd done in graduate school or what their interests were in, hey this is it academic freedom by God, we can let it out, you know, and then, gradually, and increasingly found out that the reality of teaching wasn't that. You couldn't stand up there and talk about East Asian literature to your students and hope that they were going to improve in various ways. And it gradually, it's become more skills oriented, horrible word, but, teach them how to write. It's got down to that sort of nitty gritty, and the literary part and that kind of open system has closed down much more. We started with a compromise and we've retained it pretty well. It's something like 50-50. One of the 50s, the basic skills 50 is taking up more of our time and energy, it's more 75."

Currently, the department is restructuring its writing courses again, following the communicative methodology, which integrates speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. It has embarked on a two-year experimental period of retraining teachers and "re-orientating students' learning so that they can accomplish more in the short term, and a lot more in the long term than with previous sequences of courses TAKING EXACTLY THE SAME TIME " (Spencer, "The New Language Programme").

Entering students take an English Placement Test and are placed in Level I Language courses (106-406) or in Writing (207). After completing these, they all go on to Introduction to Literature (208), which focusses on genres, terminology, and essay writing. In their second year, they select more

specialized courses from the general, specific and option Cahier course offerings.

c. Champlain St.Lambert

The English program at Champlain-St. Lambert is like others in the network insofar as it offers a broad range of courses. The department's relatively small size (compared to Dawson and Vanier) means that there are fewer different courses offered, although it applies the same basic philosophy of coverage. Like those other schools, courses originate with faculty and reflect their interests and their perceptions of what students will enjoy. Martin Bowman, the current chair, describes the method of choosing courses:

> I think we do believe that the best thing is to try to accommodate the teachers' expertise and what they wish to teach in literature. If it [the present curriculum] does continue to offer a nice mix, then there is no reason to go in and say you must teach a specific author like Jane Austen because we haven't done this for 10 years. We just don't make those kind of statements here at all (Bowman 1990).

Core students, therefore, can study Canadian, American, British, and Quebecois literature, as well as various periods, authors, and genres. There are also thematic courses which deal with topics like mythology, religion, adolescent consciousness, war, and images of women. In all, the college calendar lists approximately thirty-five Core courses, from which it offers about twenty five each semester. There are also eight option courses listed (both writing and literature), although generally only one is offered in any single semester.

> The general overall picture with some traditional type courses (and obviously centuries and specific writers and eras and so on) has been there, always with a mix of a more eclectic grab bag of interesting and sometimes odd corners of literature. That continues to be the case (Bowman 1990).

Two literature courses, Writing About Literature and Introduction to Literature, in the past have been reserved for weaker students who have come from remedial writing courses. Indeed, writing courses generally are remedial, as faculty perceives increasingly weaker students being admitted. About seven hundred of the thousand first-year students take two skill courses in their first two semesters. In addition, there are lower-level remedial courses for particularly poor students. Examples of remedial writing courses include Elementary English, Basic Writing Skills, and Introduction to Expository Writing. Some writing courses also exist for mainstream students in technical and creative writing.

However, the curriculum at St. Lambert is undergoing change. Like other CEGEP English departments, St. Lambert sees its mission as both the teaching of literature and the improvement of writing skills. However, over the past decade, more and more of the Department's resources have been directed into skills teaching because placement tests have shown that fewer entering students are able to cope with literature. This has led to difficulties:

> I think we see that the mission of the department is to teach literature courses first and foremost, and so students who write well already should be exposed to as much literature as they can be while they are here. But many

> students are so weak that we have to offer this service (Bowman 1990).

The result has been a somewhat skewed curriculum, to which several department members strongly object. By providing service or skill courses with small enrolments, class size elsewhere becomes unacceptable: "[There was] a sense that we were offering too many small sections of writing courses that were going to cost, that were costing too much in our literature courses (Bowman, 1990)

Deliberations within the department over the past two years have led to three important observations: 1) "the vast majority of students who needed skill courses were getting them" (Champlain-St. Lambert Council Newsletter, 4); 2) class size in literature increased substantially; 3) some students could graduate without taking any literature courses at all. The Department has therefore looked to the College as a whole to redress its problems by helping to fund the smaller size skills classes. The argument—the same made in other colleges—is that the entire institution benefits by teaching students to write.

In 1990-91, therefore, the Department will reduce the number of small service classes, although still meeting the literacy needs of most of its pupils. About two hundred of the thousand incoming students will be in new courses that will provide a transition from skills to literature. These are:

> Writing Across the Curriculum which will allow students to practice writing "in the context of other courses which they are taking" (Champlain-St. Lambert Council Newsletter, 5).

The course will "focus on those rhetorical skills necessary to write the longer academic paper." These include research (library use, for example), presentation (outlining, documentation, etc.) and study (note taking, time management) skills.

Introduction to Literature which will prepare students for further study. It will cover at least three genres, literary terms, and analysis of literary techniques. The course will also teach research skills such as library use and note taking.

In addition, the Department will offer Reading and Writing I for particularly weak readers (as shown by a standardized reading test). Topics covered here will include reading speed and comprehension, vocabulary, outlining, paragraph and essay writing, and study skills. A second level will be offered for students not yet ready to enter the other courses. The department will continue to offer some sections of Introduction to Expository Writing and Written English and Essay Writing.

The aim, therefore, is to maintain the Department's role within the College to teach skills while enhancing literature courses, whose norms should now approach those of the Humanities. Teaching literacy is not the task of one department alone. A broadening of this responsibility will allow the department to fulfil a major goal of encouraging more students to study literature.

d. Champlain St. Lawrence

The English curriculum at Champlain-St. Lawrence differs markedly from that at most other CEGEPs. Generally, English departments in the network intend their curricula to reflect a

pluralistic society and a broad range of literary interests, in which both students and faculty have broad choice. At St. Lawrence, all students follow the same four-course sequence of composition/short story, the novel, drama, and poetry. There is variation in reading lists among different sections of courses, but each section attempts to impart the general objectives which Champlain-St. Lawrence has enunciated:

> 1) a sure knowledge of the English language as the indispensable instrument of thought and communication; and
>
> 2) an increased ability to understand his [i.e., the student's] own moral dimension through understanding and experiencing the moral universe of literature as organized in the dominant literary forms of the short story, the novel, the drama and poetry. (Champlain-St. Lawrence Calendar 34).

In practical terms, this means that for three of the courses in the sequence, one-fourth of class time is devoted to the formal elements of language; this increases to two thirds in the first semester. The four-semester literature sequence teaches the four "dominant literary forms" in (to borrow a phrase from a course description) "more complex manifestations." The sequence particularly emphasizes narrative structure. Thus the short story course leads to the novel, then to drama, and finally to poetry.

Donald Petzel, long time department chair, explains what St. Lawrence means by the "moral dimension" and why the four genres are taught:

> . . . even though everybody tried to say don't put morals in, that's the right word. We're not talking about right and wrong type of ethical morals; we're talking about that dimension of human life which is concerned with choice. And

> literature concerns itself with human choices. And that we tried to get the students to see [that there are] four main ways in which imaginative literature presents the human situation as a moral dilemma or a moral problem or a moral situation to us (Petzel, 1989).

What is immediately clear when one looks the St. Lawrence curriculum is that it is based on a different notion of general education than other CEGEPs. Citing the Parent Report's "traditional concept of general education," the St. Lawrence program assumes that "there is a set of rational statements which exist and which can be made intelligible to students"(Champlain St. Lawrence 33). Further, such statements "justify and explain all the conclusions and insights that students gain in their individual courses." Like the axioms of science, these rational statements about what intellectual elements humans share must form the basis of general education. The Core program, therefore, tries to give the student "a synoptic and conscious view of what he is doing." Petzel explains the Department's view this way:

> To us, there is such a thing as human nature that we all share equally. And that therefore the demands of the intellect of the human being are basically the same. And we don't see this possibility of having wide diversity and ensuring the same kind of education . . . That doesn't mean that things shouldn't be evaluated again or re-evaluated and courses be tapered or changed to circumstances to some extent. I guess our difference is that we see circumstances as circumstances, as accidental of the times and not fundamental . . . (Petzel, 1989).

Champlain-St. Lawrence reading lists offer what Petzel calls "a good dose of classic literature," including Joyce, T.S. Eliot, Shakespeare, and authors of similar standing—in other words, what is more or less the traditional canon. There is little if any

popular or "ethnic" literature or media studies. Because there are only seven English faculty, the basic choice of material is generally done by consensus, often reached informally.

But there is no common reading list or text; such unanimity isn't possible, despite an essentially homogenous faculty. Generally, however, faculty agrees relatively easily:

> We've agreed on certain basic things of grammar that should be covered. And certain things of literature. For example, in literature, we agreed (no matter what short stories we do) that the students must be taught what is a plot, a plot in action, what is character, how are they presented in fiction . . . And we had a list of about a dozen or so things that we all wanted to have covered, so when they come into the second semester, they will have for sure covered this minimum plank (Petzel 1989).

Thus faculty has latitude to select material, as long courses fulfil their mandates to acquaint students with the four genres by graduation.

The Department also offers four option courses each semester. These include traditional survey courses, literary criticism, advanced genre studies, Shakespeare, and Canadian literature. The list of options at St. Lawrence reads much like the list of Core courses at most other CEGEPs. This is in keeping with the Department's view that general education provides certain basic and common elements that must precede specialization.

Emphasis on writing, as at most colleges, has increased over the years as faculty perceived increasingly weaker skills among students. As already noted, faculty spend two thirds of class

time in the first semester on formal grammar teaching. This includes "a study of the larger syntactical relationships in the language (theme, paragraph, sentence), as well emphasizing vocabulary" (Champlain St. Lawrence 34). Students write various forms of short compositions. Writing instruction in other courses depends on the individual instructor's assessment of each class. Consequently, some faculty use traditional grammar textbooks and others teach grammatical issues as they come up in student work. The Department also insists on uniform presentation of research, specifying a simplified MLA style.

Regardless of methodology, then, Champlain-St. Lawrence devotes much formal time in the first semester (and beyond) to grammar. This again differs from most other CEGEPs which use remedial courses to teach much of their writing. At St. Lawrence, the assumption is that all students require formal instruction. Indeed, "the truly educated man" ought to "know why his language is the way it is and not just how to use it more or less appropriately" (Champlain St. Lawrence 34). Hence, writing is part of general education, rather than something taught in remedial classes or as an adjunct to literature.

