The Toronto Scheme: The Undergraduate Curriculum in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the University of Toronto, 1945-2000

by

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Abstract

Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century, undergraduate degree requirements in the Faculty of Arts (later the Faculty of Arts & Science) at the University of Toronto were comprehensively reviewed and revised seven times. The records of these reviews demonstrate that the curricular changes of the second half of the twentieth century were substantial, reflecting attempts by curricular planners to shape the undergraduate program of study to accommodate broader social, economic, demographic, and epistemological changes. These changes therefore reflect the connections between the University and its local, provincial, and international communities.

These substantial changes, however, are balanced by consistent and recurrent patterns in curriculum across this period as curricular planners sought ways to implement sustained curricular goals into a changed institutional environment and a changed curricular framework. Collectively, these reviews demonstrate that the U of T maintained a distinct approach to undergraduate education from the beginning of this period through the end. This approach, referred to here as the “Toronto Scheme,” is characterized by the belief that specialized study can lead to liberal education, and that students should have access to multiple pathways through the degree.

This analysis of degree requirements over time has important implications for understanding higher education at the University of Toronto, in Canada, and internationally. Most importantly, this research helps to explain both the strong similarities and significant differences between American curricular structures and those in
place at the U of T. Additionally, this study of curriculum provides valuable insight into the role of the U of T's colleges in undergraduate instruction, further illuminating the effect of this relatively unique institutional structure on the history of the U of T. On a broader scale, the relationship indicated by this history of the curriculum between the U of T and other institutions in Ontario and Canada deepens our understanding of the nature of a Canadian system of or approach to higher education (or lack thereof). As such, the Toronto Scheme informs – and sometimes challenges – many of the assumptions currently made about Ontario, Canadian, and North American higher education.
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I am very grateful to a number of people who have been instrumental in my ability to complete this research.

Even prior to beginning my dissertation, my time in the Higher Education program at OISE has been all that I could have hoped for in a doctoral program. Each course, and every instructor, expanded my interest in and dedication to the field, and made me look forward to the opportunity to spend a lifetime engaging with ideas about postsecondary education.

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Staff members at the University of Toronto Archives were essential in my research, helping me uncover files that transported me back in time several decades. Sally Walker, Registrar of New College, and Glenn Loney, Assistant Dean & Faculty Registrar of the Faculty of Arts & Science, pointed me to additional essential resources that had not yet been entered into the historical record.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century, undergraduate degree requirements in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the University of Toronto were comprehensively reviewed and revised seven times. The curricular changes over this period were substantial, reflecting attempts by curricular planners to shape the undergraduate program of study to accommodate broader social, economic, demographic, and epistemological changes.

These substantial curricular changes, however, are balanced by clear links between the curriculum at the beginning of this period and the end of the century as these same generations of curricular planners sought ways to implement sustained curricular goals into a changed institutional environment and a changed curricular framework. These curricular connections uncover the assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education and about the structures that best support these goals that form the foundation of undergraduate curriculum at the U of T throughout this period.

This review of the undergraduate curriculum over time, therefore, illuminates curricular priorities and assumptions, both during the period under investigation and as the foundation of contemporary structures. Through these competing forces of change and stability, this review of curriculum over time describes an approach to undergraduate education distinct to the U of T.

1.1 ORIGINS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study emerged from my personal experience as a student and subsequent professional experience in undergraduate teaching and curriculum development. I became aware that assumptions about the goals and curricular structures of undergraduate education that were assumed to be common across North America – an assumption upon which much of the dialogue and scholarship in these areas is based\(^1\) – could not adequately explain the structure of undergraduate degree programs in the arts and sciences at Canada’s largest university. At first glance, the degree

\(^1\) This is less likely to take the form of an explicit assertion – that is, one would not expect to see a scholar of higher education state that there are no material differences between higher education in Canada and the United States – and more likely to take more casual and subtle forms. This can include: the use of American scholarship to explain or support phenomena in the Canadian context; the use of American and Canadian institutions as peer comparators or equivalent examples; or an assertion that conclusions or structures apply in general to the North American context. As can be gleaned from, for example, a review of recent publications in the *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, almost every piece of research on Canadian higher education (including my own) performs at least one of these three actions, especially, often out of necessity, the first. While certainly this also occurs in other national contexts, and while the parallels assumed may be perfectly appropriate in particular situations, the potentially problematic outcomes of such assumptions, when combined with the lack of research specific to Canadian contexts and the indications of substantial differences in higher education between the two countries, are discussed below.
requirements for the B.A. and the B.Sc. at U of T look very much like American undergraduate programs in schools of arts and science. Students enrol in the Faculty (rather than in a specific program), and spend some time in preparatory, general, or exploratory study before selecting a program of specialization. Students must meet requirements that normally provide for some breadth and some depth of study, with the remaining portions of the degree composed of electives selected by individual students. Students progress through the degree by accumulating credits for a particular number of independently-structured and assessed courses. These credits represent the equivalent of four years of full-time study, though students may complete the degree at any rate they wish. Access to courses is controlled by pre-requisite requirements and sometimes standing or program status. These structures allow for an almost infinite range of combinations of courses, such that it is entirely possible – or even likely – that no two students in even the largest of North American universities would pursue exactly the same undergraduate program of study.

These substantial similarities can lead those studying or discussing the university to speak about programs from across the two countries as if they were largely interchangeable. However, having completed a complicated set of general education requirements and a wide range of elective courses in my own American undergraduate program at an institution of comparable size, age, and organization to the U of T, I subsequently noted that these elements that had not only defined much of my own undergraduate education in the arts and sciences but that had been the subject of much discussion among my peers, my professors, and indeed the public more broadly simply did not reflect the degree requirements or program assumptions at the University of Toronto.

Indeed, at the U of T, some important differences from common structures of undergraduate education in the U.S. are immediately obvious. Most U.S. institutions offer only a single level of specialization – the major – while the U of T also offers specialist programs that provide almost double the amount of concentration in a single field (or in closely related areas). While some American programs offer an honours designation, there is no U.S. honours degree. And three-year (90 credit-hour) degrees, unheard of in the States, were until very recently an option for U of T students. These differences became increasingly evident as I completed research on

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2 See note 1 above.
undergraduate programs of study in North America for my own PhD studies and as a research assistant for the implementation of the current curriculum review and renewal process in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the U of T. Namely, I noted that while both Canadian and U.S. institutions normally mandate some distribution of study across fields, no Canadian institutions offer a comparable set of requirements that in any way resemble the often complex general education programs ubiquitous at U.S. institutions.4

To someone familiar with both systems, this collection of differences appears very significant because it describes structures – like general education in the U.S. and the honours degree in Canada – that are so central to the undergraduate mission. These differences, therefore, suggested to me that until their nature and extent are better understood, the presumption of equivalency, even at a very general level, between the fundamental goals and structures of undergraduate education in Canada and in the United States is indeed no more than a presumption.

For those who work and study in higher education in Canada, and in particular in areas of teaching and learning, student engagement, and the student experience, these potential differences are of substantial significance. The study of higher education remains a relatively small field internationally.5 The majority of research – and, consequently, as Altbach notes, the “major research paradigms”6 – originate in the United States, Britain, and Australia. Canadian higher education remains, as Jones writes, “a marginal enterprise.” He argues that:

there are very few universities which provide academic programs in the field and there are only a small number of academics who devote their attention exclusively to higher education issues. The result is that while some topics have been given relatively strong coverage in the literature, such as accessibility and government funding, there are a wide

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4 Emily Greenleaf, “Distribution Requirements: Notes and Observations” and “Curricular Competencies: Notes and Observations,” (University of Toronto: Unpublished, 2008). This research, produced in my capacity as a research assistant for the curriculum review process in the Faculty of Arts & Science, surveyed 22 and 79 institutions, respectively, in Canada and the United States and recorded, in the first case, requirements listed as breadth or distribution requirements in academic calendar and in the second, degree requirements focused on multi-disciplinary academic skills (including, for example, writing and quantitative reasoning).


range of very important issues in Canadian higher education that have received almost no attention at all.\(^7\)

The lack of Canadian research has therefore meant that “the small number of scholars working in the field are often forced to borrow frameworks and models developed by scholars working in other nations, especially in the United States.”\(^8\) The result has been that “the way Canadian scholars have come to view higher education in this country has been heavily influenced by their American and European counterparts.”\(^9\) The adoption of these frameworks may obscure issues that are unique or different in a Canadian context. As Trow argues (while discussing the limitations of applying American conclusions in a European context) “there is a danger of learning the wrong lessons and drawing inappropriate conclusions from the American experience.”\(^10\) Cormier provides a compelling example of this phenomenon within the field of sociology prior to the dedicated effort to develop Canadian approaches in that field, noting that “For many sociologists in Canada and elsewhere, the whole idea that sociology was objective, ahistorical, and value-free – that rigourously tested sociological knowledge is universally valid regardless of who produced it or where – was simply mainstream American sociology in disguise.”\(^11\)

The need to identify approaches and models appropriate to the Canadian study of higher education has been advocated by a number of scholars. Symons, reviewing progress in the movement towards Canadian studies, both as a field and as integrated across the disciplines, noted in 1995 that “the study of Canadian higher education is a key area of Canadian studies that is still surprisingly neglected”; Axelrod bemoans that fact that “As an historian of higher education, I have long been aware of the failure of scholars to address adequately a fundamental question about university development in North America: how can important differences between Canadian and American higher education be explained?”\(^12\)

\(^8\) Ibid, 203.
\(^9\) Ibid, 203.
This research addresses this research need in the context of undergraduate programs of study. The point of departure for this study is to uncover the fundamental assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education in the arts and sciences, and the assumptions about which curricular structures best support these goals, at Canada’s largest university – the University of Toronto. In other words, can a U of T model of or approach to undergraduate education in the arts and sciences be defined? If so, what does this model suggest about the significance of the apparent differences between the structures of undergraduate education at the U of T, and those structures common at American universities?

1.2 APPROACH AND GOALS OF THIS RESEARCH

In response to these needs and questions, the primary goal of this study is the identification and description of a U of T model of or approach to undergraduate education in the arts and sciences. To develop this model, in this study I identify the assumptions expressed by curricular committees about the goals of undergraduate education in the arts and sciences, and the assumptions expressed about which curricular structures would best support these goals. I also describe patterns and changes in degree requirements and academic policies over this fifty-five year period. These assumptions and patterns are used to describe a U of T model of or approach to undergraduate education in the arts and sciences.

Such a model would expand the field of the study of undergraduate education in Canada, and would allow for the investigation of the relationship of this approach or model to the assumptions and structures of other curricular models where these frameworks have already been well-established including, most notably, those from the United States. Furthermore, such a model would provide the foundation for an exploration of the implications of this approach to undergraduate education for various issues, including curricular content, pedagogical approaches, faculty work, student life, and organizational structures within departments and within the larger university. In addition, such a model can be used to explore the relation between undergraduate education at the U of T and the models in place at other institutions or in other jurisdictions. The ways in which this model is used for such investigations within this particular study is discussed below.

To address these goals, I have conducted an analysis of documents relating to the establishment of degree requirements and related academic policies to identify the assumptions
expressed during the development and review of curricular requirements, and the patterns in requirements that emerged in academic policies and regulations as they develop and change over time. My reasons for selecting this approach are shaped by the nature of several aspects of the issues under investigation. This includes the significance of the University of Toronto within the Ontario and Canadian context, and an understanding of the context-specificity and path-dependency of undergraduate curricular structures. I discuss each of these issues below. Based on this context and the goals of this study, I then describe the means by which I propose to identify a U of T model of or approach to undergraduate education in the arts and sciences.

**THE U OF T IN THE ONTARIO AND CANADIAN CONTEXT**

Identifying a U of T model is particularly important because of the substantial evidence that the undergraduate program at the U of T was, somewhat paradoxically, both unique and influential within English Canada, particularly during the first half of this period. Though Jasen’s study addresses an earlier time, she too, in analyzing the undergraduate liberal arts curriculum in English Canada, focused her study primarily on the University of Toronto. She writes that “the University of Toronto is discussed most frequently because, with its superior financial resources, it often took the lead in curricular developments and realized its goals more fully than did those institutions which were perpetually hampered by a lack of funds.”

Because of its size and resources, the U of T had more opportunity than other institutions to direct curricular priorities.

