Board of Regents approves new curriculum program

The Ohio Board of Regents has approved the initiation of an Individualized Curriculum Program (ICP) at YSU which will be offered on a trial basis for three years starting this fall quarter.

The ICP will enable students whose needs are not completely met by existing conventional programs to design an individualized curriculum especially suited to his or her background and needs. This provides the student alternative educational paths for reaching the university's currently offered undergraduate degrees.

Dr. Irwin Cohen, professor of chemistry here, was the first to propose, research, and formulate plans for an ICP format at YSU. He began taking his proposal through committees last November. He said at that time that about 60 colleges and universities in the country already were using an ICP format or similar program.

Director of counseling Dr. George Letchworth, Dr. Lawrence Looby, director of continuing education, assistant dean of student affairs Dr. C. David Bertelsen, and Dr. Thomas McCracken, assistant professor of English, also served on the early study committee for the ICP.

With the aid of a faculty advisor or committee, students in the program will be able to plan their own curriculum, including the major or area of concentration, all graduation requirements, and supporting studies experience.

No more than 20 students will be allowed in the ICP during its first year of operation, and an active total of no more than 40 in its second year or 60 in its third year. Those who apply after these limits are reached may apply again later; students will be chosen on the basis of academic work and urgency of the program, and on the basis of balance within the university.

Students should apply if they have special problems, interests or goals that may be met by multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary or other specialized curricula which fit the purposes of the ICP. Possibilities are limited only by the individual student's abilities, interests, and needs.

A student who wishes to enroll in the program will need to demonstrate, with the help of his faculty advisor or committee, that the individualized curriculum he or she proposes will serve a valid educational goal; this goal is not attainable within the regualr curricular structure of the university; the curriculum is feasible and the overall program will be of a scope and intensity comparable to the conventional programs leading to the degree being sought.

Students may submit preliminary proposals as soon as they have determined their purposes. Some may be ready early in their freshman year, but most are expected to apply after approximately two years of study. Students may, however, submit proposals at any time.

To apply, students should develop their own ideas, clarify objectives, formulate plan, and write a tentative proposal. The proposal should include a title, principle objectives in order to achieve a goal upon graduation,

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an outline of the total proposed program including completed work that may be relevant, and proposed graduation requirements compared with the standard requirements for the degree sought, including an explanation of any variations. The proposal should then be submitted to the director of the ICP. Dr. Cohen is serving as acting director at this time.

He will indicate how the student is to form his advisory committee, and will help the student choose its members. An advisory committee is not guaranteed to the student; it is up to the student to find faculty members who are convinced of the soundness of the proposal and who are willing to serve as advisors.

Once the proposal is approved by the dean of the school of college granting the degree ,it will not be withdrawn later by the university. Students may change the provsions by following the same procedures again, or transfer to any other university program subject to the usual university requirements.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Dr. Cohen at university number 746-1851, ext. 374.