In summary, the St. Lawrence curriculum has a much higher degree of structure than at most other CEGEPs. Students are given choice only in the option courses; faculty may choose specific readings but not basic course structures or orientation. The curriculum at St. Lawrence is very much a function of both its

history and size. On one hand, most of the teaching staff has come from the former St. Lawrence College faculty, and additional hiring has been consistent with their outlook. The small number of teachers (compared to larger schools) reinforces the relative ease by which the Department reaches agreement. Obviously, it offers a coherent program, well-thought out and executed. Whether the St. Lawrence approach can in fact be transferred to larger schools where many different kinds of interests compete is problematic. The policies and politics at St. Lawrence may very well be its own.

e. Vanier College

Vanier is the second-oldest and second-largest of the English colleges, at 5,500 students. Like Dawson, it has consolidated its campuses in recent years and now has a merged curriculum in English. That is, the former separate campus of Snowdon, with its structured first-year program, has merged with the more open Ste.-Croix department. A one-semester Introduction to English Literature course on genre is now required of all students:

"The major objectives of this course are to introduce all incoming students to the study of literature at the college level and to improve their writing skills. Primary focus will be on the genres of poetry, drama, and prose fiction. Works will be selected from at least three centuries of the tradition of literature in English. In both the reading and writing components of the course, the skills of literary analysis and interpretation will be emphasized."

The program has approximately 30% of its first-year students in the remedial course Effective Reading and Writing (107), which

is normed at 25 and taken before the Introduction to Literature course. In addition there are some low-enrollment 106 courses and one for mature students, both with class sizes of approximately 20.

The balance of the courses span the gamut of the Cahier, and many of them are also attached to a number of specialized sub-programs, in Slavic Studies, Women's Studies, Quebec/Canada Studies, Jewish Studies, Liberal Arts, and International Studies. Another "certificate program" is being added in 1991: Environmental Studies.

f. John Abbott

John Abbott College's English department views the study of English not only as a means to impart the practical skills of communication but also to "enrich the experience of the student in ways which have implications for every area of human endeavour" (John Abbott College, 1988, 86). To accomplish this, the Department, as in CEGEPs generally, offers a very wide range of courses from traditional historical areas to specific themes, authors, and genres. Sample courses (from a list with well over a hundred different titles) include Survey of Literature, Conflict Resolution, Concrete Island: Montreal Poets, and History/Herstory. In addition, John Abbott's English department teaches basic writing, journalism, creative expression, film, and drama.

The implicit model is coverage, and students can choose what interests them, within the constraints of the Cahier. Diane McGee, the current chair, describes the program this way:

> Our students basically have a free choice of courses. Courses are not structured in any particular order. For most students when they come here, they decide what they want to take, what fits their schedule, or a combination of both, and they take those (Mcgee, 90).

The wide variety of courses (mostly from the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries) originate with the faculty, rather than from a particular curricular decision by the Department. In designing courses, faculty responds both to its own professional interests and to its perception of students. Anne Pacholka, the current curriculum coordinator, remarks that "It's faculty interest and also self-interest, given that you want to keep the students in these courses" (Pacholka, 1990). Students, the Department believes, enjoy contemporary works more, and that accounts for the majority of readings coming from Twentieth-century texts. That concern with student preference combines with the faculty's own literary interests to shape curriculum. The program remains fairly balanced, however. Diane McGee points out that because "people have been here for quite a while . . . you know someone's got mythology, and so that's what he does, he's good at it, and the students like the class" (McGee, 1990).

The Department has been actively discussing its curriculum over the past few years. For example, they have addressed what should be taught at the CEGEP level and whether to narrow or

widen curriculum. A related issue is the separation of students into first and second year-classes. The consensus is that mixed classes make for the best teaching. A class of all first-year students is much harder to work with, they argue, especially in the first semester. In various group activities, more experienced students often pull up less experienced ones. Hence the reasons for maintaining the mixed classes are pedagogical (how to teach a particular group) rather than curricular (how to ensure a student follows particular path through the program).

Diane McGee characterizes the curricular deliberations this way:

> What came out of our most recent curriculum discussions was a very strong sense that at this level most students are not English majors, and that they can learn writing, critical analysis, thinking, discussion, and a whole lot of skills that we want them to learn from taking a variety of courses . . . [Historically,] that has been the vision of the Department, and people still in general seem to feel that that's what they want.

There are different views, of course, at John Abbott. Like other large departments (there are about thirty-five teachers), consensus is hard to come by. Anne Pacholka remarks "that there are just so many approaches to literature" and "each teacher has such a different background" that there is no genuine agreement about what should be taught.

As at most CEGEPs, writing is an important component of the program, requiring considerable financial resources. However, unlike most English CEGEPs, not all incoming students take a

formal placement test. Those the Department feels may experience difficulty in regular literature courses are required to write a placement test before being admitted to those classes. Teachers recommend other students, based on classroom performance.

Remedial writing courses operate at several levels. Some are for students who have not previously studied in English; others are for those who have basic competence. Effective Reading and Writing, for instance, is for entering students with weak language skills, as is Composition and Literature, but the latter is open to students who have taken some literature. There are also writing courses for students already competent but who wish further work on essay writing and grammar.

In Core English, the Department requires three pieces of "connected" prose (McGee, 1990). These may be in-class exams rather than essays done at home. McGee notes that some faculty use a combination of different kinds of writing, including journals. Others give formal instruction on writing essays during class time. Still others stress the process of writing, asking students to hand in outline or drafts. The college also has a writing centre to which students can be referred by individual teachers. In general, the kind of writing instruction students get is left to faculty, rather than to the formal requirements of the Department.

John Abbott College's option program is a mix of advanced literature and service courses (such as Introduction to Written

Communication for Office Systems Technology). The advanced courses focus on specific periods, authors, or genres (examples include the Victorians, Shakespeare, and short fiction). Creative writing and independent study are also available. The option program is more active than those at other CEGEPs; in the winter of 1990, for instance, there were about ten such advanced courses offered.

The program at John Abbott College is typical of English departments both in Quebec and throughout North America. There is a very wide range of offerings, primarily reflecting the interests of the faculty. Students have considerable freedom to choose. There is not, therefore, a uniform profile for graduating students.

g. Dawson

At Dawson, English is part of the Arts Sector which, as one of the major academic divisions of the College, actively encourages students to explore a wide range of interests before specializing. In this spirit, English lists over two hundred titles in its calendar, offering about thirty in any given semester. With a sizable faculty of thirty-five FTE's (and more than fifty instructors), the department teaches a substantial range of literature from traditional surveys to less traditional courses in Latin American fiction, bestiaries, and interactive fiction. The Department intends to let students "explore the relationships between literature, other arts, ideas, cultures and

non-print media" (Dawson 39). Dawson graduates, therefore, are likely have a very great diversity in their courses, rather than a single profile.

Curricular Decisions

One major reason for this is that the English curriculum strongly reflects the interests of the faculty. Courses originate with them rather than with a curriculum committee. Although the department can, of course, reject proposals, in practice it is likely to accept most suggestions, particularly if it has confidence in the teacher. The program is centred around the teachers, says Marie Crossen (the current chair) because "the best you can do is to let a teacher teach that which the teacher wants to teach and is best at teaching . . . So why not use the best resources and let people teach what they teach best?" (Crossen 1990).

Coverage (that is, representation of major periods and genres) for its own sake is not a priority, despite the fact that most areas are taught. Neither is balance (an equal representation of topics) a concern:

> We don't care if there are an abundance of short story courses, for instance, because short story courses are often the kind the students like and they are often very good courses for them. We don't really care if there is a lot theatre if we feel the students like drama. We could have twenty Shakespeare courses if they filled. We don't feel that at the CEGEP level you have to have a balanced curriculum for each student . . . as long as you offer a kind of balanced possibility . . . CEGEP students are exploring, and basically . . . you are trying to give them reading and writing skills and trying to instill in them

> some culture and some love of literature. And it doesn't matter where that comes from (Crossen 1990).

A structured series of courses, although certainly discussed over the years at Dawson, has been rejected, partly because the Department thinks students come with insufficient training: " . . . Our students have so little cultural background in literature [that] whatever they get is something to start building on. So a sequential development isn't, I think, a realistic approach in a CEGEP" (Crossen 1990). Indeed, if the government were to insist on a particular sequence, Crossen argues, instruction still would not be the same across the board since teachers would teach the material differently. And, in fact, Crossen believes, Dawson achieves the same results as a sequence because students "are going to get those things in one way or another." Even in writing courses, she adds, students read literature and get exposure to different genres.

Writing Program

The Dawson writing program begins with a placement test for incoming students, assigning them to various degrees of remediation. The remedial courses includes four tiers of basic skills, as well as several levels of reading and writing. Certain courses are reserved for non-native speakers of English.

The Department limits students to two remedial courses in writing; in practice, this affects only the relatively few students who come in at the very lowest levels. The Calendar

notes that "a student whose mother tongue and language of education is other than English" must pass two Core English in composition or literature. Those who cannot reach the necessary competence are required to do an extra semester.

There are also several Core composition courses which deal with writing about literature, technical and scientific writing, and creative expression. These courses (whose enrolment is limited to about 27) are for students without remedial problems but who want to improve their writing. The Department stipulates, however, that all courses—in composition or literature—require at least four written assignments, although these may include in-class tests and reports, as well as the standard essay.

Options

Most of the options courses are not advanced studies in literature. For example, the 106 level in Expression and Language is a double credit course, one of which counts as an option. Two other options are part of the Reflections program (a set of selected courses for particularly able students). The Preparatory Arts program for weaker students also uses two option numbers. In practice, the department gives two or three genuine literature options courses every semester. Those vary, depending on what faculty want to teach.

Student Population

One notable change at Dawson in the past two years has been the improved skills of its students. Drawn by an impressive new facility, many excellent students now make Dawson their first choice. Traditionally, Dawson's open-door policy has meant the school committed itself to teaching many poor learners. This is changing. Faculty, for example, speak very highly of their population, ranking it among best in the city. The College also attracts a good share of the private school clientele.

However, it is still too early to see if the rise in student abilities will affect the English curriculum:

> Maybe gradually if it continues, there might be some changes in the types of books chosen. The professors may change their curriculum slightly when they see that students can handle things that they used to teach and they had given up on; they may try again . . . There may come a day when we'll go back to teaching Milton and Chaucer. We don't do it now, but we used to do it and maybe someday we will do it again. (Crossen, 1990).