In the immediate post-war period, this status and influence was pronounced, so much so that the U of T was, during this time, often referred to as “the provincial university.” The University of Toronto educated a dramatic percentage of the Ontario and indeed Canadian undergraduate population, and produced most Canadian PhDs. McKillop writes that “on the eve of the [Second World] war, the total undergraduate population of the province was approximately 12,000 students, and 7,000 of them were enrolled at the provincial university.”

In their mid-century study of the humanities, Kirkconnell and Woodhouse note that “Toronto . . . is the only Canadian university which offers the Ph. D. in all departments of the humanities or supplies a full complement of graduate courses.” They counted 66 Toronto students in PhD programs in the humanities; the

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school with the second highest number was McGill, with four.\textsuperscript{17} The U of T consequently assumed and was assigned a central role in provincial postsecondary education: McKillop further writes that, at the conclusion of the war and facing the large numbers of new and returning students, “the University of Toronto little doubted that because of its size and the variety of its programs it would bear the brunt of any increase in post-war enrollment.”\textsuperscript{18}

Because the undergraduate program followed at the University of Toronto was the undergraduate program of most university-educated Ontarians, the influence of undergraduate education at the U of T was particularly strong, as its graduates moved into teaching positions in other postsecondary and secondary institutions, and into many positions of civic leadership. Indeed, many of the postsecondary leaders who made important decisions about the shape of undergraduate education during the massification of the 1950s and 1960s, including Murray Ross, Claude Bissell, and Howard Kerr, taught or completed their degrees at the U of T, and viewed the U of T’s model of undergraduate education as something to be emulated or to be avoided.

Indeed, Harris\textsuperscript{19} and Kirkconnell and Woodhouse\textsuperscript{20} have argued that the U of T offered a particular and unique undergraduate model of education that was not simply a facsimile of British or American programs, but was, they argued, uniquely and significantly Canadian. As such, the research here speaks not just to the experience and conclusions of a single institution. Indeed, ultimately, I hope this study will be a step towards the development of a detailed study of undergraduate curriculum in Canada, both by outlining the curricular patterns and assumptions about undergraduate education at an institution of significant national influence and by providing an approach and a point of departure for parallel studies at other institutions.

\textbf{RECOGNIZING THE CONTEXT-SPECIFICITY AND PATH-DEPENDENCY OF CURRICULUM}

The process of locating a Toronto model of undergraduate education must necessarily survey changes over time and take place within the context of a particular institution, for two primary reasons. First, many elements of higher education are substantially “path dependent” in that existing arrangements shape how they adapt to new pressures,”\textsuperscript{21} as described by Davies and

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, 125.
\textsuperscript{18} McKillop, \textit{Matters of Mind}, 548.
\textsuperscript{20} Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, \textit{The Humanities in Canada}.
Hammack, who compare the nature of student competition for undergraduate spaces in Canada and the United States. Therefore, to understand contemporary structures, we must understand the foundations upon which they are built. The U of T’s own Ian Drummond, professor of Political Economy and member of the Kelly Curriculum Review Committee in the late 1970s, argues that this is particularly true of the structures of curriculum: he writes that “an approach to university education can and does emerge through a series of piecemeal changes by which an existing fabric is modified, or remodeled.” In other words, the undergraduate program at any given moment does not represent the manifestation of an abstract philosophy of undergraduate education that is perfectly responsive to contemporary needs and environments. Instead, the curriculum is an organic, layered structure. Squires agrees, noting that “Where a course takes place is important not only in terms of regulations and resources (or the absence of them), but in the more subtle aspects of the setting: the traditions, norms, ethos, style and habits of particular departments, institutions, or sectors.”

Furthermore, this path dependency also suggests the value of an institutionally-specific approach, especially given that universities in Canada vary substantially at the provincial and, indeed, at the institutional level. While Lattuca conducts a study of extremely broad scope, comparing international models of curriculum from the earliest medieval universities to the present day, she nonetheless confirms the need for contextually-specific information, arguing that “Understanding curricula requires understanding the institutions in which they are embedded, and how both evolved over time.” She argues that the more specific the setting in which curriculum can be discussed, the more satisfactory will be the answers derived, writing that "The more distant the observer is from the learning experience, the more difficult it is to speak confidently about the nature of a curriculum and its effects on learning." Toombs and Tierney concur that “a curriculum is an artifact produced by a particular faculty for students at a particular institution.”

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22 University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
26 Ibid, 40.
The shape of undergraduate education, however, is also strongly influenced by forces outside the university. The second reason why a survey of curricular patterns and assumptions over time is vital is that, through such an approach, it becomes possible to capture the substantial influence of broader policy, demographic, and epistemological influences on the undergraduate program of study. Skolnik, for example, demonstrates how such forces influence higher education more generally, attributing the substantial differences between Canadian jurisdictions to “difference in size among jurisdictions . . . , differences in religion and, to a lesser but important degree, in language and culture, . . . [and] geography, demography, and economics.”

In the U of T context during this period, major shifts outside the institution played a substantial role in shaping undergraduate education; discussed in more detail throughout this study, these include the rising importance and changing epistemological structures of science; the upsurge of university-aged youth of the baby boom; changes in the way provincial policy and the public valued postsecondary education; and the fluctuations of the economy. These forces leave lasting influences on institutional and curricular structures long after the forces themselves have dissipated.

**INTERPRETING CURRICULAR DOCUMENTS**

The significance of the U of T in the Ontario and Canadian context and the context-specificity and path-dependency of undergraduate curricular structures, as described above, have indicated the need for a study of curriculum focused on a particular institution as this curriculum develops and changes over time. Therefore, I have focused my study on the University of Toronto between 1945 and 2000. The goals of this study further shape the particular approach I have used to select curricular data for review and the approach I have used to analyze this data. Below, I describe my use of the term curriculum in this study and the data I have selected to reflect this definition, which include documents associated with the work of curriculum committees and reviews and associated academic policies and regulations. I then describe what I perceive as the similarities between curricular documents and policy documents and, based on these similarities and the goals of this study, my consequent decision to conduct an analysis of these curricular documents as text.

This approach is driven in part by my use of the term curriculum in this study. The term “curriculum” refers to a student’s course of study, which can be understood in relatively narrow terms (for example, the topics addressed over the course of a student’s educational experience) or

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28 Skolnik, “Putting it All Together,” 327-29.
relatively broadly (for example, a student’s total educational experience). While the term curriculum has been used in other contexts to capture a wide range of educational structures and experiences, in this study, I have used the term “curriculum” to describe degree requirements – that is, the required components of a particular degree – as well as the academic policies that govern these requirements. In other words, I am reviewing the regulations that shape students’ undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences. In part, this is because this usage best reflects the understanding of the term “curriculum” and the mandates of curriculum review committees at the U of T during this period, as discussed in each curricular review. This definition thus provides the most effective means for analysis of the work of these committees. The focus on degree requirements, however, also reflects the goals of this study. As noted above, the primary aim of this study is to identify the assumptions held by curricular committees about the goals of undergraduate education in the arts and sciences, and the assumptions about which curricular structures best support these goals. Because of the values embedded within degree requirements and discussions or debates about degree requirements, these requirements and the curricular documents that describe their development are the most effective means for uncovering such assumptions.

In a university context, degree requirements (as opposed to specific program or course requirements) play a particularly important symbolic role in this regard. The environment of undergraduate education in the arts and sciences is a chaotic one. Institutional autonomy, and the lack of influence of professional accreditation in many arts and science fields, means that institutions are generally free to construct their own programs of study. There are, of course, some boundaries to this freedom imposed in some jurisdictions by transfer agreements, accreditation standards, or degree level expectations. In general, however, these guidelines are quite broad, allowing their requirements to be fulfilled in a wide range of ways which can generally be designed by the individual department or instructor. For example, the recently-developed Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UDLEs) in Ontario (paralleling the work of other governments internationally), provide only very broad guidelines, leaving institutions with near total flexibility in the ways in which they might choose to meet these expectations. For

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29 Lattuca and Stark outline the multiple (and sometimes conflicting) definitions of the term in wide use by “faculty, administrators, graduate students, and observers of higher education.” They write that:
- A college’s or program’s mission, purpose, or collective expression of what is important for students to learn
- A set of experiences that some authorities believe all students should have
- The set of courses offered to students
- The set of courses students actually elect from those available
- The content of a specific discipline
- The time and credit frame in which the college provides education.

30 There are, of course, some boundaries to this freedom imposed in some jurisdictions by transfer agreements, accreditation standards, or degree level expectations. In general, however, these guidelines are quite broad, allowing their requirements to be fulfilled in a wide range of ways which can generally be designed by the individual department or instructor. For example, the recently-developed Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UDLEs) in Ontario (paralleling the work of other governments internationally), provide only very broad guidelines, leaving institutions with near total flexibility in the ways in which they might choose to meet these expectations. For
academic freedom provide individual instructors with substantial flexibility in developing and teaching their courses.\textsuperscript{31} And the modular nature of the contemporary undergraduate curriculum, described in detail in Chapters 5 and 6, often allows students to select, from among multiple options, the means by which they can fulfill degree requirements (for example, students may be required to complete a course in the sciences or the humanities, but may select from a wide range of courses that will fulfill this requirement). Combined, these characteristics of the contemporary environment of undergraduate education mean that much of an individual student’s undergraduate experience – including the combination of courses pursued and the content and teaching in those courses – is unique to that student.

And yet despite this atomized nature of the contemporary curriculum, degree requirements in fact describe and define that which is shared by all students. They thus explicitly and intentionally represent expectations, goals, and outcomes for students on a broad basis. In this role, degree requirements define those elements that curriculum review committees have deemed important enough to require of each student. In so doing, degree requirements are statements of what undergraduates, upon completing their program, should know and be able to do. As Astin notes, “Just having a curricular requirement is a value.”\textsuperscript{32} This is the premise underlying studies identifying and critiquing the often implicit hierarchies of knowledge expressed in many curricular reviews and calls for curricular change.\textsuperscript{33}

Degree requirements also provide a further piece of information – they represent assumed connections between particular curricular structures and these curricular goals. In other words, degree requirements, in aiming to shape how students will develop particular knowledge and skills, are embedded with assumptions not just about what students should know, but also about how they best learn. In part, this occurs through the ability of degree requirements to influence the breadth,
depth, and sequence of a student’s course of study. Furthermore, while particular contributors to student learning – such as student-instructor interaction – cannot be mandated by degree requirements, curriculum can have a substantial influence on the processes of teaching and learning within an institution. At the U of T, for example, the Macpherson Committee attempted to shift pedagogy from lecture-based learning to discussion-based learning by changing course structures and examination regulations. Later, the introduction of the course credit system in the 1970s shifted the unit of knowledge from the year to the single course. Later still, curriculum committees saw the curriculum itself as a learning tool, guiding the student through cognitive development and meta-learning processes and providing opportunities for new discoveries about the nature of disciplines and of academic knowledge. Therefore, degree requirements are a particularly powerful means for uncovering assumptions about how goals in undergraduate education can be achieved through curricular structures.

In this research, in order to identify these assumptions I primarily reviewed two sets of data. A broader review of the archival documents associated with the Faculty of Arts & Science across this period indicated that, for the most part, discussions of curriculum at the Faculty level throughout this period were contained within the discussions of formal curricular review processes. Therefore, the first set of data consisted of the records of the seven curricular reviews that took place between 1945 and 2000. The records for the curriculum review committees are rich; the University of Toronto Archives has multiple holdings for each of these curricular reviews, often reflecting the records maintained by the committee chair or secretary. These holdings include many of the committee minutes, copies of correspondence received or sent by the committee, and copies of materials the committee developed or reviewed.

Additionally, I reviewed many of the divisional-level holdings for the Faculty of Arts & Science at the University of Toronto in search of related documents. This allowed me to review reports associated with curriculum but not tied directly to a formal curricular review process, such as the 1959 Woodside report on college instruction or the records of the 1974 committee charged with developing a liberal arts program option. Where archival records were not available, as was the case for the period following the Kelly Committee, I relied on documents stored elsewhere at the institution – I was kindly supplied with the New College Registrar’s records of the work of the Cook

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34 For example, the role of the standing curriculum committees is primarily limited to reviewing proposals from departments for new courses and programs.
Committee – or on publicly-available information, including the minutes of institutional governance committees.

