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Academic Standards Committee²⁹
Study and Recommendation on Social Science Survey⁴⁹

The committee, in considering post-war problems, has re-examined the objectives of the college as stated in the catalog. It feels that quite evidently the educational system of the country must share a large portion of the responsibility for the war in which the nation is now engaged. In the educational system itself the colleges bear the greatest responsibility for the success or failure of education because the colleges train the teachers for the lower schools, and the colleges are less vulnerable to these movements of mass prejudice and hysteria which are sometimes directed against public education.

In view of these considerations the committee felt that it should consider seriously whether we are providing adequate subject matter to enable the students intelligently to fulfill their obligations of citizenship. The subject matter most obviously necessary to a realization of this objective is that of the social sciences. Professors Gould and Burt of the social science department were asked to meet with the committee during the discussion of the problem. The conclusions of the committee ^{may} vary. The can be summarized as follows:

1. The present system (9 hours social science, 6 hours psychology, philosophy or Bible) permits the student to take at least five courses which may have little relationship to one another and which assure no complete and well-rounded understanding of the nature and background of our society.
2. The alternatives to the present system are a series of specific required courses or a single extensive survey course required of all candidates for degrees.
3. After considerable study and discussion the committee decided that the survey course would be most likely to improve the preparation of the student to fulfill his obligations of citizenship.

The committee therefore wishes to recommend that the faculty instruct the social science department to prepare in considerable detail an outline of a course whose basic objective shall be the preparation of the student for his duties as a citizen upon whom as a college graduate the responsibilities of citizenship will be particularly heavy. [It is suggested that in the preparation of this outline the Columbia syllabus for Contemporary Civilization and the Chicago course in the Humanities, as well as similar syllabi of other institutions, be used as much as possible in view of the size of the task and the relatively small number of faculty members available to perform it. The course would probably require at least twelve semester hours of work and would run through the freshman and sophomore years. It would be required of all candidates for all degrees and would replace the present social science group requirements. This outline should

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be ready for presentation to the ~~curriculum~~ committee and the faculty by the first of May so that final action on it may be taken before the close of this academic year, and the course may begin in September 1945.

The Committee wishes to add a few additional explanatory comments. It is fully realized that literature, the natural sciences, and the arts also play a most important part in the development of good citizens. The reasons for recommending at present a survey course only in the social sciences are as follows:

1. It is apparently the experience of most schools which have tried survey courses that the social science survey is least difficult to introduce, the natural science survey most difficult, and the survey in literature and the arts somewhere between.
2. The social science department has expressed a desire to experiment with a survey course, and it is apparent that it is imperative that a new course of this nature can hardly succeed unless the instructors believe it can.
3. The committee considers that desirable survey courses may appear, it is preferable to start with one in a single area rather than to embark on several at once.
4. The committee wishes, however, to have the natural science people and the literature and arts people to be studying the feasibility of similar course in those fields.
5. The new course will require restudy and restatement of group requirements.

1 Unanimously approved.