In addition to its better students, the Department also changed because of union with Lafontaine. As we have discussed in the history section of this report, the Lafontaine campus had a different orientation, due in part to its interdisciplinary thrust and structure. Its weaker students also led to a more structured writing program. Crossen, however, doesn't see much difference between the offerings when there were two campuses, although there was a period of adjustment when the merger occurred:

> It's taken two years for us, this union. It's a chunk of people to absorb and with quite different attitudes towards what a department was and what the whole process was. You

> could say that the departments had very different personalities, and I think that we are now one department (Crossen, 1990).

Dawson—Summary

As the both the largest and oldest English CEGEP, Dawson exerts a strong influence on curriculum. Its English department is the paradigm for most others—a wide range of courses offered, essentially reflecting the interests of its faculty, along with a sizable writing program, both Core and remedial.

2. English in the private colleges

Approximately 3,200 students are currently taking CEGEP English courses in colleges which require tuition fees annually ranging from $1200-6000.

At first glance, it might be assumed that these private colleges could be split into two groups: those giving exclusively professional curricula, such as the secretarial colleges, and those giving exclusively pre-university curricula, like Marianopolis and Centennial. From the point of view of the courses offered, this rough division is accurate; but in fact the universities do not necessarily restrict entrance to students from the general education stream. In fact, several spokesmen for the private secretarial colleges giving CEGEP English courses noted that their students included university graduates who were retraining themselves in a tight employment market. Again, although most of these are vocational colleges rather than general and professional CEGEPs, the students were able to go on

to university-level work in a variety of faculties and disciplines once they had earned their DEC's.

a. Centennial Academy.

This school has been giving CEGEP English courses for twenty years, and has had a representative on the Provincial Committee for English for 7 years. All of its 210 college students are in the pre-university stream. The fees for Canadian students are $3,150/ annum and for International students $6,050/ annum.

English Credit Courses

1. Remedial or Writing Intensive (10-20% of the students)

Language Use (603-106,-206,-306,-406)

Effective Reading and Writing (603-107)

2. Literature and Composition (603-108), used as a foundation course and diagnostic tool for advanced placement for 80-90% of the students.

3. Literature Courses

Period courses: Renaissance, Romantic, Victorian, 20th Century (603-102,-202,-302,-402)

Thematic: Archetypal Themes (603-103)

Genre: The Novel (603-140)

2. Workload. All classes at Centennial are taught in groups of 20, and a full load is 6 classes or 12 meetings per week. This small class size across the board is a very distinctive feature of Centennial.

b. Lasalle Business College

Lasalle has been certified to offer CEGEP English courses since 1976 and represented on the Provincial Committee for approximately 7 years. Approximately 260 students are in 1st year English courses, 120 in 2nd year and 120 in 3rd. Some of these students already have university degrees, and some 10-20% go on to university after completing their DEC.

1. Curriculum in English: Credit courses offered

A) Remedial or Writing Intensive

1st year: Case Studies/ Study Skills (603-407)

Language Use: Basic Prose I (603-106)

Subsequent years: Language Use: Uses of English I (603-306)

The Essay (603-130) (Writing skills in the rhetorical development of the short essay.)

B) Literature (occasionally offered): The Short Story (603-120)

In addition, the Office Automation Program includes 603-914, Introduction to Written Commmunication, within the concentration. (The course, given in all colleges with the OST program, is a basic review of composition, with a focus on the secretarial science student.) That program also includes courses in business writing, report writing, and note taking as part of the 412 concentration.

2. WORKLOAD. All classes in the first year are normed at 30-35, and in subsequent years at 20-25.

c. Notre Dame Secretarial College

The college serves many students at the post-collegial level who are retraining for the job market, and the number of students taking college level English is 60-70 per term. FEES: $1400/year (The fee for foreign students is $4,450 /year.)

The calendar description of the program in English mother tongue reads as follows:

> In order to obtain a Diploma in Collegial Studies, students must take four required English courses from among courses numbered 603-101 to 603-499.
>
> These courses are intended to meet the needs of students of various cultural backgrounds by providing them, through the study of both language and literature, with a fuller understanding of their world and with the power to read intelligently, reason clearly, and articulate effectively. These courses should help the student enrich herself culturally, giving her an overview of writings in poetry, prose, and drama.
>
> It is expected that the student's study of language and literature be reflected in her spelling and choice of words, sentence structure, and overall presentation of assignments (23-24).

d. O'Sullivan College

Approximately 350 students are enrolled in this college in either professional program 412 Office Systems Technology or 410 Business Administration. Annual fees for the college are $1,700 for residents and $5,000 for foreign students. Students take a required 107 course: Introduction to Essay Writing, followed by a choice of thematic courses and drama.

In addition, the O.S.T. students take a specialized Written English course, 603-914, as well as specialized concentration courses in business correspondence , note taking, etc.

e. Marianopolis

An interdenominational and co-educational college of 1550 students, Marianopolis is the largest private institution within the English CEGEP system. Its students are all university bound, and approximately 50% of them have come from private high schools. Fees are approximately $1,600-2,000 /annum for Canadian students and $4,750-$5,150/ annum for foreign students.

The Marianopolis Calendar describes the College:

> . . . a private institution with an academic history stretching back to the turn of the century and an equally long reputation for academic excellence, Marianopolis as a small personal college offers university-bound students an alternative to the large CEGEPs (5).

The English curriculum at Marianopolis is presented in the calendar as follows:

> The English curriculum serves to enrich the student's awareness of his cultural heritage through the study of literature. At the same time, these courses help the student to develop a better appreciation of his mother tongue and to acquire a greater facility in his use of it, both in speaking and in writing (26).

The Marianopolis student chooses from a variety of offerings, listed under the categories of the 1984 Cahier. Following is a selection from the current course offerings, listing the number of sections in each category (at the time of writing, in 1990), and the title of the first course in each group:

National Literature (4): Canadian Women Writers

Historical Period (4) : The Age of Satire

Thematic Studies (8) : Initiation Theme

Survey of Literature (5): Survey to 1800

Literature and other Media (1) : Images of Women (taken in tandem with Humanities 301-10)

Specialized Language Studies (4) : Propaganda and Argument

Poetry (4): Major American Poets

Short Story (4) : Canadian Short Stories

Novel (3): The Art of the Novel

Drama (1): Principles of Drama

Great Works (2): Canterbury Tales

Specific Author (3): Shakespeare: Tragedies

Options (4): Science Fiction

Language Use (Intensive) (2): Improving Reading and Writing

Reading and Writing (Intensive) (5): The Argumentative Essay

Composition & Literature (Intensive) (4): Studies in Short Fiction

Within the broad English Core curriculum, Marianopolis offers three interdisciplinary certificate programs: European Heritage, International Studies, and Quebec/Canada Studies. Students choose groups of courses in history, social sciences and liberal arts that are appropriate to each of these programs.

A further innovation in the Marianopolis curriculum is the intensive approach to writing and speaking English as a second language through a five-day-a week Core package:.

> "Our experience has been that the second language students are so highly motivated that in one term [with their English course] they do a linked course in humanities taught by the same person, so they have 5 days a week in that first term intensive practice in English. And with the exception of only a few, after that they are ready then to go into a regular English course (Jean Huntley, interview)."

Marianopolis is the only college to link the two Core courses together in this way, so that the first-year student in ESL receives intensive instruction from one teacher five days a week through the first term. The early hiring practice of joint appointments across the two Core departments facilitates this approach to intensive language teaching.

As of September 1990, Marianopolis will require an entry-level course for all students: an introduction to genre in a one-semester course normed at 25 students and aiming at intensive writing practice. This course evolved through a series of departmental and area discussions. For example, in the same interview, Jean Huntley spoke about the work of three study groups working on the department's curriculum: one on revitalizing the course offerings, one on writing assignments and their evaluation, and the third on the institution of a required entry-level course for all students:

> One of our problems has been that we did not make a distinction between first and second year students. This is a problem which has been bothering us for a number of years. Because, especially in the fall term, we would have this

> mixture of the experienced second year students and the raw inexperienced first year students. So it meant then that in that first year, in the first term, we would have to put a far greater emphasis on writing and the kind of assignments that we expected in our courses. And almost have a two-tier level of expectations within that same course (Jean Huntley, interview).

One of the aims of the course is to provide instruction in kinds of formal writing not uniformly taught in the high schools, in the view of the department. In addition, the course aims at introducing literary terminology and the formal study of the genres or modes of prose fiction, drama, and poetry. "The duration of this course will be one semester, and in order to maximize its foundational purpose major emphasis will fall on developing students' familiarity with the forms, techniques, devices and effects of the work studied. Literary terms useful in the explication and or analysis of passages or whole works will be introduced in the context of lectures, discussions and writing exercises and assignments." In pilot year of this new course, both teachers and students have given it a 90% satisfaction rate.

III. Conclusion

The variety of institutions and the curricula they have evolved to meet their needs cannot be overemphasized here. Heritage is a public CEGEP, mixing the general and professional streams and offering them a Core curriculum in literature which is accepted at par for university equivalent transfer. On the other hand, the private secretarial colleges are totally career

orientated, and offer CEGEP-level writing courses to **graduates** of universities. These are only two of many wide disparities which illustrate the variety of courses and their uses in the different English colleges throughout Quebec.

B. Perspectives of the Teachers: Our 1990 Curriculum Survey

In the Spring of 1990, we conducted a mail survey of English teachers in the province, and the response rate of over 50% was more than adequate to give us a snapshot of teachers' thinking at that time. The questions were relatively few (12), and we combined multiple-choice questions with questions requiring individual written responses. Finally, we encouraged written responses to a last, open-ended question on the curricular concerns of the teachers themselves. We discussed this questionnaire, its responses, and our analyses at two meetings with the Provincial Committee and with curriculum committees and other departmental groups on our visits to the departments. It will continue to used in discussions next year, when its results will be compared with those of subsequent questionnaires. In addition, copies will be discussed with our colleagues at other levels: the high schools and universities primarily. The full reports have been sent to all the departments, and summaries will be sent out to each CEGEP English teacher in the Province by the end of the research period. **A copy of the questionnaire is reprinted at the end of our report as an Appendix.**

1990 Curriculum Survey Responses

A. Multiple-choice questions

1. Who has decision-making responsibility for curriculum?

Among the large colleges (Champlain, Dawson, John Abbott, Marianopolis, and Vanier) 42%, by far the largest response, stated that the decisions regarding curriculum should be in the hands of the departments. A further 10% include the individual instructor, so that the majority of respondents place this responsibility at the local level: a reflection of the twenty-year history of local autonomy.