I also wished to identify the patterns of actual curriculum requirements and related academic policies. These curricular requirements and policies form the second set of data, and include types of requirements (such as specialization and distribution requirements), required courses or fields, classification of courses (into, for example, the humanities, social sciences, and sciences), examination processes and policies, and admission and standing requirements. For this information I relied on the academic calendars. These two sets of data, viewed across the fifty-five years of this study, allowed me to identify the assumptions underlying these requirements through the means described below.

Additional potential sources of information, including most notably interviews with members of curriculum committees, were not explored for two reasons. First, given the goal of this study to explore curriculum development and change over a fifty-five year period, it was important that I rely on equivalent sets of data for each curricular review. Because of the time frame and the varied degree of information about committee memberships available (in some cases, it was not possible to discern the full memberships of these committees), I did not want to include additional types of data for some reviews and not for others.

Second, the way I have conceptualized committee assumptions and decisions necessitates a focus on the documentation developed through committee work. Within this study, assumptions about curricular goals and structures are ascribed to the committee as a whole. Given the nature of these curricular documents, it is generally only possible to describe assumptions expressed by the committee as a unit, especially when these assumptions are implicit within particular committee recommendations. Records of curricular discussions are generally summaries of the conclusions reached through a deliberative process, and while they may provide an overview of this deliberative process (that is, a summary of the primary positions held within the committee, and the ways in which these positions influenced the committee’s ultimate conclusions), they often do not provide substantial detail about individual voices. Therefore, while it is clear that opinions and assumptions within committees varied, many of the curricular documents reviewed here represent the collective and summative statements of the committee (in that they are entered into the committee’s record through meeting minutes or other committee documents), and it is these collective statements that
form the basis for the “assumptions” ascribed to the committee, though not necessarily to each individual member of that committee.

The assumptions expressed through these curricular documents are identified through an analysis of these curricular documents as text. This method of analysis draws on the similarities between these curricular documents and policy documents. Curricular policies within an institution—that is, the degree requirements and the associated academic policies that govern them—share many characteristics with policy documents in other parts of the higher education landscape. Namely, as Ball, Codd and Taylor each describe, policy documents speak from a position of authority (that is, statements in policy documents are understood to be sanctioned by the institution or organizational body they represent) and they are intended to produce or change action and practice. Like policy documents, curricular policies and regulations are sanctioned documents that are intended to shape the undergraduate academic experience.

The relationship between these curricular documents and policy documents points to potential means of analysis of these documents. In the study of policy, many scholars have drawn a distinction between analysis for policy and the analysis of policy. As Codd describes, analysis for policy takes the form of an evaluation of the potential policy means by which a desired outcome may be met. In the context of higher education, therefore, a desired outcome at the provincial level may be particular levels of attendance or access; an analysis for policy would assess a range of policies to determine which of these would be most likely to achieve this outcome. To draw the analogy to curriculum, such outcomes may include the achievement of particular learning objectives; an “analysis for policy” of potential curricular structures may therefore seek to identify initiatives or interventions that support the ability of students to meet these learning goals. As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, it is this type of research that characterizes much of the existing scholarship on postsecondary curriculum. Key to this approach is an established set of goals or desired outcomes which the analyst wishes to evaluate. These goals or desired outcomes are not necessarily those established within policy documents themselves; the outcomes are defined by the analyst, and may

38 Codd, “The Construction and Deconstruction of Educational Policy Documents.”
be in support of existing bureaucratic and managerial structures, or, as is often the case in critical policy analysis, might seek outcomes that challenge these structures.

My goal with this project, however, is not to assess the ability of the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T to meet particular goals or outcomes. Instead, I seek to understand how the committees themselves conceptualized the goals of undergraduate education and the curricular structures that would best support these goals. Understanding the assumptions that have shaped these goals and structures and the curricular patterns that emerge as a result allow for the identification of a U of T model of undergraduate education. Instead of an analysis for policy, therefore, this goal indicates the need for an analysis of policy. As Codd describes, the goal of an analysis of policy is “the critical examination of existing policies.”

Once again, however, scholars of policy studies make a distinction between two primary goals in the analysis of policy. In attempting to answer the question “what is policy?”, Ball draws a distinction between “policy as text” and “policy as discourse.” To put it simply, reading policy as text focuses on what is said, while reading policy as discourse focuses on who speaks, how and when, and how these statements affect the experience of multiple populations. Policy as discourse, therefore, as Codd writes, focuses on the processes through which policy texts are produced, while policy as text focuses on interpreting the text that is produced. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of research in higher education, this distinction may also be understood in terms of the respective disciplines most closely related to each approach. Reading policy as text is grounded in literary textual analysis, providing an interpretation of the meaning or meanings of policy documents. This interpretation may draw on, as the interpretation in this study does, a range of poststructural theoretical lenses. Policy as discourse is most closely linked to sociology and the social relationships embedded in the interactions between the individuals and groups engaged in and affected by policy development and implementation.

For me, the goals of this study indicate that an interpretation of the text that is produced – in other words, a reading of policy as text – provides the best opportunity to make explicit the assumptions embedded within curricular documents about the goals of undergraduate education and

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about the curricular structures that best support these goals. These assumptions are identified through an interpretive reading of the text of curricular documents to identify a model of undergraduate education in the arts and sciences at the University of Toronto. This model is defined by the assumptions expressed through curricular documents about what undergraduate students should know – regardless of specific program – and about the curricular structures that best support these goals.

This analysis of curricular documents as text identifies curricular assumptions in committee discussions in one of two ways. First, these assumptions may appear as explicit statements within curriculum documents. For example, a committee may state the claim (as did the ad hoc group of science instructors that formed in response to the Macpherson proposals) that science studies must be carefully sequenced. Alternatively, assumptions may be implicitly embedded within curriculum documents, emerging through statements about problems or goals, or through the curricular structures recommended to address these problems or goals. For example, a curriculum committee may propose a science program that is more carefully sequenced than the equivalent humanities program (as did the General Science Course Committee). The assumption implicit in this proposal – that science studies require careful sequencing of courses – may be inferred to be similar to the assumption, described above, stated explicitly during the discussion of the Macpherson Report.

I have called both of these types of statements “assumptions” to highlight the fact that they are statements of opinion or experience, and are not necessarily correlated with particular student or learning outcomes. Committee discussions and recommendations treat these assumptions as givens, but both within the U of T context across different periods of time, and especially when compared to other institutions and jurisdictions, we see that different assumptions are held. As noted above, these assumptions are ascribed not to individual committee members but to the committee as a unit.

Importantly, while curricular policies outline these assumptions by highlighting curricular priorities and describing the structures that are intended to support these priorities, other curricular documents – including the recommendations of curriculum committees and the discussions that shaped these recommendations – provide substantial further insight into the nature of these assumptions. In proposing curricular change, as in other contexts of policy change, curriculum committees must argue for the necessity of a particular regulation or approach. To do so, they must present elements of the existing situation as “problems,” and propose regulations or curricular policies or structures that will, they implicitly or explicitly argue, resolve these problems. Similarly,
committee members may identify opportunities or goals, which curricular recommendations are then designed to fulfill.

As scholars in the field of critical policy analysis argue, however, the problems that serve as a starting point for policy discussions, even though presented as such in policy documents, are often not objectively defined. The identified problems in fact represent, as Codd describes, “values, assumptions and ideologies” on the part of committee members. The identification of certain problems and not others, and the explanation and contextualization of these problems, is often presented objectively, and certainly is often related to observable events or circumstances. However, the way in which these events or circumstances are contextualized and interpreted by the committee identifies the problem or goal that comes to be associated with this issue. In this study, for example, the expansion of the postsecondary population in the 1960s certainly occurred, but whether this expansion is interpreted as a challenge or as an opportunity by curricular committees, and how this expansion is presented in curricular discussions, exposes assumptions on the part of committee members about the implications of this influence. Therefore, how and whether particular institutional or broader environmental influences (such as shifts in the provincial policy, economic, or social environment) are interpreted as problems or opportunities tells us much about the assumptions about undergraduate education made by curriculum committees.

Information about assumptions about what students should learn and the structures that best support this learning expressed by curriculum committees is also found in the nature of the solutions, intended to address these problems and goals, that are proposed by curriculum committees. Any problem or goal may be approached through a range of curricular structures; which curricular structures committees develop and support in response to identified problems and goals, as well as the way in which they advocate for particular solutions, again expresses assumptions about undergraduate education. Like problems and goals, the assumptions may be expressed explicitly, but may also be expressed implicitly through the nature of the solutions identified by curriculum committees.

Therefore, when reviewing the curricular documents for expressions of the assumptions and values, I sought both explicit statements of assumptions as well as implicit assumptions about the goals and structures of undergraduate education embedded in the identified curricular “problems”

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43 Codd, “The Construction and Deconstruction of Educational Policy Documents,” 236.
identified and solutions proposed by the committees. The interpretation of curricular documents to identify patterns and assumptions in this study is a two-stage process, dictated by the nature of the documents under review and the specific aim of this project. The first step is the translation and synthesis of the archival documents into a description of the issues discussed and the decisions rendered by the curriculum review committees. In the case of this study, the curricular documents often did not consist of full committee reports, summarizing discussions that identify problems and proposed solutions, but instead consisted primarily of a disparate set of documents, each incomplete on its own, which first needed to be collected, synthesized, and analyzed to allow further interpretation of their implications to take place. I have addressed the issues discussed and conclusions rendered by the curriculum review committees thematically in the section of this thesis that discusses each committee’s work, providing a summary of the problems, goals and solutions identified by each committee, as well as, to the extent possible, the discussions and debates leading to the identification of these problems, goals and solutions.

In addition to providing the foundation for the next level of analysis, my goal has been to explicate these committee discussions, as well as other major institutional and provincial events that directly influenced them, as comprehensively and in as much detail as possible in order that future researchers may have access to detailed information in a more usable format than that provided by basic archival documents alone, and in a format that clearly outlines the major themes, disagreements, areas of consensus, and priorities as I have interpreted them from the primary documents. While these interpretations and syntheses inevitably present conclusions that represent the researcher’s own priorities and biases, they are nonetheless developed in part in the hope that a wider range of future researchers will have access to a detailed record of curricular decisions and requirements at the U of T, or at least in the hope that these researchers may be directed to particularly useful events or documents in previous curricular reviews.

The second step in this process of interpreting curricular documents is the identification and analysis of the assumptions and patterns that emerge from this synthesis, especially as they develop, change and remain stable over time. Gale argues that a historical framework allows researchers to identify a series of “historical epochs” within the understanding or interpretation of a particular policy issue and within the proposed solutions or actions addressing that issue, and that these epochs

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highlight the fact that policy decisions are “temporary and contextual.” As Giroux and Tierney argue, curricula must be understood as embedded in particular epistemological, social, historical, and political contexts and therefore as expressing particular values and assumptions. As Tierney writes, “we cannot consider curricular models divorced from the contexts in which they are situated. Not only must we understand the organizations in which curricula operate, but we must also investigate the cultures that surround the curriculum.” Similarly, drawing on this understanding of curriculum as reflection of broader values and assumptions, and in an attempt to highlight the interaction between goals and environment that characterizes the curriculum, Lattuca defines higher education curriculum as “academic plans in context.” Degree requirements, in their capacity to uncover values and assumptions, provide this contextualization of academic programs, and these distinct historical periods of curriculum change provide one form of contextualization of particular policy recommendations as a starting point for further interpretation and interrogation of these decisions. In an iterative and inductive process, the identification of the problems and solutions identified in curricular documents allows for the delineation of several epochs or periods in these patterns and assumptions. Within this thesis, this analysis follows the synthesis and analysis of the curricular reviews within a given period. Each of these periods is represented by Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

As an example of this process, Chapter 5 identifies, among others, a particular “problem” noted by members of Berlyne Curriculum Review Committee: the unstructured nature of many undergraduate courses of study during the initial years of the New Programme. As solutions to this problem, they proposed that the provision for structured, specialized study should be incorporated into degree requirements. Both the identification of this as a problem and the proposed solution expose assumptions that structured and specialized study provided a more effective education, and therefore that undergraduate degrees should incorporate requirements for this kind of study. Other curricular reviews occurring at a similar time echoed similar assumptions in their identified problems.