However, with the smaller colleges identified as "others", approximately 60% were looking to the Provincial Committee for those decisions.

2. Are there any authors who should be read by all students?

The largest number of respondents (43%) answered that there were no authors who should be read by all students, followed by 38% who specified Shakespeare.

Only five female authors were mentioned, and only one of those was Canadian. It is striking that only 6% listed any Canadian authors or even mentioned Canadian works as a general class. Three times as many (18%) specified an author from other languages and literatures. This seems anomalous when compared with these responses: (7a) Only 20% of respondents said Canadian literature was not important in their teaching, while 1/3 of respondents said it was <u>very</u> important, 21% said fairly and 18%

slightly important. Again, responding to question (7b), only 2% said that Canadian literature was <u>not</u> important in their department's curriculum; 28% said it was very important and 46% that it was fairly important.

It might be worth noting in this regard that the English Language Arts curriculum specifies no particular content or national literature throughout the five years of secondary instruction. Originally, the <u>Parent Commission Report</u> recognized the importance of Canadian literature for all levels of English instruction. Recommendation 208 recommends research and study into "the mode of presentation of Canadian literature to students of various levels." Until recently, colleges could assume that the high schools were covering Canadian literature, and the CEGEP programs could put less emphasis on that area. But now, in 1991, <u>very few Canadian authors are taught in the English high schools of Quebec and only 10% of the students are now taking NAL: North American Literature.</u> (The French Language Arts curriculum, however, puts a very heavy emphasis on Canadian writers writing in French for the assigned readings.)

3. Do students read enough, too little or too much of the tradition of literature written in English?

Over 50% of respondents stated that students are taught too little of the tradition of literature written in English. One of the global objectives for English Language and Literature set out in the <u>Cahier</u> focusses directly on this point: "[Les quatre cours

communs] visent aussi à leur faire approfondir la connaissance de leur héritage culturel, tel qu'il est révélé par la littérature (I.63)". Again, in the objectives of the General Literature categories, the Cahier states that "The CORE literature curriculum is designed to deepen the students' understanding of their cultural heritage and the literary tradition to which they are heir (11)".

4a and 4b. How much class time do you spend on teaching writing skills in literature classes ?

Clearly, in literature classes, the mechanical skills of writing take up little class time: approximately 1/2 the time given to the more advanced essay planning skills.

5. Evaluation of Writing Skills

One half of the respondents gave a lot of weight to grammatical correctness in essays (More than 25% of the evaluation). One fifth gave little weight to correctness (0-15%) and a further one fifth was between those extremes.

6. Media studies:

Understanding of the types of discourse (both print and media) is one of the six fundamental objectives of the Language Arts curriculum, and it figures as one of the five general categories in the CEGEP English Cahier, as Literature and Media. But over the broad range of the respondents, it appeared not to be very important, since 27% gave it no importance and a further 31% up to 1/4.

8. Choice of Readings: Is any reading as good as any other for your purposes?

As indicated in the commentary on the questionnaire, 83% of respondents cited excellence as the sine qua non of the readings for their courses. (The only exceptions stated were for writing courses, where other levels of readings were sometimes brought in.)

9. Sequence

There is a clear split in the responses to the question about sequencing of courses. In colleges where the courses are sequenced, support for this principle runs very high: for example, Heritage 100% and Vanier 80%. In colleges where there never has been sequencing, support for a non sequenced curriculum is fairly high: John Abbott 77% and Dawson 60%. In the case of Marianopolis, which was planning to introduce a required sequence for the first time, support was at 70% at the time the questionnaire was administered, and it is now over 90%

10. **E.S.L.** Two thirds of respondents felt the curriculum served second-language students adequately or well, and one third were not satisfied. Champlain Ste.Foy and Heritage expressed the highest levels of dissatisfaction.

B. Written Comments

The questionnaire asked teachers to list and discuss their own curricular concerns. Of the 95 respondents, 65 wrote answers

to this question. (The other 30 did not choose to add to the concerns already addressed in the questionnaire.) These have been grouped under the following headings and are recorded in full in the report:

1) Defining English Core
2) Our role in the education continuum
3) Our specific aims and objectives
4) Organization, content and methods of the curriculum
5) Teaching conditions
6) The CEGEP student.

There are 12 pages of comments recording teacher concerns under these headings. Fully 2/3 of them focus on the question of what how the English curriculum at the CEGEP level defines itself. Individual teachers respond in various ways, and the colleges vary enormously in their size and clienteles, but a global view can be derived from synthesizing the answers.

1. Defining Core English

These respondents are acutely aware of how difficult it is to establish the appropriate academic orientation of CEGEP-level English: what the students need, what the discipline means, what both the general and professional streams require. Specifically, English teachers know better than any one in the CEGEP system that English at this level is many things:

1) For the general stream student, who is university bound, CEGEP English is a bridge to advanced academic study. This in turn has various implications, as some university students may go on to advanced study in English and/or the teaching of English. Other university students may never study English courses again, yet need the exposure to literature and the preparation in language and writing skills that the college courses provide.

2) For the students in careers or professional streams, CEGEP English courses are a cap to their formal study of literature and language. No one has defined successfully what a liberal education means for these—or for any other—students, but few would argue against including literature as well as language and writing in their Core English courses.

Respondents in the big, polyvalent CEGEPs are especially aware of the heavy demands and schedules of the careers students. As a consequence, they are concerned with ways of retaining, motivating, and interesting them in English courses.

English teachers are also probing the relationship between language and literature teaching and the goals for each. Some of them are concerned with serving a heterogeneous student body with a curriculum in English language and literature that is both relevant and appropriate. Some respondents identify student choice as an important motivator for interest in English. Finally, respondents from most colleges are challenged by the distinction between college-level and remedial work in English,

for example, the question of credit and the appropriate levels for each.

2) Our Role in the Education Continuum

A great many responses here focussed on the new high school English Language Arts curriculum. It is evident that CEGEP teachers are concerned with following up that program with challenging material and effective methodology. Teachers are concerned with the lack of clear distinctions between what the colleges are expected to do (defined very generally in the Cahier) and what has already been achieved (in high schools).

Placement and entrance levels are frequently mentioned in the responses, as are standards for evaluation. Respondents commented on the low reading levels and limited exposure to literature of some first-year students. The most frequent comments concern the poor writing skills of the students, their limited exposure to analytical and argumentative writing assignments, and their weak composition and vocabulary skills.

(The question of the place of CEGEP English in the continuum of education in Quebec is the central focus of the second year of our research, "Renewing CEGEP English Curriculum". In the report on next year's work we will present a detailed analysis of our links with the high schools, the universities, and the workplace. In particular, the new high school curriculum, English Language Arts, will provide a useful case study of curricular change.)

To a more limited extent, teachers also commented that there is little clarity in what the universities and labour market expect of the CEGEP graduate. The term "good communication skills," for example, is extremely general as an objective for two years of English courses.

3) Our specific aims and objectives

Here, teacher concerns included some elements which cannot be quantified and yet are central to most English teachers' commitment to the profession: fostering a love of literature and developing the aesthetic sense of the students. Regardless of the students' backgrounds or future career, English teachers want them to enjoy and continue to enjoy reading a variety of literature and non-fiction. Further, teachers of English are concerned with developing in their students an awareness of the uses (and abuses) of language.

Teachers are also concerned with questions of standards and evaluation, finding some coherent grading practices for all English courses leading to a DEC, for example. Again, the teachers want to ensure that courses in the departments challenge students intellectually. A variety of contents and materials or types of discourse fall into the purview of English departments , including literature (variously defined), composition, and media studies. Teachers in the various departments are trying to find fair equivalencies among all these variables.

4) Organization, contents and methods of CEGEP English Curriculum

Clearly, this question about sequencing of courses drew two opposite sets of responses. In colleges where the courses are sequenced, support for this principle runs very high. In those where there never has been sequencing, support for that approach is also fairly high. What is perhaps most revealing is that in Marianopolis, where a first, foundational course was about to be implemented after long preparation and discussion at the department level, support was at 70% when the questionnaire was conducted and has since (October, 1990) risen to 90%.

The standard 15-week term, with students changing teachers constantly (especially in the large colleges) is also a concern. (Other solutions, like two-semester courses, retaining the same teacher for two semesters, linking Humanities and English courses, with both taught by the same teacher, have all been raised in discussions and interviews with teachers.)

On the content of the curriculum, teachers are concerned at the lack of cultural awareness or "cultural literacy" of the students. This awareness is limited in both traditional and non-traditional senses of culture. Thus, teachers want more awareness of traditional materials, for example, "the canon" <u>and</u> of other cultures and races, feminist perspectives, oral discourse, etc. (See also answers 2 and 3 on this topic, above under answers to multiple-choice questions.)

On methodologies, teachers of English are investigating new methods of teaching both literature and composition. This is an area where faculty interchanges is fruitful and invigorating, to judge by the responses: for example, reader-response techniques in the literature classes, more group work, and awareness of different learning styles. In composition, the word-processor, group work (peer editing), literacy across the curriculum, personal journals, and training in thinking skills are all mentioned. The whole-language approach which links speech, reading and writing, thus has its equivalents in the college classrooms.

5) Teaching Conditions

Budget cuts, large class sizes (especially in literature), and substandard classrooms are issues that touch on financial allocations. At a deeper level, teachers also want meaningful consultations when questions of curriculum and college goals are defined.

6) The CEGEP student

Chagrin and discouragement can be read in the comments about many of our current CEGEP students. Core English has little status or attraction for too many of them. Part-time jobs and the demands of their concentration subjects push English to the bottom of many student agendas, and the English teachers know it. Registration at many of the bigger colleges also makes a farce of

"student choice." Teachers themselves are aware of the challenges facing them in trying to make English important and relevant in a pluralistic Quebec.

The full text of the questionnaire will be found in the Appendix to this report. It includes all the written comments of all respondents (over 50% of the teachers giving CEGEP English courses at the time of the survey, February, 1990.)

Chapter VI. Conclusion

A. Overview

This year's work has focussed in large measure on the origins and development of CEGEP English curriculum: at the past more than at the future. That history has been important to understand and to record for more than simple archival interest. Primarily, we must understand this history as a case study in curriculum development. Given these conditions, this faculty, this administrative leadership, these DGEC policies, here is the curriculum that has evolved over the past twenty years.

For meaningful change to occur in the future, teachers themselves must be engaged in the process, as must the other major players in the system. What is good and valuable in the curriculum would be lost if some administrative _fiat_ declared a major transformation of the _Cahier_ and the courses. Indeed, we could forecast that any imposition of models from the outside would only lead to subversion (conscious or unconscious) and to cynicism—hardly an improvement. So we must look to the teachers themselves and their interest in teaching the students of the 1990s in Quebec: what their students need to know and, more importantly, what they must be able to do after two years in college.

To explore the **process** of curricular development we plan to go beyond our own history and look at how teachers, consultants, policies, and curricular theories come together in other

jurisdictions and levels. We are looking for insights into the process of curricular change in the implementation of new ideas and new approaches. At the same time, that will give us insights into other **models**: what works, what does not, and how they translate in our context as English teachers in the CEGEPs.

In next year's research, the same objectives, research areas, and methodology from our original proposal will apply. However, to follow up on our findings this year, we foresee the need for much more attention to research areas not originally planned.

B. Recommendations for next year's work

1. Research Areas

Research areas for next year's work should be broadened to include the following:

A) Analysis of the teaching of English at other levels, the high schools and universities primarily

B) Articulation of their connections

C) Study of the parallels with the teaching of French at the high school and college levels

D) Analysis of the cognitive development of students at the CEGEP level and its implication for the teaching of English

E) Research into the needs of labour market and employment services: what we can learn about the English training needed for today's and (future) job markets

F) Gathering and distributing information throughout the network of people in education from a variety of levels and in both the general and vocational streams of the CEGEPs.

2. Methodology

All the interactive and non-interactive techniques as originally planned should continue to be used. Interviews will continue to be important, but increasingly we will go out to groups of teachers for presentations and discussions. In addition, as an essential instrument for communicating with all the teachers in the network, we propose that a newsletter be developed. This will greatly aid in the process of sensitizing the widest possible range of CEGEP English teachers to the central curricular issues affecting the field. It will also aid the researchers in breaking down the distance barriers between the colleges and ensure that information and reflections are passed on **to each teacher throughout the network at the same time.**

We recommend that the specific curricular model of Alverno College be followed up as one focus next year. During the summer, Anne Blott of the research team will take a training program at Alverno College in Milwaukee, which is an intriguing case study on curricular design for formation fondamentale. The Alverno model, a curriculum in liberal arts based on teaching and assessment of generic abilities across the disciplines, is

already having some impact in Quebec. CEGEP de Lévis has adapted part of that design, focussed on communications and problem solving. Several of the CEGEP English departments will have members at Alverno for the training period, and through the next research year Anne Blott is committed to giving a workshop on the subject at an Intercollegiate Pedagogical Day in November, as well as to follow-up discussion groups at Vanier and Champlain. The other major case-study for next year's work will be the implementation and design of the English Language Arts Program in Quebec's English and French schools, with a focus primarily on the high schools—our immediate curricular link.

The technique of the questionnaire to faculty and students will continue to be important, and comparative analysis of both years' work will give a global picture of faculty curricular thinking and practice. In addition, it will provide a reality check in finding out student response to what is taught to them in English courses.

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Appendix

English Curriculum Survey

February - April, 1990

Report to the Provincial Committee for English

October 12, 1990

Introduction

This report presents the results of our English Core curriculum survey, conducted last spring. On February 4, we sent out 188 copies of the questionnaire to English teachers in all colleges giving CEGEP courses. We received 95 replies, for a response rate of just over 50%--far above average for surveys of this type.

We report the data in two major divisions: first "Responses to multiple-choice questions" and second "Responses to questions involving written comment and analysis." The five parts of this second group of responses are organized by topic, apart from 10b: "What significant changes have you made in your demands on the students?" which follows the order of CEGEPs used in the initial grid of questionnaire responses. The longest part of the report is that covering the written answers to the open-ended question # 12: "Which of your curricular concerns does this questionnaire leave out?" Responses here have been subdivided into six broad topics:

1. Defining English Core
2. Our role in the education continuum
3. Our specific aims and objectives
4. Organization, content, and methods of the curriculum
5. Teaching conditions
6. The CEGEP student.

It is important to note that this report reprints every comment we received concerning curriculum. While there are clearly some important differences in the terminology preferred from one individual to another, and in the organization of curriculum from one college to another, the responses to this survey demonstrate many shared concerns.

The volume of returns and the detailed answers written by our colleagues demonstrate energy and commitment. These are resources we can all build on in renewing and revitalizing English curriculum.

Anne Blott and Arnold Keller

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4b. What percentage of your classroom time in literature classes do you spend on essay argument, organization, etc? 2

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7b. How important is Canadian literature in your department's curriculum? 4

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10a. During your years at CEGEP, what significant changes have you made in your course descriptions? Briefly, why did you make those changes? 9

10b. During your years at CEGEP, what significant changes have you made in your demands on the students? Briefly, why did you make those changes? 9

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I. Responses to multiple-choice questions

1. Major decisions regarding the curriculum should be made by?

	PrCC	Dept	Instr	D/I	P/D	P/D/I	DGEC /D/I	DGEC /P/D	Totals
Ch-L		3							3
Ch-SF		2		1					3
Ch-SL	3	3		1					7
Daw	2	8	1	2	4	3			20
Her	1	2			1				4
JAC	1	3		2	3				9
Marian	3	8				2			13
Van	1	8		2	6	5		2	24
Others	7	3		1			1		12
Total	18	40	1	9	14	10	1	2	95
%	19%	42%	1%	9%	15%	11%	1%	2%	100%
NUMBER	95								

2. Are there any authors who should be read by all students? List 3.

	No	Shakes	Chauc	18th	19th	Mod	Cdn	Other Lit	N/R
Ch-L	1	1					1	1	
Ch-SF	1	2	1			2		1	
Ch-SL	2	3			4	5			1
Daw	9	6			6	1	1	2	5
Her		3	3		2			1	1
JAC	5	1						5	2
Marian	7	4			2	6	1	1	
Van	8	14	4	4	5	7	1	2	1
Others	8	2			1	1	2	4	2
Total	41	36	8	4	20	22	6	17	12
%	43%	38%	8%	4%	21%	23%	6%	18%	13%
NUMBER	95								

3. Are students taught too little, too much, or just enough of the tradition of literature written in English?

	Too Little	Too Much	Enough	N/R	Total
Ch-L	1		1	1	3
Ch-SF	2	1			3
Ch-SL	4		2	1	7
Daw	11		2	7	20
Her	2	1	1		4
JAC	4		1	4	9
Marian	6		4	3	13
Van	13		3	8	24
Others	5		2	5	12
Total	48	2	16	29	95
%	51%	2%	17%	31%	100%
NUMBER	95				

4a. What percentage of your classroom time in literature classes do you spend on the mechanical skills of writing?

	0-5%	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+	N/R	Totals
Ch-L	3						3
Ch-SF	1	1			1		3
Ch-SL	6					1	7
Daw	5	6	4	2		3	20
Her	3	1					4
JAC	5	1			2	1	9
Marian	9	3				1	13
Van	11	4	1	2	1	5	24
Others	3	1		3	2	3	12
							0
Total	46	17	5	7	6	14	95
%	48%	18%	5%	7%	6%	15%	100%
NUMBER	95						

4b. What percentage of classroom time in literature classes do you spend on essay argument, organization, etc.?

	0-5%	6-10	11-15	16-20	21%+	N/R	Totals
Ch-L	2	1					3
Ch-SF	1	1			1		3
Ch-SL	2	1			2	2	7
Daw	4	4	5	3	1	3	20
Her	2		1	1			4
JAC	1	5			2	1	9
Marian	1	5	1	4	2		13
Van	2	10	3	3	1	5	24
Others	2			5	2	3	12
Total	17	27	10	16	11	14	95
%	18%	28%	11%	17%	12%	15%	100%
NUMBER	95						

5. How much weight do you give to grammatical correctness in essay writing?

	Little 0-15%	Some 16-25%	A lot 26%+	N/R	Total
Ch-L		2	1		3
Ch-SF			3		3
Ch-SL		4	2	1	7
Daw	4	2	11	3	20
Her			4		4
JAC	2	4	3		9
Marian	8	1	2	2	13
Van	4	6	13	1	24
Others	1	2	8	1	12
Total	19	21	47	8	95
%	20%	22%	49%	8%	100%
NUMBER	95				

6. How large a place do you think media studies should have in English curriculum?

	None	<1/4	<1/3	<1/2	1/2+	N/R	Total
Ch-L		2	1				3
Ch-SF	1	1				1	3
Ch-SL	2	1	2	1		1	7
Daw	3	11	3	3			20
Her	3		1				4
JAC			7	1		1	9
Marian	3	5	1			4	13
Van	7	7	5			5	24
Others	7	2	3				12
Total	26	29	23	5	0	12	95
%	27%	31%	24%	5%	0%	13%	100%
NUMBER	95						

7a. How important is Canadian literature in your teaching?

	Very	Fairly	Slightly	Not	N/R	Total
Ch-L	1	2				3
Ch-SF	2		1			3
Ch-SL	2	1	3		1	7
Daw	6	8	1	4	1	20
Her	2			1	1	4
JAC	2	1	2	2	2	9
Marian	4	2	2	4	1	13
Van	9	5	4	5	1	24
Others	2	1	4	3	2	12
Total	30	20	17	19	9	95
%	32%	21%	18%	20%	9%	100%
NUMBER	95					

7b. How important is Canadian literature in your department's curriculum?

	Very	Fairly	Slightly	Not	N/R	Total
Ch-L		2	1			3
Ch-SF	1	2				3
Ch-SL		2	3		2	7
Daw	3	13			4	20
Her	4					4
Marian	4	7			2	13
JAC	5	3			1	9
Van	9	11	1		3	24
Others	1	4	4	2	1	12
Total	27	44	9	2	13	95
%	28%	46%	9%	2%	14%	100%
NUMBER	95					

8. Do you feel that any sort of reading is as good as any other for what you want to teach?

	Excellence in Texts	Any Texts	Other Factors	NR	Total
Ch-L	2		1		3
Ch-SF	3				3
Ch-SL	4		2	1	7
Daw	18			2	20
Her	4				4
JAC	8		1		9
Marian	11		1	1	13
Van	18		3	3	24
Others	11		1		12
Total	79	0	9	7	95
%	83%	0%	9%	7%	100%
NUMBER	95				

9. Should there be any sequence of courses that all students follow? If yes, should the sequence extend over 2, 3, or 4 courses?