48 Ibid, 45.
49 Lattuca and Stark, Shaping the College Curriculum, 4. This definition reflects that used by much of the existing scholarship on postsecondary curricula (discussed in Chapter 2), which typically reviews the structures and requirements of undergraduate programs within an institutional, national, epistemological, or historical context.
and goals and proposed solutions, and this period of curricular reform at the U of T is therefore identified in part by its prioritization of structure in the undergraduate curriculum.

Once the entire fifty-five year period has been subject to this analysis, I and future researchers have a substantial foundation upon which further analysis and interpretation addressing undergraduate education at the U of T and more broadly can be built. The final two chapters of this dissertation pursue some of these potential further lines of inquiry, although many additional possibilities remain. Chapter 6 represents a broader process of identification and interpretation of assumptions and patterns across the full period under review. Taken together, these patterns and assumptions describe the U of T model of or approach to undergraduate education in the arts and sciences that this study has set out to identify. Furthermore, the nature of this model or approach suggested important insight into the question that initially drew me to this topic: the obvious similarities and intriguing differences between curricular structures at the U of T and those I was familiar with in the U.S. context. An analysis of these similarities and differences as illuminated by the research into this fifty-five year period of curriculum, also discussed in Chapter 6, itself further illuminates the U of T model. Finally, Chapter 7 describes additional ways in which the analysis of the curricular reviews and the identification of the U of T model can serve as a starting point for inquiry into a wide range of potential future research.

LIMITATIONS

The primary limitation of this study is the scope of the voices represented in defining the approach to undergraduate education in the arts and sciences at the U of T; the U of T model defined by this study should not be assumed to reflect the goals, values and beliefs of the entire U of T community. It is inevitable that the conclusions drawn through the approach described above will reflect the material that has been preserved, as opposed to that which was not part of the official record; and the views of those selected to sit on curriculum committees, as opposed to those voices which were not part of the decision-making process, including, in the early part of this period, students. Relying primarily on committee records may also obscure the contributions of support staff, including administrative and research assistants, registrarial staff acting in a consultative role, and staff contributing to the effort to move recommendations through institutional governance processes.
Indeed, as described above, this study is not designed to focus on the processes of curriculum development. As part of the discussion of assumptions and patterns, this study does highlight, where relevant, where the recommendations of curriculum committees and the implemented requirements or policies diverge. However, as an analysis of curriculum documents as texts, the focus of this study is not on the translation of the recommendations of curricular committees into actual degree requirements and policies (except in cases where this implementation process was the work of a separate committee established for this process) because, in the focus on assumptions and patterns, the priority of this study is on what was recommended by the committees and what was ultimately implemented. The study of the process of the translation of recommendations into requirements and policies would shift the focus from the decisions – and the assumptions and the patterns therein – to the organizational structures within which these decisions were made. However, this focus on the content of curricular documents may obscure the iterative relationship between curriculum and the broader context of curricular requirements and changes.

Because this study focuses on committee discussions, decisions and recommendations, it draws on events and influences in the broader environment of the U of T, including changes in provincial policy and the postsecondary system in Ontario, and changes in the role of the university in social and economic mobility and capital, to explain curricular change. The curricular changes that occurred during this period, however, not only reflect but also facilitate and shape changes in the U of T’s local, provincial and international environment. For example, the changes made during the 1960s and 1970s not only responded to the pressures of massification, but in fact facilitated further expansion of access and participation. Curricular changes that allowed for more part-time study potentially shifted the demographics of university attendance. Because this study focuses on identifying the influence of these changes on the curricular assumptions voiced and the curricular decisions made, this complementary focus on the effect of the curricular changes ultimately implemented is left relatively unexplored.

This is not because these effects are deemed unimportant or even secondary. Instead, it is because of what I perceive as the necessarily sequential nature of research into undergraduate curriculum in Canada of which I see this study as a foundational element. This research has identified the major events and influences that interact with the curriculum. Because the relationship between curriculum and the U of T’s broader context is iterative, the research presented here clearly indicates potential avenues that were not previously available for the investigation of the effects of
curricular changes on the U of T’s institutional, provincial and international context, and on the social, policy, economic and epistemological changes indicated by curricular change. In other words, using events and influences from the U of T’s environment as a lens onto curriculum change allows for the subsequent use of these curriculum changes as a lens through which to further investigate these events and changes in the broader postsecondary environment, and as a lens through which to investigate the effect of curriculum change on these events and contexts. Through this is not a focus of this study, some of the many potential avenues for this further research are described in Chapter 7.

There are also limitations to this study imposed by the topics addressed by committee members. Some of these absences may be surprising. For example, with the exceptions addressed in this study, the committees generally did not discuss the influence of other divisions of the university or other educational sectors on their curricular decisions. For example, with the exception of the general science degree, discussed in Chapter 3, curricular committees paid little attention to the role of the arts and science undergraduate degree in preparation for further professional education; the committees similarly generally did not discuss the role of the secondary school curriculum in shaping undergraduate education. The committee’s consideration of the degree for the most part began and ended with the degree itself; as such, potential links with other educational sectors are for the most part not discussed here.

Finally, those familiar with the U of T might note some absences in an institutional context. First, this study does not discuss the Bachelor of Commerce program. Throughout this period, the B.Com. was a distinct program with its own focus on professional preparation and its own curriculum, admissions process, faculty members and, indeed, curricular planning process. A review of divisional structures conducted in 1979 – the middle of the period under review – indicates that only Toronto and Carleton offered a Commerce degree in the same Faculty as the B.A. or B.Sc. The administrative separation of the program at Toronto combined with the overwhelming tendency for Commerce degrees to be offered in a separate Faculty at other Canadian institutions suggested that it would most usefully be explored in a separate context.

Second, this study does not thoroughly review curricular change on the U of T’s newer campuses, Scarborough and Mississauga. As described in more detail in Chapter 4, the Scarborough

50 University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
and Erindale (later the University of Toronto Mississauga) campuses were so strongly influenced by their own distinct populations, educational priorities, and locations that they very quickly argued for and adopted varying degrees of autonomy over their own undergraduate programs. In the case of Scarborough, this included designation as a separate Faculty of Arts & Science, while Mississauga remained a college in the Faculty of Arts & Science somewhat longer, but nonetheless developed curricular structures more appropriate to its own needs. As such, discussion here of curriculum in the Faculty of Arts & Science is for the most part restricted to the U of T’s St. George (downtown) campus.

1.3 Structure of the Study

Following a review of the existing literature on curriculum in higher education and at the University of Toronto, this study provides an overview of curricular reform at the U of T during the second half of the twentieth century. During this period, there were seven major curricular reviews; some of these were accompanied by implementation committees that further shaped curricular structures and requirements.

These reviews have been organized into three major eras of curricular reform, each representing two or three efforts at curriculum review that demonstrate similar curricular patterns and assumptions: the revision of the general arts and general science degree programs in the late 1940s and early 1950s; the abandonment of the parallel general and honours streams in the late 1960s and the consequent establishment and review of the New Programme through the 1970s; and, finally, the attempts to re-introduce structure into the degree and manage the fiscal and enrolment challenges that plagued the university through the 1980s and 1990s. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, these three eras parallel broader changes in the policy, demographic, and epistemological context of the U of T. Each of these sections concludes with an analysis of the patterns and assumptions defining that era.

Collectively, these reviews strongly affirm the unique nature of the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T, especially when it is compared to curricular structures and beliefs ubiquitous in the United States. As is discussed in detail in Chapter 6, the collection of choices represented in these reviews also explains both the strong similarities and significant differences between American curricular structures and those in place at the U of T. At mid-century, the U of T’s curriculum resembled undergraduate programs at Oxford or Cambridge more than it did programs at Harvard
or the University of Michigan. The significant pressures and changes in the university’s broad environment - most notably, the massive expansion in student numbers of the 1960s – led the U of T to adopt curricular structures that much more clearly resembled those in place in the U.S. However, in adopting those curricular structures, this review of curricular patterns and assumptions over time demonstrates that the U of T did not adopt the underlying assumptions about the goals and desired structures of undergraduate education that shaped U.S. undergraduate programs, as becomes evident through the choices made in subsequent decades as the U of T adapted its existing patterns and beliefs to its new structures. Instead, the U of T maintained a distinct approach to undergraduate education that stretches from the beginning of this period through the end. This approach is characterized by the belief that specialized study can lead to liberal education, and that students should have access to multiple pathways through the degree. These beliefs express sharply different assumptions about the fundamental goals of undergraduate education from the philosophy and practice of general education that underlies nearly every undergraduate program in the United States.

Importantly, therefore, this review of degree requirements over time helps to explain both the strong similarities and significant differences between American curricular structures and those in place at the U of T. Additionally, as is discussed in Chapter 7, the analysis of curriculum provides valuable insight into the role of the U of T’s colleges in undergraduate instruction, further illuminating the effect of this relatively unique institutional structure on undergraduate education the U of T. On a broader scale, the relationship indicated by this review of the curriculum between the U of T and other institutions in Ontario and Canada deepens our understanding of the nature of a Canadian system of or approach to higher education (or lack thereof). As such, the Toronto Scheme informs – and sometimes challenges – many of the assumptions currently made about Ontario, Canadian, and North American higher education.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Despite the fact that undergraduate education in the arts and sciences is, as noted in Chapter 1, understood as an essential and central contributor to the personal and professional development of individual students and of the social and economic well-being of communities and cities, the undergraduate curriculum has been the subject of surprisingly little formal research. Barnett and Coate confirm this discrepancy, writing that while:

All around the world, higher education is expanding rapidly, governments are mounting inquiries into higher education . . . and more money is being spent on higher education . . . And yet, despite all this growth and debate, there is very little talk about the curriculum. What students should be experiencing is barely a topic for debate. What the building blocks of their courses might be and how they should be put together are even more absent from the general discussion. The very idea of curriculum is pretty well missing altogether.  

This is particularly true in the Canadian context with its more limited research on higher education in general. Nonetheless, there is a relatively wide range of scholarship that can inform, and indeed in many cases is essential to understanding, the wide range of influences on undergraduate curriculum in Canada.

As described in Chapter 1, this study adopts a historical approach because curricula are grounded both in institutional history and in the broader policy and demographic context in which that institution is situated. This review of the relevant research, therefore, in addition to surveying the existing research on university curricula, then reviews the research on undergraduate education in Ontario and Canada in the second half of the twentieth century, and investigates the historiography of undergraduate education in the arts and sciences at the U of T. Finally, because each iteration of a program reflects that which came before, from this history, an overview of curricula at the U of T in the period from its inception to the mid-twentieth century, when this study begins, is provided.

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52 I have focused here and in my research on the study of curriculum at the postsecondary level, and specifically at universities because of the significance of a number of factors that distinguish curriculum in universities from other educational sectors. Discussed in Chapter 1, these include institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and the individualized nature of the contemporary undergraduate curriculum. These factors introduce substantial variability at the institutional, instructor, and individual student level that creates a substantially different context from that which informs the curricular policy and practice in place in the second or college sectors.
2.1 **THE STUDY OF CURRICULUM IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

For the purposes of identifying the work that is most relevant to this study, I have found it useful to establish a broad division within the existing research on undergraduate education in Canada, the United States, and England – the countries of the most direct relevance to the U of T. This division makes a distinction between research on the curriculum based on whether or not the research takes as its starting point a set of assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education and of the structures that best support these goals.

The first of these two groups – that which does take a set of assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education and of the structures that best support these goals – includes several types of scholarship: the relatively large collection of books and articles, written primarily by scholars but for a popular audience, that advocate for particular curricular content or structures; literature on curricular change; and research connecting particular curricular structures to specific desired student learning outcomes. While eminently useful within a particular context in assisting institutions and scholars find ways to research those goals or implement those structures, this type of scholarship has limited applicability in places with different goals or structures. Nonetheless, understanding the specific limitations of this type of research, and of the potential implications of not fully accommodating these limitations, is essential to this study.

Within the Canadian context, these limitations are particularly acute because this literature for the most part comes from other places. As discussed in the Chapter 1, the formal academic study of higher education in general remains a small field. In his survey of the academic field of higher education, Altbach argued in 1996 that while “there is a great need for expert knowledge and data about all aspects of higher education . . . there has been surprisingly little research and analysis concerning higher education until the very recent period.”\(^{53}\) Furthermore, Altbach argues that because of the applied nature of much higher education research, “The international centers of the field control most of the publications, and the major research paradigms originate in these countries”\(^{54}\) – namely, the United States, Britain and Australia. Consequently, the subjects identified as priorities for investigation and the frameworks used to study these subjects derive from the priorities of these regions and jurisdictions and may not fully reflect priorities and frameworks in place in Canada.