	NO	1	2	3	4	N/R	Total
Ch-L	1		2				3
Ch-SF	1			1	1		3
Ch-SL	4		2			1	7
Daw	12	3	3			2	20
Her					2	2	4
JAC	7					2	9
Marian	4	2	4		1	2	13
Van	5	5	11		1	2	24
Others	7		4	1			12
Total	41	10	26	2	5	11	95
%	43%	11%	27%	2%	5%	12%	100%
NUMBER	95						

11. How well are the second language students served by the current curriculum?

	Well	Adequately	Poorly	N/R	Total
Ch-L		2	1		3
Ch-SF			3		3
Ch-SL	3	2	2		7
Daw	6	7	6	1	20
Her			3	1	4
JAC	1	7		1	9
Marian	2	5	4	2	13
Van	3	14	7		24
Others	4	6		2	12
Total	19	43	26	7	95
%	20%	45%	27%	7%	100%
NUMBER	95				

II. Responses to questions involving written comments and analysis

2. Are there any authors who should be read by all students? If so, list three.

As indicated in the table of responses to question #2 above, 41 respondents answered that there were no authors that all students should read. Of the remaining respondents' answers, all specific choices are tabulated below in more detail:

2a. Authors writing in English

Female authors

Jane Austen 3.

Alice Walker.

Bronte 2.

Virginia Woolf.

Margaret Laurence 2.

Canadian authors

Margaret Laurence 2 (as above).

Robertson Davies 2.

All other authors, listed chronologically

14-18 Centuries

Chaucer 8.

Shakespeare 36.

Milton 1.

Swift 4.

19 th Century, Romantics and Victorians

Blake.

Wordsworth 2.

Keats.

Tennyson.

Dickens 5.

Walt Whitman.

Twentieth Century

Yeats.

Hemingway 2.

Faulkner.

Eliot 3.

Tom Robbins.

Robert Thonless.

Lewis Thomas.

Bret Easton Ellis.

Joseph Campbell.

Ray Bradbury.

James Joyce 3.

George Orwell.

Vonnegut.

2b, No specific author, but recommended periods

Important authors from different periods.

At least one from each century or major literary period 2.

Romantics 3.

Perhaps there should be periods covered.

Maybe one from each decade of the 20th Century.

A smattering, at least, of Canadian literature.

Major Canadian writer, like Margaret Laurence.

Canadian novel.

Contemporary 2.

3. From other literatures

Homer 2.

Sophocles 3.

Old & New Testaments.

Tolstoy.

Goncharov.

Chinua Achebe.

Julio Cortazar.

Jerzy Kosinski.

Victor Hugo.

Molière.

Cervantes.

Krishnamurti.

8. **Do you feel that any kind of reading is as good as any other for what you want to teach?**

Overwhelmingly, respondents stated that they chose texts on the basis of excellence or literary merit. None of the value qualifiers like class and gender bias or ideology were invoked here.

The only exceptions to this appeared to be in the context of composition courses, as 9% of the respondents wrote that they chose some texts simply to illustrate rhetorical strategies or themes in writing courses.

10a. During your years at CEGEP, what significant changes have you made in your course descriptions ? Briefly, why did you make those changes?

Better guidelines.

Eighteen respondents gave variations of the following answer: during my years at CEGEP, my course descriptions have become
more precise/ structured/ concrete/ specific/ well-organized/ accurate/ well-worded/ clear/ detailed/ consistent / systematic/ and less smart-alecky re. expectations, objectives, demands. Their reasons are as follows:

Departments and administration are more demanding about course descriptions--a change for the better.

I can still allow for some flexibility.

I need to give the students better guidelines.

Added plagiarism warnings.

Because college is plagued with grievances and other legal problems.

Because students need more guidance and direction.

Clarified objectives and evaluation, demonstrating purpose.

Spelled out precise work schedule.

Written titles which are less trendy and courses less superficially "relevant" than 20 years ago.

10b. During your years at CEGEP, what significant changes have you made in your demands on the students? Briefly, why did you make those changes?

These changed demands have been grouped by college below. Globally, the reasons for most of them can be summarized briefly as perceptions of changes in the student body, the need to respond to those changes, and the pressures of an increased workload.

In addition to those specific reasons for changing demands on the students, a variety of personal assessments were also given:

I am older/more experienced/go back to the beginning/less idealistic/ more bitterly realistic/ worn/ less "academic"/a better teacher/better at tailor-making courses/ understand learning needs more.

Champlain Lennoxville

As the quality of the students has improved over the years, it has been possible to place more demands on them. I feel that they are entitled to a better education than they received in the past.

Fewer, shorter assignments, more emphasis on "process" writing.

The system does not give them time to read. They are not prepared to do long assignments.

Integrated language, media and literature.

Champlain Ste. Foy

I take nothing for granted. I choose books that are simple and easy to read, yet still can be talked about with intelligence.

More stress on skills, genre, less on individual authors.

More use of videos of plays and novels.

More precise questions, smaller, frequent papers: encourage class reading and improve writing skills.

Champlain St. Lambert

CEGEP has become very high schoolish.

Pleasing a clientele, PR, a fraud.

Addition of references to audio/visual material.

More choice to students, more variety, to mitigate drudgery of corrections.

Reading tests prior to discussion of a work.

Mastery of paragraph development, then move to synthesis, tone, etc.

Demands more precise.

Shorter, more manageable literature assignments, realistic to students' capabilities and deficiencies.

Dawson

More demanding, structured, specific assignments.

Added written exams in some courses, orals in others--to focus the mind.

Some changes required by Senate.

Assignments more varied in types and style: formal, informal, group work. These have improved my course.

I have moved from modern to older work.

Less material, but more detailed study, because students write with less facility.

I've simplified everything.

I've simplified everything, alas.

To be a better teacher for these students, I give shorter, frequent, well-defined assignments.

I am becoming more precise, clear, and consistent: dates, expectations, etc.

Fewer essays (too many students).

More journals (dialogue with students).

Less focus on formal grammar.

Group reports-less grading, more student interaction.

More focus on free writing-eliminates fear of writing, encourages communication.

Writing courses: more focus on reading and study skills, research strategies to cut down on plagiarism.

More variety or kinds of writing assignments.

More focus on basic writing skills.

Less reading, fewer assignments ; too many students.

More in-class assignments, both in reading and in writing, at beginning of my course.

[I have] better perspective: weaker students, bigger classes.

Fewer papers assigned, less reading, more accessible reading.

I demand much more writing of all kinds and I've integrated more literary texts at every level.

Demands have not changed, but content has changed considerably.

Literature content is watered down, used only as examples to use in writing courses. More writing courses by department decision.

Heritage

I go slower, assume little correction has been done to students' work in high school, assume NO OUTSIDE reading in 1st year.

NONE.

Dropped the historical British survey for first year and adopted genre approach. Students' reading skills, training and background were too weak.

Adopted genre approach to get to more approachable material.

John Abbott

I have responded to student pressure for more contemporary works and film.

Simplification to match drop in "literacy"--whatever that might mean.

Less formal writing, more journals etc. Not enough time to grade several essays.

More emphasis now on content.

More students in my classes: less writing required.

NONE.

Yikes, I've made things easier.

I ask them for outlines before they write long essays.

Simplification--need to address students at their level.

Marianapolis

More focus on thinking skills.

More flexibility in due-dates.

More in-class writing (to cut down on plagiarism).

More attention to language analysis, close reading.

More emphasis on basic writing skills : I sadly realize that literature is irrelevant to the lives of 90% of our students.

Reduced length of writing assignments, number of questions on class tests.

More focus on skills, making literature accessible. Students do not necessarily bring literary knowledge and writing ability.

Less reading, but more informal writing tasks like journals, pre-writing. I probably work more, but students less.

More emphasis on the "how" of literature (for the discipline of English).

More marks for informal writing--to raise marks.

Demands more lenient--too many students in class.

Vanier

I insist reading be done and I test it.

I ensure essays are carefully written and rewritten.

I give informal writing practice.

I build oral units into classes, partner discussions.

I don't think students are that different--I had lots of lazy badly prepared students in 1970--more than now, I think.

More in-class work to prevent plagiarism.

Less reading, more attention to reading process.

Sinking college standards; my demands are lighter.

I try to accomplish the same goals, but with more "bread and circuses".

Writing component has changed most: more group work, more journals.

Less readings, more in-depth background information and extensive intensive exegesis because of students lack of reading skills and training in literary criticism etc.

Some courses are easier.

I demand less and less, alas. And I'm supposed to be tough.

I have become less demanding because of increasing class size and declining quality of students.

Student decline.

Literature content has diminished and writing component requires more class time.

More time with basics--grammar.

A little less reading, more oral work.

Oral work allows me to see students' preparation, and encourage them to express their views. (Also eliminates one set of marking--also important).

I have been forced to retain works that students find easier--eg. "Love-interest ", because political themes or historical background are harder for them.

I have toughened my requirements about essays: development, correctness. I have 1/2 to 2/3 of the class rewrite, because they have not been taught write carefully enough.

I have reduced the reading list because of the very broad range of backgrounds (in terms of competence in literature).

Less demanding, less study of historical and literary backgrounds.

Less research for essays, because so many weak students are mixed in with the strong ones. Shorter essays for the same reason and because of class size.

Fewer essays , and less inclination to allow rewrites.

Fewer demands because of class sizes.

Less reading, less supplemental reading, less able work: all because of larger classes and overworked students.

Slightly less reading and writing: weaker students and more of them are from the technologies.

More emphasis on writing skills.

Less reading, shorter essays. Students resist hard work.

Others

Fewer demands for abstract comprehension.

Shift from literature to basic writing skills.

Watered down courses as students have become weaker.

More focus on personal response to literature.

More and shorter assignments, guided or directed.

More focus on basic writing skills.

Students need more guided, in-depth work. Fewer long essays, more short, in-class assignments to ensure that it is students' own work. Less reading assigned.

More discussion in place of written study questions.

Less work from before 20th Century.

12. "Which of your curricular concerns does this questionnaire leave out?"

This question was intended to stimulate interest, provoke reaction, and encourage direct responses, based on individual experience.

Out of the total of 95 respondents, 30 stated that they had no curricular concerns beyond those on the questionnaire. The comments of all the other respondents have been grouped below. Every comment relating to curriculum has been printed at least once, and topics have been defined to highlight logical classes. In a few instances, a comment appears twice because its content and implications overlap two areas.

Following each comment, the name of the institution is printed in a parenthesis. For clarity, in the case of Champlain College the individual campuses are used as identifiers. Because the smaller colleges have so few teachers each (and in one college only one respondent), in the interests of anonymity they have been grouped as "Others", which represents O'Sullivan, Centennial, Lasalle, Notre Dame, and Gaspé.

1. Defining English Core

1a. Core English curriculum

1. The goals of language teaching and literature teaching. and the ratio of language teaching and literature teaching. (Lennoxville)

2. English has to be defined more clearly. What is its place in the general and vocational streams? (Vanier)

3. Variety of course offerings.(St. Lambert)

4. The question about the purpose of Core English in the CEGEP curriculum. (Marianopolis)

5. You have not asked the central question: what, ideally, do we want to impart to our students? There is an implicit assumption in this questionnare that we do/should put the literary heritage first.(Marianopolis)

6. ESL courses should not be credited as part of the Core English curriculum (Vanier).

7. This questionnaire seems already to imply certain assumptions about the curriculum which bother me. If we are going to question the curriculum, let's start from scratch. What are our responsibilities to our students? Do we give them what they "need"? What they want? or what we want them to want? Also, we have to ask ourselves whether our role is that of a mini-university, liberal arts style, or what? (Marianopolis)

8. Relevance - as a compulsory course, English needs to consider the special needs and interests of local populations, and we need to change with these needs. (Vanier)

9. I will limit myself to one. I would like to see some thought given to the problems of making English Literature relevant to students from a vast range of cultural backgrounds (an indisputable reality of Quebec's CEGEP system. (Vanier)

10. To what extent should we consider streaming students in terms of programme.(Vanier)

11. Too difficult to put succinctly. It is always a problem to satisfy the needs of a widely divergent student population as well as satisfying teaching goals. I think Dawson does very well in reconciling both elements.(Dawson)

12. My concern is question #11 ["How well are second-language students served by the current English curriculum? Respondent's answer: "adequately"]. (Lennoxville)

13. Unclear objectives (to match very varied abilities of those entering college) for language and literature teaching. Do we want to prepare English majors, scientists, business people, gardeners, graphite inspectors? Most courses appear to be too difficult for some, too undemanding for others. (John Abbott)

14. Students need to perceive the importance of core subjects like English. To realize this, students need to choose their areas of English study and to enjoy their courses. (John Abbott)

15. Clearer definition of what Core English means in the context of college students in Quebec in 1990: its place in the pre-university and careers streams, the perception of its importance among students and teachers from other disciplines.(Vanier)

16. I would like the question of our role addressed by the total membership. Are we supposed to be serving our discipline or are we primarily teaching to raise the literary skills of the general CEGEP population? Are we popularizing literature? If all of these, where does the membership wish the balance to be? Are the populations of the separate institutions disparate enough so that no general answer would be valid? (Vanier)

17. The heavy student workloads and very tight sheduling of students in career programs, as well as their stage requirements and lock-step grids, give them very poor course selection and limited time and energy to commit themselves to the courses they do get into. And yet we Core English teachers are supposed to give them the same education and demand the same level of work of them as of others who are freer to choose courses and often less driven by their program demands. (Vanier)

1b. An increasing service-course orientation

1. I deplore the increased emphasis on hand-to-mouth, spoonfed grammar courses, wherein students are drilled regularly in spelling quizzes, are forced to read out loud, and lecture time is spent on rules of grammar. (St.Lambert)

2. The teaching of "skills" courses. (St. Lambert)

3. What about our changing roles in English Departments? We have gone from being a true discipline to being a service area. Can we all accept this? What do we do to serve the practical needs of our students instead of our perceptions of what these needs should be? (Marianopolis)

2. Our role in the continuum: transitions from high school to university or to the job market.

1. Lack of clear distinctions between what the colleges are expected to do and what has been achieved (in high schools) and can be expected at university or in the labour market. (Vanier)

2. Lack of agreement about the level of challenge in reading and writing requirements encourages mediocrity. It makes it difficult to offer and keep going any courses which allow students to reach beyond what they have already grasped. (Vanier)

3. High School>>>>>>>>>>CEGEP<<<<<<<University
(process) (?) (canon)

How do we provide for our students coming from HS programme and going to university? (Marianopolis)

4. Evaluation, coherence with secondary level approaches. (Marianapolis)

5. How do we distinguish one level from another: high school, college , university,(+ working world?) Where are the gaps and overlaps? (Vanier)

6. Standards of literature courses at lower levels, high schools and university. (St.Lambert)

7. How to make CEGEP something more than a continuation of high school and relevant to student needs.(Dawson)

8. The fact that incoming students are more poorly prepared than ever with regard to vocabulary, grammatical awareness, ability to think logically, concentration, and basic historical awareness; and that there seems to be no concerted attempt afoot to remedy this, either at the high school level or in CEGEP's. From what I know of the new high school _Regime_, things are only going to get worse with regard to the teaching of composition at CEGEP, students are so deficient, and the nature of remedial teaching so delicate, that a one-term (15 week) course is never enough to do much more than get started. I think it extremely important that an effort be made to make it possible that teachers can have the same class for two semesters in a row. This especially applies to composition, but it wouldn't hurt in literature either. (Dawson)

9. Do high schools and elementary schools realize how much students are _missing_ basic reading/_writing_ skills?
-- what has happened to _grammar_ at the pre-CEGEP _levels_? (St. Lawrence)

10. Better evaluation procedures for catching and placing incoming students. (Vanier)

11. Twenty years ago, our students were rather better grounded in conventional literary techniques than they are now and needed encouragement to respond to and enjoy a text. Now, a large number seem bewildered by or alienated from the written word itself and need reassurance that they are capable of comprehending it. I do feel that the lower schools have done many of our students a terrible disservice by subtly convincing them that they are "not good" in English and that literature is the property of a small elite. I spend most of my time trying to undo the damage, with varying success. (Dawson)

3. Our specific aims and objectives in literature and composition

3a. Literary appreciation and aesthetic pleasure

1. Fostering in students a love of reading and recognition of literature as one of the pleasures life has to offer. (St. Lambert)

2. There is no mention of what is taught in English Lit. courses in terms of the basic skills involved in learning to appreciate literature. I think the most important thing to focus on at this level is teaching students how to read with sensitivity and understanding so that they will be able and willing to pursue their literary education beyond the classroom. I find that the debate over canon and cultural background somewhat irrelevant to the situation as I actually confront it in the classroom. (Others)

3. Will my students enjoy reading "X"?. In some way does it relate to their experiences? Will they learn something from it? When they have finished reading it, will they want to read more by the same author, from the same genre? (If not, ditch it!) (Others)

4. Interest - the study of English should be enjoyable; the acquisition of culture and the development of language skill and sensitivity should be presented pleasurably. (Vanier)

5. You haven't left it out, but the primary concern for me is how young people can be introduced to the literary aspects of our cultural heritage without coersion, write valuing and giving some consideration to the richness of two cultural backgrounds from which they come. (Dawson)

3b. Standards in literature courses: content and teaching

1. Standards of literature courses at lower levels, high schools and university. (Marianopolis)

2. A major concern: should we dilute our curriculum to suit the students coming from a high school English programme which is substantially weaker than a decade ago? My answer: NO! Students respond to challenge. Bring the literature to them by relating it to themes they can identify with; help by making writing about it easier; but encourage them to taste the richness that English literature offers -- in short, get them hooked on Chaucer, Spenser, Milton & Shakespeare. It can be done!! (Marianopolis)

3. It [the questionnaire] says nothing of standards. It says nothing of the quality of literature studies of the lower levels, high school, and the other plans-- universities. (St.Lambert)

4. Evaluation, which dogs me. Do we use the same standards for remedial as for regular courses? I don't think I do, which penalizes our better students. Evaluation, sorry I think we have a great deal to do with assignments and evaluation, maybe even more than with curriculum. Do we talk together about standards so that students leave with a good sense of their own abilities? Do we involve students in the evaluation process? (Obviously, we need more credibility here if we are to hold off the forces of administrative exit tests.) (Marianopolis)

6. All the ones which cannot be quantified eg. objectives in Lit courses - function of Lit teacher - your concerns are bureaucratic -- mine are pedagogical! (Dawson)

7. Evaluation methods re: individual or departmental control. (Vanier)

8. The presence of media courses (eg. radio, tv, film) and popular culture courses (eg. the detective story, folk and rock music) which usurp the place of literature courses. (Lennoxville)

9. English courses without texts eg. Creative Writing, ESL, etc.(Lennoxville)

10. Importance of stressing a core literature in all CEGEP courses. (St. Lawrence)

11. The demands we place on our students -- at CEGEP a 60% is guaranteed in too many courses. (Vanier)

12. To what extent do we provide "enriched courses" for students who wish to be challenged? (Vanier)

13. Too much "remedial" work--not a clearly-understood idea. Over the 4 courses, too few challenging reading and challenging writing assignments. (Vanier)

3c. Standards and writing: comments concerning the levels demanded and the determination of equitable and realistic standards of evaluation of the CEGEP students' writing skills.