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\(^{54}\) Ibid, 7.
One type of publication that assumes particular goals for undergraduate education and related supporting curricular structures are books and articles, often of a popular (rather than scholarly) nature, most often written by university faculty and administrators describing – usually in concerned tones – the current state of undergraduate education and learning. In recent decades, this has most frequently taken the form of expressions of concern over the limited academic skills or motivations of contemporary students 55 or the lack of particular required content in the undergraduate program of study 56 – normally that which would, the authors argue, transmit a particular set of personal or political values (such as liberal democracy or the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake). Sometimes, too, these statements express broader concern about the state of the university in general, either that it has prioritized vocational training over study in the liberal arts, 57 or that it has prioritized research above its teaching mission. 58 Others urge a critical reinterpretation of common assumptions about undergraduate education or the university as an institution. 59 Each of these expressions of concern are normally accompanied by calls for reform, either to the goals and mandate of the contemporary North American university or to the undergraduate program of study. 60

Ultimately, such statements of crisis and calls for reform represent something positive – a conviction that undergraduate education is terribly important to the health of society – but take as a

58 See, for example, Tom Pocklington and Alan Tupper, No Place to Learn: Why Universities Aren’t Working (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002); Larry Cuban, How Scholars Trumped Teachers (New York: Teachers’ College Press, 1999).
60 For example, Stanley Fish, “What Should Colleges Teach?”
given a particular goal for student learning or role of the university that in fact represents a personal stance or particular political or social paradigm. Furthermore, these statements often speak to an abstract idea (or ideal) of the university rather than an institution grounded in a particular historical, policy, cultural, and demographic context.61

These limitations do not mean, however, that these works cannot contribute to the study of curriculum in higher education. Such statements, especially when taken collectively, can indicate important currents in the academic and public discussion of the role of the university. They can also influence these discussions: occasionally, these types of pleas and polemics can become foundational texts in the higher education literature – as is most notably the case with John Cardinal Newman’s *Idea of a University.*62 Finally, they can provide potential insights into the interpretation of particular statements on the part of curriculum committees who, after all, are made up of a collection of individuals who enter curricular discussions with their own existing assumptions and paradigms about what constitutes appropriate goals and outcomes for undergraduate education.

A second subset of research that assumes a particular understanding of the goals and appropriate structures of undergraduate education is the research focused on curricular change. The research on curricular change constitutes a substantial portion of the American research about the undergraduate curriculum conducted primarily by and for scholars of higher education. Such research may take the form of a description of the mechanisms by which institutions do or should arrive at new curricular structures;63 descriptions or assessments of efforts at curricular reform;64 and statements of direction for reform advocated by institutional or national task forces.65 Within this literature, the assumed

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goals of undergraduate education in the U.S. are rarely explicitly investigated or articulated. These assumptions nonetheless form a common foundation upon which recommendations for curricular development and review are built. For example, Kimball notes that the series of major, national level reports on curriculum that were released in the 1980s all shared, but never articulated, common assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education and the means by which those goals were best met. These goals are grounded in the philosophy of general education, a set of degree requirements that are neither part of the student’s program of specialization nor freely-selected electives and which aim to provide broad and common education to specialization nor freely-selected electives and which aim to provide broad and common education to undergraduate students (general education is discussed in Chapter 6, where I argue that we do not have a comparable curricular structure in Canada). As Miller illustrates, and as is discussed in Chapter 6, there is a clear, coherent, and historically consistent set of assumptions about the goals of general education that has resulted in the relative agreement about the structure and nature of general education across the United States. These assumptions take for granted that the important work of undergraduate education takes place not in specialized study but rather in general education programs that provide a broad and common experience to all students. These assumptions in turn shape statements and expectations for successful or appropriate curricular structures. Indeed, a number of scholars have attempted to highlight the value-laden nature of many of these calls for reform. Tierney, for example, notes that:

The recent critics [of undergraduate education] have not only dominated the discussion about the nature and purpose of higher education, they have also set the terms around which curricular solutions have been proposed. For example, curricular coherence has been advocated for what we conceive to be an educated person reared in Western society who must confront the technological imperatives of the twenty-first century.
A collection of essays edited by Margolis reminds readers that every curriculum is accompanied by a “hidden curriculum” of often unspoken but nonetheless influential values and assumptions that shape both actual curricular requirements and way those requirements are implemented.69 Evidence of these assumptions is readily available in the ubiquity of phrases that indicate an existing curricular agenda upon which recommendations for change are built. For example, Dressel70 and Conrad and Pratt71 propose models for curriculum change that promise to provide curricular planners with “both a rational and necessary series of steps to arrive at a sound program.”72 Lattuca and Stark argue that “Disciplinary perspectives impede curricular reform,”73 suggesting that good curricula are grounded outside the disciplines, not within them. Numerous publications on curricular reform take for granted the curricular goal of “coherence,”74 which is understood to mean connections between multiple fields of study. These goals may very well represent the predominant models of undergraduate education in place in the United States and may therefore be a perfectly suitable point of departure for discussions on means of moving closer to these ideals, but the fact that much of the research is grounded in a particular set of assumptions limits its utility in alternative contexts, including Canada.

A closely related type of research includes studies that explore curricular means to meet particular outcomes for student learning. These outcomes may include issues like student access to postsecondary education, student retention, deep learning, or the acquisition of particular knowledge, skills, and values.75 Because curriculum in these studies is a one among several means to broad learning outcomes and not necessarily an independent research end, their focus is often substantially broader than degree requirements. Studies like Astin’s What Matters in College,76 Kuh,

70 Paul L. Dressel, Improving Degree Programs.
72 Dressel, Improving Degree Programs, 8 (emphasis mine).
Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt and Associates’ *Student Success in College*,77 or the Boyer Commission’s report on *Reinventing Undergraduate Education*78 all identify elements of undergraduate education that bridge curriculum (such as integrative or research-based capstone experiences), pedagogy (such as authentic assessment and student-centred learning), and co- and extra-curricular elements of the student experience that together contribute to the achievement of the student outcomes they identify as priorities. As in the prescriptions for curricular reform described above, the goals described in these works — especially those that promote the acquisition of particular knowledge, skills or values — cannot be assumed to apply across all contexts.

More generally, however, such research is also useful as a reminder of the sometimes artificial distinction between curricular and co- and extra-curricular elements of the undergraduate experience, as well as the similarly porous distinction between curriculum and instruction or pedagogy. The challenge of articulating and accepting the boundaries and limits of curriculum was not lost on the U of T’s own curriculum committees. The committees in charge of implementing the New Programme in the late 1960s and early 1970s in particular struggled with ways to expand the scope and influence of the curriculum without overstepping the boundaries of departmental and instructor autonomy, as is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

The research and writing on curriculum described thus far, therefore, are deductive in the sense of beginning with a particular theory or set of assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education and the structures that best help students meet those goals. When these assumptions are previously understood and agreed upon, such studies provide useful information in assisting institutions in meeting those goals. However, these sectors of curricular research characteristically do not specifically identify or articulate these goals and approaches and, in this absence, may indeed obscure their identification.

Histories of curriculum succeed in demonstrating that curriculum is not a closed system or the perfect manifestation of a philosophy of education, but rather a set of structures that is shaped by changes not only within the institution, but also by changes to public expectations of the university; by changes in student populations and needs; and by changes to the composition and

nature of fields that make up study in the arts and science, among other influences. The second of these two broad groups of research relevant to undergraduate curriculum, therefore, is composed of research on the curriculum that adopts a historical perspective. This historical perspective can be useful in one of several ways. First, historical research from other jurisdictions or institutions may offer important comparative perspectives. This research also provides examples of the ways in which historical information can inform and shape understanding of curricular structures. Information from the Canadian context, and the Ontario context in particular, additionally provide essential perspectives about these influences in the context of the U of T.

The broad histories addressing a national context in the U.S. together help develop a portrait of the most significant influences on the undergraduate curriculum in the second half of the twentieth century in that country: the expansion of higher education beginning with the influx of veterans after the Second World War, followed by continued expansion both in the number of eligible students and, as public policy embraced human capital theory, the expansion of the proportion of students participating in higher education. Thelin pays particular attention to the influence of federal U.S. policies supporting scientific research in the expansion of scientific study in the undergraduate curriculum; Soares argues that the same forces were at work in the U.K. Later still, student political unrest in the 1960s contributed to the establishment of greater curricular flexibility and increased options in the 1960s and 1970s, while external pressures on universities to prepare students for the knowledge economy led to the re-introduction of curricular requirements and structure and the focus on fundamental academic skills from the 1980s through the end of the century.

These broad histories are accompanied by studies of specific curricular elements, presenting an argument for the origin of particular curricular structures or priorities. For example, Shedd and

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Mason, Arnove and Sutton\textsuperscript{85} argue that the credit hour, as a means of measuring progress through the degree, emerged in the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century from pressures on universities to find a common means of measuring student progress through the degree. Shedd writes that the credit hour emerged as a way “to translate high school work to college admissions officers. It slowly made its way into higher education to record elective course work when standardized curricula began to erode.”\textsuperscript{86} Payton argues that the terms “major” and “minor” potentially derived from German terms during a period in which Johns Hopkins and other American universities were eager to demonstrate their affinity with the specialized, research-focused model of the German university.\textsuperscript{87}

While the previous histories listed above trace the histories of curricular structures themselves, others offer histories of particular external influences and the ways in which they have shaped undergraduate study. For example, Scott\textsuperscript{88} and Teichler\textsuperscript{89} discuss the ways in which the massification of higher education systems promotes increased standardization and modularization of curricular structures (discussed in more detail in Chapter 6). Dressel\textsuperscript{90} and Axelrod\textsuperscript{91} both discuss the ways in which the increased focus on preparation for professions and vocations marginalized humanistic study within undergraduate programs in the second half of the twentieth century. Darling, England, Lang, and Lopers-Sweetman\textsuperscript{92} demonstrate how increased provincial funding in Ontario for particular types of programs (including professional programs and honours study) provided incentives for universities to enhance these aspects of their program offerings and how the provincial funding formula encouraged expansion. Altbach,\textsuperscript{93} Altbach and Cohen,\textsuperscript{94} and Jasen\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{86} Jessica M. Shedd, “The History of the Student Credit Hour,” 5.
\textsuperscript{88} Peter Scott, \textit{The Meanings of Mass Higher Education} (Bristol: Open University Press, 1995).
\textsuperscript{90} Paul L. Dressel and Frances H. DeLisle, \textit{Undergraduate Curriculum Trends}.
demonstrate how broader international political movements led to student activism in the 1960s, and how that political activism translated into curricular change.

In other words, broad, national overviews, as well as investigations of particular elements or of particular environmental factors, demonstrate the mutual influence of institution and the environments in which they are located, and consequently demonstrate the importance of an institution’s location on its curricular development.

Histories of curricular elements can also identify consistencies, patterns, and lineages that can help describe and define curricular trends and structures that may, without these histories, appear incoherently varied and chaotic. As described in Chapter 1, Kimball and Miller, in their overviews of the history of the concepts of, respectively, liberal and general education, identify ideas or approaches that persist or recur, using history to identify prioritized goals and structures. In a context where these assumptions of curricular aims are not well-established, the historical approach is therefore an important starting place.

Indeed, while the landscape of research on the Canadian curriculum is limited, most of the available works are, in fact, histories. Most central to the study of the undergraduate curriculum is Harris’ *A History of Higher Education in Canada*, which provides a history of the structure of undergraduate degree programs in both English and French Canada from the earliest colleges through the early 1960s. Harris’ work has been sharply and repeatedly criticized as a “very limited, non-explanatory, non-analytic history,” but it nonetheless provides an important overview of basic curricular structures over a long period of time. In the sections of his history that review the undergraduate program in the arts and sciences, Harris checks in on the evolution of the curriculum periodically, reviewing major changes and highlighting national and regional trends. Within each time period, Harris reviews the classical course of study, in place in most institutions in French Canada, and the general and honours programs at English Canadian universities. Harris’ attention to the post-war period is limited, as the book addresses only the years up to 1960 before many of the major changes associated with the expansion of the university system had taken place. However, Harris’ work is relatively unique in providing a broad portrait of higher education across Canada;

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96 Kimball, *Orators & Philosophers*.
97 Miller, *The Meaning of General Education*.
Sheehan notes that this national perspective, relatively available in the U.S., is unusual in histories of Canadian higher education.  