1. I deplore the increased emphasis on hand-to-mouth, spoonfed grammar courses, wherein students are drilled regularly in spelling quizzzes, are forced to read out loud, and lecture time is spent on rules of grammar.(St.Lambert)

2. To establish a standard of acceptable writing before students receive their DEC. (St. Lambert)

3. Evaluation, which dogs me. Do we use the same standards for remedial as for regular courses? I don't think I do, which penalizes our better students. Evaluation, sorry I think we have a great deal to do with assignments and evaluation, maybe even more than with curriculum. Do we talk together about standards so that students leave with a good sense of their own abilities? Do we involve students in the evaluation process? (Obviously, we need more credibility here if we are to hold off the forces of administrative exit tests.) (Marianapolis)

4. Evaluation methods re: individual or Department control. (Vanier)

5. To what extent do we provide "enriched courses" for students who wish to be challenged? (Vanier)

6. The demands we place on our students - at CEGEP a 60% is guaranteed in too many courses.(Vanier)

7. We need more meaningful diagnostic tests. What do we mean by college-level skills in writing? (Vanier)

8. I deplore the increased emphasis on hand-to-mouth, spoonfed grammar courses, wherein students are drilled regularly in spelling quizzes, are forced to read out loud, and lecture time is spent on rules of grammar. (St.Lambert)

9. More emphasis is needed on writing skills at the CEGEP level. (St. Lawrence)

10. Effective writing, courses for underprepared students. All our comp. courses - or lack of them. (Vanier)

11. Meaningful diagnostic tests to determine entry levels. Definition of what we mean by college-level writing skills both when we stream students and when we set the aims of our courses. (Vanier)

4. The organization, content, and methods of English curriculum

4a. Organization and sequence

1. SEQUENCE --Question #9 ["Should there be any sequence of courses that all students follow? If yes, should the sequence extend over 2, 3, or 4 semesters?"] is the most important concern I have, and I am pleased it has been asked. Please, do something further with it. (Others)

2. I think that all students should take a basic writing & literary analysis course. It would focus on basic essay structure & examples of literary terms, e.g plot, characterization, setting, imagery, metaphor, symbol, irony, etc. (Marianopolis)

3. Courses for students who want to follow literature at university level. (Vanier)

4. ESL & "Remedial" students' needs in relation to the overall curriculum. (Vanier)

5. My "curricular concerns" are essentially local. The Cahier descriptions are as vague and general as they should be. (Heritage)

6. We are currently concerned with whether or not we should have the weaker students in separate sections at least for the first semester.(St. Lawrence)

7. I think the problem students have with literacy stems from a lack of cultural preparedness. They cannot read because they cannot make connections. I have always taught both remedial students (teaching old fashioned grammar, stucture etc.) and literature students (various courses in which students address the literary content and write essays on it). I think those literature courses to be far more beneficial, even for poor students because they teach them to think, and thereby (with hard work on the mechanics in the office) to write faster and better than in composition courses. I think only the poorest students ought to be taught composition per se, and that the others should have

an introductory course which covers western culture, literature, and at the same time shows how to write essays. From then on, let them follow their noses. (Dawson)

8. The fact that incoming students are more poorly prepared than ever with regard to vocabulary, grammatical awareness, ability to think logically, concentration, and basic historical awareness; and that there seems to be no concerted attempt afoot to remedy this, either at the high school level or in CEGEP's. From what I know of the new high school Régime, things are only going to get worse with regard to the teaching of composition at CEGEP, students are so deficient, and the nature of remedial teaching so delicate, that a one-term (15 week) course is never enough to do much more than get started. I think it extremely important that an effort be made to make it possible that teachers can have the same class for two semesters in a row. This especially applies to composition, but it wouldn't hurt in literature either. (Dawson)

4b. Content: Texts and approaches

1. Race and Ethnic considerations--what about black writers? Writers reflecting cultures other than our dominant one? Women - more than half our students are women, traditionally not represented in literature courses. (Vanier)

2. I will limit myself to one. I would like to see some thought given to the problems of making English Literature relevant to students from a vast range of cultural backgrounds (an indisputable reality of Quebec"s CEGEP system). (Vanier)

3. "Third World texts", even if not "top-ranking" seem to me increasingly important at this time in global history. Good translations are certainly available, though I'd hesitate to suggest they should usurp the supremacy of the literature written in English as the langue maternalle. (Vanier)

4. Literature in translation. (Dawson)

5. Traditional curriculum emphasizes the written (literary) over the oral (& popular) - hence my reference to Baker. It also favours WASP writing over that of non-western cultures. This is particularly regretable in a multi-ethnic city like Montreal in the 1990's. (Dawson)

6. Revising the canon: the application of feminist criticism to literature teaching. (Lennoxville)

7. English studies for students of diverse ethnic backgrounds and especially for French students. (Lennoxville).

8. What kind of English courses shall be provided to students who will be living in an increasingly French Quebec society? (Lennoxville)

4c. Methodology : teaching methods, general

1. Matching learning/teaching styles. (Vanier)

2. Team Teaching, Experimental modes
On-going pedogogical developments. (Vanier)

3. Team teaching with Creative Arts in Media/Communication courses. (Vanier)

4. Most of them especially the issues related to pedagogy--the "how" rather than the "what". (Dawson)

5. It leaves out as I have said twice, my concern that a lot of literature teaching isn't teaching - but a "specialist-priest" exhibiting fine feelings and giving people "answers" to texts (by dictate). (Dawson)

6. Application of new literacy theory to teaching methods & text selection. (Lennoxville)

7. Curricular concerns are minor if the teacher lacks compassion and understanding. (St. Lambert)

4d. Teaching methods, focussed on writing

1. The need for more effective writing courses to teach academic writing/research skills, so that literature courses don't have to include so much instruction in this area. (Others)

2. Do students learn to think through their written assignments given in the English Curriculum -- writing is simply the activity that should develop -- at the beginning of my writing course I tell students that writing is thinking and then I ask, "Do you ever think about what you think about?" That then is your source for written material. (Others)

3. I am currently keen on incorporating more writing into the curriculum-- in all courses for both mother-tongue and second-language students. (Others)

4. Writing/revising on the word processor.(Dawson)

5. Effective writing, courses for underprepared students. All our composition courses--or lack of them. (Vanier)

6. I see virtually no concern with writing on this questionnaire. Whoever wrote the questionnaire seems to equate writing with "mechanical skills" "grammatical correctness" and "organization" Where is "invention", "revision", "rhetoric", "journals", "writing across the curriculum", "peer editing", "word-processing", etc? The approach to writing implied by your questionnaire is unprofessional in the extreme. It undermines the credibility of the whole process. (Marianopolis)

7. Another concern is , for me at least, peripheral <u>and</u> central: our students need some sort of training in logic (I am convinced that at least some of their problems in both grammar and organization would dissipate if they were more "responsible" and aware of their lapses in sheer thinking.) (Vanier)

5. Teaching conditions

1. Effect of the administration on budget & curriculum. (Vanier)

2. Having to teach too many sections and too many students. (Dawson)

3. Curriculum cannot be separated from class size. Many things we'd like to do in the classroom cannot be done with 40+ students. (John Abbott)

4. Classroom space too small for class sizes. Acoustics are sometimes very poor. Ventilation systems are noisy. (John Abbott)

5. I believe the impact of the wearing down of teachers needs to be taken into account in curricular development. Clear curricular goals can give teachers a renewed sense of mission; they can also discourage teachers if they feel they have not been consulted, if they feel students will not respond well, if they must abandon material they feel enthusiastic about. This is not to say that one should not engage in the exercise. (Vanier)

6. The CEGEP student: attitudes, preparation, and cultural context

1. Students need to perceive the importance of core subjects like English. To realize this, students need to choose their areas of English study and to enjoy their courses. (John Abbott)

2. The heavy student workloads and very tight scheduling of students in career programs, as well as their stage requirements and lock-step grids, give them very poor course selection and limited time and energy to commit themselves to the courses they do get into. And yet we are supposed to give them the same education and demand the same level of work of them as of others who are freer to choose courses and often less driven by their program demands. (Vanier)

3. Let's be honest. The students are a disaster (except 20%) We should teach accordingly. But good luck. (Vanier)

4. Students do not recognize the importance of English in their overall education. We have a very low priority for most of them, and if teachers set high standards, a lot of the students resent it! (Vanier)

5. The preoccupation students have with their part-time job --which can amount to thirty hours each week. How this makes education secondary in their lives. (Vanier)

6. What sort of English courses should be provided to students who will be living in an increasingly French Quebec society? (Lennoxville)

7. Too many students put their academic work low on their list of priorities, with part-time jobs higher, for example. Our discipline rates low even on that list, so our assignments in both reading and writing get sketchy attention from many students. (Vanier)

8. The abysmal failures of most registration systems place students arbitrarily in courses that they really don't want. This makes a farce of planning, freedom of choice, variety etc. (Vanier)

III. Appendix

Department of English
Vanier College
821 boul. Ste.-Croix
St. Laurent, Quebec
H4L 3X9

February 4, 1990

Dear Colleague:

Could you take a few minutes and respond to some questions about English studies at the CEGEPs?

As part of a DGEC research project on current English curriculum, we are asking teachers of English for their opinions and advice. We know that filling in a form like this is tedious, but you are at the centre of English curriculum and know it best. All responses, of course, will be strictly confidential. If you would be interested in meeting with us and discussing your ideas in greater detail, please include a note to arrange a time. We will be glad to come to your college.

We have included a stamped and preaddressed envelope, and we would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible.

Thanks for your help.

Arnold Keller Anne Blott

Vanier College
Department of English

Vanier College
821 boul. Ste.-Croix
St. Laurent, P.Q.
H4L 3X9
March 25, 1990

Dear Colleague:

We know, answering questionnaires is a bore. Ten things pile up on your desk and the questionnaire sinks to the bottom. Nobody reads the thing anyway, what difference does mine make in the total picture, etc.

The fact is that _we_ read them all, and take your views very seriously. And this questionnaire already has a 50% return rate from all over the province--a very gratifying level of response. But we'd like to make sure that your opinions get their fair weight too.

So, if you haven't taken the time yet, please answer the questions and make your comments known. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

Of course, if you've already answered, ignore this letter. Thanks for your help, and we'll be in touch soon with individuals who identified themselves and asked to be contacted.

Yours truly,

Anne Blott, Arnie Keller

P.S. We can send you a new copy if necessary.

Please answer in the space provided, using the back of the sheet as necessary.

1. Major decisions regarding the curriculum should be taken by:

   - the Provincial Coordinating Committee
   - a department of English
   - individual instructors
   - other (please specify).

2. Are there any authors who should be read by all students? If so, list three:

3. Are students taught too much, too little, or just enough of the tradition of literature written in English?

4. What percentage of your classroom time in literature classes do you spend on

   a) the mechanical skills of writing ______

   b) essay argument, organization, etc.? ____

5. How much weight do you give to grammatical correctness in essay writing?

6. How large a place do you think media studies should have in English curriculum?

   ____ None

   ____ a third

   ____ a half

   ____ more than half

7. How important is Canadian literature in your teaching? In your department's curriculum?

8. Do you feel that any sort of reading is as good as any other for what you want to teach?

9. Should there be any sequence of courses that all students should follow? If yes, should the sequence extend over 2, 3, or 4 semesters?

10. During your years at CEGEP, what significant changes have you made in your course descriptions and demands on the students? Briefly, why did you make those changes?

11. How well are second-language students served by the current curriculum?

___ well

___ adequately

___ poorly

12. Which of your curricular concerns does this questionnaire leave out?