Axelrod provides several historical studies of wide scope that explicitly address the curriculum. *Values in Conflict* argues for the importance of a liberal education, beginning with an overview of the history of liberal education in North America (including its European origins), with some focus on arts and science programs in Canada. Much of the book traces the ways in which the concept of liberal education – which he traces to Greek origins and connects firmly to critical and creative thinking – have variously been embraced and shunned by the public and by policy. Ultimately, Axelrod argues that increasing demand from these groups that higher education provide a direct and immediate return on investment permanently jeopardizes Canadian universities’ ability to provide a liberal education. Similarly, *Scholars and Dollars* argues that graduates of programs in the liberal arts were highly valued by employers during the economic expansion of the 1950s and 1960s, but that the economic contractions of the 1970s shifted priority to professional and vocational training. His work on student life, primarily focused on the first half of the twentieth century, also offers insight into the academic experience of Canadian undergraduates.

McKillop’s essential *Matters of Mind* provides a provincial focus, tracing the intellectual, social, economic, and political influences on Ontario universities through the first half of the twentieth century. While McKillop’s work overlaps only slightly with the period under investigation in this study, the final chapter of his book nonetheless begins to illuminate some of the forces and trends that shape higher education in Ontario and, by extension, the undergraduate curriculum, through the second half of the twentieth century. In particular, McKillop notes the beginnings of a shift away from the deliberate emulation of British universities and towards the United States as a source of

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99 Sheehan attributes the relative prevalence of broader histories in the U.S. to “The popular interest in education, the proliferation of all kinds of colleges and universities, the early interest among members of the American Historical Association in the academic nature of history and the development of a number of prestigious research institutions.” Ibid, 27.

100 Paul Axelrod, *Values in Conflict: The University, the Marketplace, and the Trials of Liberal Education*.

101 Paul Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars*.


curricular and organizational inspiration, but notes too that this shift forced introspection about the role of universities in shaping national identity and culture.\textsuperscript{104}

Finally, a collection edited by Storm, \textit{Liberal Education and the Small University in Canada}, focuses for the most part on particular institutional or disciplinary contexts, but provides a brief introduction to the history of liberal education (arguing for its connection to classical curricula), as well as to the structure of undergraduate programs in Canada. Indeed, the most relevant essay to this study included in the collection provides a compelling case study of the challenges in attempting to draw broader conclusions without established Canadian frameworks in which to operate. The authors begin by noting that “There is no recent study comparing the structure of arts and science curricula in various Canadian institutions and no study at all comparing the Canadian to the American liberal arts colleges.”\textsuperscript{105} The authors therefore provide a brief overview of “what seemed to be common in the contemporary liberal education as defined by programs leading to the BA or BSc degree” in “large and small Canadian universities and small American colleges devoted exclusively to the liberal arts,”\textsuperscript{106} including the University of Toronto. They note primarily consistencies between Canadian and American models.\textsuperscript{107}

However, on closer inspection, the authors interpret their results in a way that confluates Canadian and American models. In consequence, their findings offer a limited value. They come to the conclusion that “The notion of breadth has been operationalized in distribution requirements and the consensus seems to have been reached that breadth in a liberal education is achieved by requiring a certain number of courses from each of the three groups of disciplines represented by the natural sciences, and the social sciences, and the rest, most commonly labeled humanities or arts.”\textsuperscript{108} While it is true that distribution requirements are common structures, in one form or another, across North America, and is certainly the predominant breadth structure in Canada, these requirements form only a portion of general education programs in the U.S..\textsuperscript{109} Furthermore, the

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid, 540-541.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid, 20.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid, 21-22.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid, 22
\textsuperscript{109} See the description of typical general education requirements in Chapter 6.
courses eligible to fulfill this requirement are, unlike Canada, normally severely restricted in the United States.\footnote{D. Kent Johnson, James L. Ratcliff, and Jerry G. Gaff, “A Decade of Change in General Education,” \textit{New Directions for Higher Education} 125 (2004): 19, 25.}

They also note that “In our sample the minimum requirements for a major were in the range from thirty percent to forty percent of the credits required for the degree. There did not appear to be systematic differences between [large and small Canadian universities and small American colleges] in this respect.”\footnote{Storm and Storm, “Theme and Variations in the Arts and Science Curriculum,” 24.} While this may be true of the major in Canadian universities, many Canadian institutions offer a designated stream of significantly more substantial concentration (for example, a “Concentrated Honours” at Dalhousie,\footnote{Dalhousie University, \textit{Undergraduate Calendar} 2009/10 (Halifax: Dalhousie University: 2009).} a specialist program at the U of T,\footnote{University of Saskatchewan, \textit{University Course Calendar} 2009-2010 (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 2009).} or the Honours program at Saskatchewan\footnote{University of Toronto, \textit{Faculty of Arts & Science Calendar} 2009-10: St. George Campus (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2009).} and Simon Fraser,\footnote{Simon Fraser University, \textit{SFU Calendar} 2009/2010 (Vancouver: SFU, 2009).} to select examples from universities of varied size, focus, and region) in addition to the major. These designated, highly specialized streams are not a common structure in American institutions. The example demonstrates the danger of assuming that shared curricular vocabulary or superficial similarities represent similar parallels at a deeper level, and therefore is a reminder of the importance of maintaining an inductive, context-specific approach until those assumptions and goals are both identified and identified as generalizable.

2.2 \textbf{Undergraduate Education in Ontario and Canada, 1945-2000}

As described in Chapter 1, and demonstrated by the histories of undergraduate education from other jurisdictions described above, curriculum is significantly shaped by its political and institutional context. The study of this context in the form of research on undergraduate education in the arts and sciences in Ontario and in Canada in the second half of the twentieth century therefore, forms an important source of information for this study. There is very little formal research that addresses this specific topic; the exceptions have already been noted above. The majority of research on higher education from and about this period focuses primarily on finances, policy, and what happens to students as they elect to enter university or upon their graduation – but focuses little on the educational process itself. These works, however, can provide substantial insight
into the major issues in higher education during this period that have a significant influence on the structure and nature of the undergraduate program of study.

Indeed, changes – to the provincial and policy context, to the perceived role and social contribution of the university, to the nature of the university itself, and to fields of knowledge and approaches to study – quickly and repeatedly rendered existing curricular structures obsolete. The result was the series of curricular reviews beginning in the immediate post-war period through the second half of the twentieth century in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the University of Toronto that form the basis of this study. The decisions made by these curriculum committees are illuminated by the existing research about the U of T’s broader context.

Jones’s article “Higher Education in Ontario” provides a framework for the major trends and influences during the second half of the twentieth century. Jones divides the post-war history of higher education in Ontario into three distinct eras, each with defining priorities, characteristics, and events. The first, lasting from the end of the war until approximately 1960, was characterized by “Evolutionary Expansion.”\(^{116}\) Jones argues that although the number of students in postsecondary education increased substantially during this period as “the huge federally-supported cohort of veterans began to find their way onto university campuses,”\(^{117}\) and because “the population was gradually beginning to view universities . . . as important instruments of economic and social development,”\(^{118}\) there were few substantial changes to higher education planning or support at the provincial level during this period. While student numbers expanded with the influx of veterans, Friedland highlights the temporary nature of the accommodation for this expansion, noting that “Some courses were given in Convocation Hall, and a number of temporary structures were built,” and that engineering students were moved to “a very large munitions plan in Ajax, Ontario.”\(^{119}\) The response to this enrolment increase was a period of temporary emergency measures that were neither sustainable – Drummond and Kaplan, for example, describe the strain the increased teaching loads placed on faculty in the Department of Political Economy and the almost complete cessation

\(^{117}\) Ibid, 138.
\(^{118}\) Ibid, 139.
\(^{119}\) Martin L. Friedland, The University of Toronto: A History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 373.
of research during this period\textsuperscript{120} – nor expected to continue beyond the years in which veterans were moving through their degrees.

The real change began in the 1960s, during a decade that Jones deems one of “Structural Revolution.”\textsuperscript{121} This was a period during which, as he notes, “The pace and magnitude of change in Ontario higher education structures . . . were nothing short of revolutionary.”\textsuperscript{122} The number of universities in Ontario tripled, from 5 to 15,\textsuperscript{123} and a new system of technical colleges was introduced across the province. At the University of Toronto, student numbers “more than doubled” during the 1960s.\textsuperscript{124} Similar changes were happening across North America and, to a lesser extent, across the world.\textsuperscript{125} However, unlike the immediate influx of veterans after the war, the expansion of the 1960s represented a permanent and fundamental shift in the nature of the university as it transformed from an elite to a mass institution.

Trow outlines this international shift, characterized by the growth in the proportion of youth attending university, by the increase in size and complexity of institutions, and by a change in the significance of attending university “first from being a privilege to being a right, and then, as is increasingly true in the United States, to being something close to an obligation.”\textsuperscript{126} As described in greater detail in Chapter 6, which focuses on the effect of these changes at the U of T, mass higher education changed the university in ways that had a direct influence on undergraduate curriculum. The number of students not only dramatically grew, resulting in expanded class sizes, new courses, and new, more specialized fields of study, but the academic background and motivations of students diversified. Rather than drawing students from a relatively small pool socialized to a particular type of learning and bringing with them previous academic experience that closely matched the expectations of the university environment, faculty found themselves teaching students whose previous knowledge could not be taken for granted and who had a range of expectations for their university experience.

\textsuperscript{120} Ian M. Drummond with William Kaplan, Political Economy at the University of Toronto: A History of the Department, 1888-1982 (Toronto: University of Toronto Faculty of Arts & Sciences, 1983), 89.
\textsuperscript{121} Jones, “Higher Education in Ontario,” 141.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid, 145.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid, 141.
\textsuperscript{124} Robin Ross, The Short Road Down (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1984), 2.
The transition in the 1960s from elite to mass institutions, therefore, was fundamental and extended through the university. The significance of these changes is reflected in the tone of contemporaneous writings about the university, which warn of “Towers Besieged,”127 “The Struggle for Canadian Universities,”128 and “Canada’s Crisis in Higher Education.”129 This decade (and the years immediately preceding and following it) was marked by numerous conferences and planning exercises bringing together university administrators and planners from across the province and country, all attempting to grasp the scope of this change and identify means to retain academic and institutional priorities in this period of rapid and fundamental change.130 Studies reviewing the period in retrospect have similarly portrayed it as a period of disruptive transition; the narrative trajectory is one of exhilarating change and experimentation and of narrowly avoided catastrophe.131

Ontario universities therefore emerged from the 1960s part of a much richer but fundamentally changed postsecondary system. Jones argues that, beginning in the 1970s, Ontario entered a period of “Structural Stability.”132 Like the 1940s and 1950s, little changed in policy or administration to fundamentally alter the university system, but unlike the immediate post-war period, the final decades of the twentieth century were characterized by financial retrenchment and, when compared to the ebullient expectations of the 1960s, reduced public esteem in the ability of the university to improve either individual or community standards of living.133 Bissell characterized the difference between the two eras by noting that, in the 1970s:

133 Paul Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars*: 161, 185.
Universities are taken for granted; they are big, impersonal institutions, fitted parts in a technological society, necessary, deserving support, to be criticized, admonished, censured in the same way that we would criticize, admonish, and censure any large corporation. But they have no special status, they are not thought of as sources of new ideas, and they do not make good subjects for animated comment or lively analysis.\textsuperscript{134} Reports from the period beginning in the 1970s paint a gray portrait of higher education in Ontario as skies continued to darken. In 1980, Leslie predicted that “Canadian universities, as they move into the 1980's, will find it increasingly difficult to think in terms of anything but survival.”\textsuperscript{135} Ten years later, the situation, if anything, looked direr; a report from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada notes that “With regard to finances, Canadian universities were, of necessity, much leaner in the late 1980s than they were in the late 1970s.”\textsuperscript{136} The wild expansion of fields of study experienced in the 1960s ceased and students increasingly pursued programs they perceived as leading to future professional and financial security.\textsuperscript{137}

The influence of this broader context and the responsiveness of the undergraduate curriculum becomes evident throughout the series of curricular reviews conducted at the U of T across the second half of the twentieth century. Indeed, the curricular reviews at the U of T clearly fall into three broad eras that parallel, in chronology, influences, and priorities, these broad eras of Ontario higher education policy: a period of evolutionary expansion in the immediate post-war period as the university attempted to accommodate post-war demand for higher education within existing curricular structures; dramatic changes to the structure of undergraduate programs in the 1960s (and extending into the 1970s); and modest revisions to this new structure in the period of financial constraint that lasted through the end of the century. These three eras, therefore, are represented, respectively, as Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

\textsuperscript{137} Paul Axelrod, \textit{Scholars and Dollars}. 
2.3 **THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

A final piece of information essential to understanding the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T in the second half of the twentieth century is the U of T’s institutional and curricular history. As noted in Chapter 1, curricular history is heavily path dependent, sharply influenced by the curricular structures that come before; furthermore, institutional culture, organizational structures, and priorities substantially influence curricular decisions. While the number of works dedicated primarily to the investigation of undergraduate curriculum is, as noted above, obviously quite limited, there is nonetheless much that can be gleaned from other historical sources that provide some insight into particular curricular initiatives, events, or elements, or that, while not addressing curriculum directly, nevertheless provide important information about the context of curricular developments. Considering the limited landscape of higher education research in Canada described above by Sheehan, the historiography of the University of Toronto is relatively rich. This history comes in several forms: institutional histories; memoirs and histories of academics and administrators or of particular groups within the university; departmental histories; and discussions of the U of T within broader provincial or national histories of higher education.

As might be expected, the broader the history, the less information it provides specifically about the curriculum. This is particularly true of broader histories of higher education that address more than one institution or jurisdiction. Nonetheless notable, however, is the substantial role the U of T plays within these broader histories. Chapter 1 highlighted the fact that many of the important historical works on undergraduate education in Canada, especially those looking at the first half of the twentieth century, focus their investigations substantially on the U of T. This occurs primarily, these authors state, because of the size and resources of the U of T which put it at the forefront of universities in Canada, but also, as is evident in Gidney’s and Massolin’s intellectual histories of, respectively, the protestant establishment and Tory thought, because the U of T was home (for many of the same reasons) to so many of the leading academics and intellectuals in the country.

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Similarly, much of the early history of York University, and other Ontario universities like McMaster and Queen’s often begin with a description of the early relationships with the U of T that often preceded their establishment as independent degree-granting institutions.

At a more local level, it is notable that institutional, departmental, and individual histories, while providing important background to the contexts and environments of curricular changes, often do not address curriculum directly as much as might be expected. The only direct reference to curriculum in *A Path not Strewn with Roses*, for example, is a note about the establishment of the women’s studies program; similarly, while Martin Friedland’s *The University of Toronto: A History*, for example, is an indispensable resource for general background of institutional events and important individuals, it dwells little on curriculum. The work of the Kelly Curriculum Committee (discussed in Chapter 5), for example, is provided one paragraph in a chapter that spans the unionization of faculty in the 1970s, the financial circumstances of the university during that decade, the development of Woodsworth college, the 1974 Memorandum of Agreement on college instruction, the growth of public outreach in science at the institution, controversy over the role of the School of Hygiene, and the departure of President Evans.

Departmental histories (and, in some cases, the histories of the colleges and faculties) provide somewhat more insight into how the curriculum was implemented at the course

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145 Histories from other institutions demonstrate a similar scarcity of curricular information, normally noting major curricular changes, but devoting little overall space to the undergraduate program of study. One exception are the histories of York University, including Michiel Horn’s recent volume: Michiel Horn, *York University: The Way Must be Tried*; and Murray Ross’s reflections on the institution’s founding: Murray G. Ross, *The New University* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961). The curriculum at York was so central to its early identity and institutional structure that the curriculum plays a much more significant role in its recorded history than is the case at other institutions.
146 For the purposes of this study, I found the histories of the departments of Political Economy and English most useful because of their significant discussion of curriculum and undergraduate education within the department and within the university more generally: Ian M. Drummond with William Kaplan, *Political Economy at the University of Toronto: A History of the Department, 1888-1982* (Toronto: University of Toronto Faculty of Arts & Sciences, 1983); and Robin S. Harris, *English Studies at Toronto: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988). Other departmental histories include Robert Bothwell, *Laying the Foundation: A Century of History at University of Toronto* (Toronto: Department of History, 1991); Dorothy F. Forward, *The History of Botany in the University of Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977); R. Helmes-Hayes, *Forty Years, 1963-2003: Department of Sociology, University of Toronto* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2003); Fred. V. Winnett and W. Stewart McCullough, *A Brief History of the
development and program level and the reactions to the recommendations of curricular committees. For example, Drummond’s history of the Department of Political Economy at the U of T describes the challenge the department faced in increasing the number of courses when specialization was introduced into the general degree in the late 1940s, and the reluctance of departmental faculty to divert teaching resources from the honours degree to the general degree – exactly the reluctance that the General Course Review Committee was attempting to address.

However, departmental histories also demonstrate an important point: that curricular changes sometimes affect students far more than they affect departments or faculty – and these histories are rarely written from a student’s perspective. For example, the history of the Department of Sociology makes no mention of the curricular changes introduced by the Kelly Committee. While these changes were significant to students, compelling them to select a program of specialization when they had previously been responsible for developing their own program of study, they did not necessarily force many changes to departmental course offerings or courses themselves. Similarly, memoirs and individual histories of U of T faculty and staff, like those produced by Ross, often don’t address curricular requirements although, as Bladen’s or Cameron’s does, they may reflect on the goals and structures, broadly defined, of undergraduate education.

There are three notable exceptions to the conclusion that such histories rarely focus substantially and directly on curriculum. All are produced – two edited and one authored – by Claude Bissell, who was president of the U of T in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The first of these

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147 These include C.B. Sissons, *A History of Victoria University* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952); T.A. Reed, ed., *A History of the University of Trinity College, Toronto, 1852-1952* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952); Claude T. Bissell, ed., *University College: A Portrait, 1853-1953* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953); and John L. Ball, *The First Twenty-Five Years, 1964-1989: Scarborough College, University of Toronto* (Toronto: Scarborough College, 1989). The New College Alumni Association recently published a series of photographs and brief memoirs of former students; histories of Innis College and St. Michael’s College are currently under development. Additionally, I was able to consult with Professor Craig Brown about his forthcoming history of the Faculty of Arts & Science. While my archival research was concluding just as he was entering the period under review here, I very much look forward to his study and anticipate that it will illuminate many of the people, events, and ideas addressed in this research.

148 Ross, *The Short Road Down.*


three volumes is the history of University College. Woodhouse’s overview of University College’s first faculty members provides much of the material available on the earliest iterations of U of T’s undergraduate program and, as Bladen notes, provides the most effective description of the historical origins of the U of T’s belief in “the ‘general education’ value of the specialized course.” Similarly, Bissell’s collection of speeches and essays, The Strength of the University, and his memoir of his time at the U of T, Halfway Up Parnassus, offer the result of his extensive reflection on and engagement with undergraduate education at this university.

Much of the history available about the U of T focuses on the period before approximately 1965. This simply reflects the limited research in the field; a number of the relatively few scholars working in the area focus in their own scholarship on the nineteenth or early twentieth century. Additionally, much of the work, including Harris’ broad overview and many college and departmental histories, was last attempted in the 1950s and 1960s and simply has not since been updated. It is for this reason that Friedland’s book is so essential in filling in much of the broader historical context of the university. It is, as Axelrod notes, the only major historical work on the U of T that approaches the current day.

While works focusing on an earlier period have a limited ability to inform the later parts of the period covered by this study, they are useful in identifying the earliest origins of many of the curricular structures and assumptions that remain central throughout the post-war period. Understanding these origins is, as noted, essential to understanding the post-war structures built upon this foundation. This earlier history is detailed below.

151 Bladen, “The Role of the University,” 484.
152 Claude T. Bissell, The Strength of the University (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968).
153 Claude T. Bissell, Halfway up Parnassus: A Personal Account of the University of Toronto, 1932-1971 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974).
154 While many of these scholars also discuss later periods in other publications, this would include McKillop, Matters of Mind; Jasen, The English Canadian Liberal Arts Curriculum 1800-1950; Axelrod, Making a Middle Class; Axelrod, “The Student Movement of the 1930s”; Sara Z. Burke, “New Women and Old Romans: Co-education at the University of Toronto, 1884-1895,” Canadian Historical Review 80, no. 2 (1999): 219-41; and Sara Z. Burke, Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto 1888-1937 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).
155 For example, Robin S. Harris, A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1960 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976); Craigie, A History of the Department of Zoology up to 1962; Sissons, A History of Victoria University; Bissell, ed., University College: A Portrait, 1853-1953; and Reed, A History of the University of Trinity College, Toronto, 1852-1952.
2.4 UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM AT THE U OF T TO 1945

The U of T has a complicated early history because elements of the institution existed well before the institution itself. The earliest institutions of higher education in Ontario were small, private denominational colleges that provided a heavily prescribed and religiously-inflected curriculum. Many of these colleges offered programs modeled on the U.K. institutions that best matched their denominational affiliations or that reflected the educations of their early leaders:

King’s College (which would become University College, the founding college of the University of Toronto), for example, modeled its curriculum on Trinity College, Dublin (itself closely modeled on Cambridge) primarily because its first Vice-President, John McCaul (who would become the second president of the University of Toronto), was a graduate of that institution. In order to gain access to public funds, however, these colleges shed most of their formal religious affiliations in the late nineteenth and earliest years of the twentieth century and federated with the public King’s College to form the University of Toronto. The fact that the University was stitched together from a number of existing small colleges had an early impact on its curricular structure. The federated colleges – St. Michael’s, the Catholic institution; Victoria, Methodist and later United; Trinity, Anglican; along with the non-denominational University College – were, as Friedland describes, somewhat reluctant to give up autonomy over instruction of their students, but did not have the resources or facilities to teach many of the emerging scientific fields. A compromise was therefore reached: the University would, generally speaking, provide instruction in the sciences, while the Colleges would, generally speaking, provide instruction in the humanities. Freidland explains that this was intended to “allow the University . . . to be ‘organized on the German principle for the promotion of higher learning,’ and the colleges to be ‘organized on the English basis for a broad liberal culture.’” But Wallace argues that “The distinction between ‘College subjects,’ and ‘University subjects’ was not made on any educational theory.” He adds, rather bitterly, that “University College was to teach only such subjects as Victoria College found it convenient for her to teach.” Indeed, the division of subjects was not intellectually consistent. Some traditional humanities fields were placed in the University at the time of federation – namely, Italian and Spanish, philosophy (but not ethics), and medieval and

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158 Friedland, The University of Toronto: A History, 102.

159 Wallace, “Staff, 1853-1890,” 46.

160 Ibid, 46.
modern (but not ancient) history – primarily because of either a lack of instructional resources for those fields in particular colleges or because of the particular predilections of those departments’ current chairs.\footnote{Friedland, The University of Toronto: A History, 102-3.} Therefore, since 1884,\footnote{The relationship between the University and the colleges was established by an agreement of federation in 1884 in discussions with the affiliated Trinity, Victoria, and Queen’s Colleges, even though Victoria did not formally federate with the university until 1890 and Trinity until 1904. St. Michael’s College federated in 1910; Queen’s, of course, remained independent and later became Queen’s University. See Friedland, The University of Toronto: A History, 99-112 (Chapter 10: Federation).} the “college subjects,” as they came to be known, included (as noted in the 1944-45 calendar) English, Ethics, French, German, Greek, Greek and Roman History, Latin, Oriental Archaeology, Oriental History, Oriental Languages, and Oriental Literature (in University College) or Religious Knowledge (in the federated universities and colleges), a collection of disciplines that could not be changed without “unanimous consent of the senate.”\footnote{Friedland, The University of Toronto: A History, 108.}

All other fields, including any new fields of study established, were the responsibility of the university.

As a “college subject,” a single field actually had multiple departments, one in each of the colleges, and each with the authority to hire its own staff. While in theory each college also had authority over the curriculum in those fields, this was in fact, as Harris outlines, generally coordinated by University College.\footnote{Harris, English Studies at Toronto: A History, 205.} Furthermore, exams were developed and evaluated collectively, a process that further standardized the content of curriculum in college departments. Nevertheless, as Harris notes, “while the college system has had little effect on the design of the undergraduate course of study, it has had a great deal to do with how that course of study has been taught.”\footnote{Harris, English Studies at Toronto: A History, 205.}

The first decades of the U of T’s curriculum were marked by frequent substantial changes as the university searched for a program of study that met its needs, priorities, and values. Once this program was identified, by contrast, the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T remained a relatively stable entity until the mid-twentieth century.

The available history strongly emphasizes the role of individual institutional leaders in shaping the early goals of the undergraduate program. While individual actors certainly played a more substantial role in the relatively tiny institutions of the mid-nineteenth century than they might today, the focus on individual contributions (rather than the influence of other populations or external...
influences) is a common characteristic of traditional institutional histories. University College, as the largest and first college – primum inter paria according to A.S.P. Woodhouse – had the most significant impact on the U of T’s earliest undergraduate programs. Wallace’s history of University College outlines the influence of McCaul, Wilson, and Hutton, in that order, of developing the curriculum that characterized study at the U of T in the final years of the nineteenth century and the first half of the 20th.

McCaul, as the first Professor of Classics at King’s College, essentially directly imported the full undergraduate program of Trinity College Dublin. This curriculum was a rigorous, highly structured program of classical study. This honors course, as it was called, required fluency in Latin and Greek at matriculation, and three years of required courses, at the conclusion of which students completed a rigorous graduation examination. By the 1850s, however, University College Professor Daniel Wilson, who would later succeed McCaul as the President of the U of T, began to sharply criticize the exceptionally high entrance and graduation standards demanded by this course, which effectively closed the doors of the university to graduates of any high school except for Upper Canada College. Wilson believed that the mandate of the university was the “education of the whole province,” and advocated for both an alignment of the entrance standards with the high school curriculum and additional flexibility in the program of study. Ultimately, the length of the course was extended from three years to four, and “A system of options was introduced after the conclusion of the common first two years.” These options allowed students “to devise such a course of study as would provide an effective source not only of intellectual culture but would prepare the youth of Canada for the practical duties of life.”

Axelrod writes:

If you stroll through the stacks of any university library and examine what was published on the history of universities before the 1970s, this is what you would be likely to find: volumes of institutional biographies written by ex-presidents or retiring professors in which the themes of struggle, endurance, survival, and accomplishment dominate . . . However important, the stories of institutional endurance and dedicated individuals are not necessarily the most interesting themes. More stimulating, and more significant historiographically, at least to me, is the study of the university’s intellectual, cultural, and social worlds—and how these have cast light on the life of the community in which the university is situated.

Axelrod, “The University of Toronto Through Historians’ Eyes,” 299.


Ibid, 39.

Ibid, 39.
Maurice Hutton, whose career as chair of the Classics department and later as Principal of University College began in the 1880s, undertook yet another substantial re-envisioning of the undergraduate program of study at the U of T. Jasen argues that Hutton attempted to re-create the contemporary Oxford curriculum at the U of T.\textsuperscript{172} When Hutton arrived at University College in the late nineteenth century, Oxford had relatively recently undergone a transition, through the introduction of a rigorous set of competitive graduating exams, that moved its undergraduate program of studies from a prescribed classical curriculum to a system of multiple specialized honours programs. Anderson argues that this examination system, which was introduced at Oxford and Cambridge in the mid-nineteenth century, both increased the importance of the honours degree (which was now an indication of competitive success) and made “the ‘single-subject’ degree,” which was the curriculum examined through this system, “the norm.” As a consequence of both of these developments, “the ‘pass’ degree based on a combination of subjects had low prestige. It did little to stir the minds of the mass of gentlemanly undergraduates, and eventually died out.”\textsuperscript{173}

As a result, through Hutton’s efforts, the U of T inherited a system that was highly specialized, carefully sequenced, and rigorously examined. As at Oxford, this curriculum at first focused exclusively on the classics – “Greats,” as the program was called there – but through the addition of examinations in additional fields, was gradually expanded to additional areas. The curriculum implemented by Hutton, Woodhouse argues, found a comfortable home at the U of T, and its values were widely embraced. Quickly, Woodhouse writes, the honours courses at the U of T took on a set of distinct and lauded characteristics. While highly specialized – focusing on “a sufficiently important and productive area of concentration,” they were not narrow, but rather aimed at “the systematic exploration” of “an area with its own internal relations” with a broad, historical scope. Woodhouse therefore argues that “the great aim of the honour system” was “general education by means of judicious specialization.” The focused, structured study of the honours course leads, he writes, to “the possession not only of a considerable body of the world’s best knowledge, but of a habit of mind and a point of view which might also be a starting point for further exploration.”\textsuperscript{174}

The fact that this program successfully took root at the U of T, in comparison to its previous curricular iterations, was due in no small part to, as Jasen outlines, attempts to ensure that Oxonian

\textsuperscript{174} Woodhouse, “Staff, 1890-1953,” 55.
systems were sustained at Toronto through “a hiring policy that deliberately favoured graduates of that university.” Nonetheless, the essential curricular structures introduced in the 1880s and 1890s were still essentially reflected in the mid-twentieth century curriculum; as Bissell noted in 1958, “University College, for instance, remained much as it was when it was rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1890; an undergraduate of that day suddenly transported to the present would have experienced no environmental shock.”

Despite the stability of the fundamental structures, there were nonetheless significant changes in two areas. One of these was areas of change was to the nature and status of the non-honours course. U of T historian C.B. Sissons provides a brief “Memorandum on the History of the Honour, General and Pass Courses” which outlines several attempts in the U of T’s history to provide a program of study that was complementary to the honours course and that focused on broad, rather than specialized study. As had once been the case at Oxford, in the late nineteenth century at the U of T, broad “pass” degrees were options for students who did not wish to or could not complete the rigorous and highly specialized honours course; as at the universities from which the U of T drew its curricular inspiration, however, the pass degree was a decidedly less well-respected and resourced program. As described above by Anderson, the pass degree at Oxford and Cambridge was eliminated in the mid-nineteenth century; “Ordinary” degrees, as non-specialized programs came to be called, were available but unpopular, and sometimes used as a cache system for failing students.

By contrast, the U of T in 1895 attempted to raise the profile of its pass course, rebranding it as the “general” course, which they argued “describes the character of the course without branding it as inferior.” This name lasted for 24 years, but the non-honours course was demoted back to “pass” in 1919 in response to an initiative that allowed veterans to complete the non-honours degree after fewer than three years of full-time study. Sissons notes that this “was regarded by many members of the [Faculty] Council as further revealing an inferiority in the training given to students outside of the honour courses, and this suggested that a reversion to the term pass was in the

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175 Jasen, “Educating an Elite,” 278.
176 Bissell, *Halfway up Parnassus*, 44.
178 University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(3).
direction of honesty.”\textsuperscript{179} Even with its low profile, however, the pass degree remained a significant force at the U of T and was pursued by a substantial minority of students.\textsuperscript{180}

The second set of adaptations to the general curricular structures inherited from the late nineteenth century was the gradual secularization of the curriculum. Jasen characterizes this as an “academic revolution,” and one that was taking place “throughout the industrialized world.”\textsuperscript{181}

While religion was not a focus of the Oxford Greats, the federated colleges taught an undergraduate program heavily inflected by their respective denominations. The integration of the federated colleges into a public institution meant that they could no longer evangelize through the undergraduate curriculum and could no longer restrict admissions based on religion. The colleges, founded as they were on religious purposes, protested these limitations, and were granted the ability to provide religious instruction through a subject that became known as “Religious Knowledge.”\textsuperscript{182}

In the late 1960s, as Reverend Derwyn R. G. Owen, Provost of Trinity College, described Religious Knowledge courses in a brief to the members of the Macpherson Committee:

Religious Knowledge . . . consist[ed] of two quite different types of programmes. In the General Course it consists of three-hour per week courses . . . and open to students of the Federated Colleges as a full-ranking part of their academic programme . . . [I]n the General Course in Science and in the Honour Courses, instruction in Religious Knowledge consists of one-hour per week courses offered to students of all years registered in the Federated Colleges as an addition to the subjects in the Honour Programme.”\textsuperscript{183}

The non-denominational University College offered its students “Religious Knowledge Options” courses in university subjects to fill the equivalent spots on students’ timetables. Over time, as student interests and backgrounds changed and the denomination of the colleges became primarily a historical fact rather than an evangelical imperative, these courses turned into a broader study of

\textsuperscript{179} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(3).

\textsuperscript{180} The relative prominence of the pass degree at the U of T is likely due to its even wider acceptance across Canada: while most Canadian institutions offered both pass and honours degrees like the U of T, at many other Canadian institutions the honours degree was reserved for those with exceptional academic ambitions or ability; most students pursued the pass degree. Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, \textit{The Humanities in Canada}, 40.

\textsuperscript{181} Jasen, “Educating an Elite,” 271.

\textsuperscript{182} The non-denominational University College instead taught “Oriental Literature” – a “non-literal interpretation of the Bible,” among other texts. Friedland, \textit{The University of Toronto: A History}, 226.

\textsuperscript{183} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/001.
religion – what would become, after the union of the college departments, “Religious Studies.”

Over the years, the Religious Knowledge requirement was dropped by Trinity and Victoria Colleges, although it remained an option, and was retained as a requirement only at St. Michael’s College until a new relationship between the university and the colleges was implemented in 1974.

Pedagogy, of course, also varied from the Oxford and Cambridge tutorial system; instruction occurred in classrooms – through lectures, seminars, or laboratory work – though students in the honours program had access to additional academic resources and support. Student life, too, varied; Murray Ross argues that no Canadian university offers the comparable residential environment of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges that played such an integral role in students’ education at those universities. The division of college and university instruction introduced its own instructional and curricular eccentricities, leading to small classes but limited subfields in many of the college subjects.

The structure of the pass degree was another influence on the U of T’s approach to pedagogy. One way in which this emerged was in the U of T understanding of the unit of instruction. As Anderson describes, the examination system at Oxford and Cambridge first introduced in the mid-nineteenth century firmly established the degree program in its entirety as the unit of instruction. In the U.S., by contrast, the elective and subsequent credit system introduced at the turn of the twentieth century made the individual course an autonomous and discrete unit of instruction. By the mid-twentieth century, the U of T had firmly established the academic year as the unit of instruction, though the manifestation of this principle varied in the honours and the pass course. In the honours course, this principle was straightforward: the curriculum for each year was set and examined annually; while a small number of options were available to students in a particular honours program, the curriculum and examination system was for the most part common. In the pass course, because students essentially had free election of their courses (within the limited range available), examinations needed to reflect only the material in a single course. Nonetheless, examinations were set and assessed by departments (rather than by individual instructors) and

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performance on this set of examinations alone determined standing; passing or failing referred to the year, not the course.

These adaptations to the original Oxford and Cambridge influences meant that, by 1945, the undergraduate program in what was then the Faculty of Arts at the University of Toronto offered what Kirkconnell and Woodhouse called the “Toronto Scheme”: “an interesting example of Canadian mediation between British practice and the demands of local conditions.” In either a broad three-year pass program or a highly specialized four-year honours program, U of T students pursued a curriculum that was still, Ross wrote in 1961, rooted “firmly in the British tradition” but that nonetheless, in its relatively robust pass degree, its federated structure, and its year system in fact distinguished itself almost equally from Oxford and Cambridge and American models. These differences suggest that the U of T entered the second half of the twentieth century with a clear and distinct set of assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education and about the curricular structures that would best allow students to meet those goals. It is this curriculum that forms the foundation upon which this study is based.

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188 Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 58.
CHAPTER 3

THE GENERAL PROGRAM REVIEWS

This chapter reviews the curricular changes at the U of T in the immediate post-Second World War era. Between 1945 and the early 1950s, two major curricular review processes added two completely new programs to the U of T’s roster. This chapter reviews each of these two committees’ work in depth: first, the Committee to Investigate the Pass and General Degree, which established a new general program to replace the pass degree whose reputation, already troubled, had been damaged beyond repair during the war; and second, the committee that developed a general science program to meet the emerging needs of the post-war professional and academic landscape. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the assumptions about student learning and the nature of curriculum expressed in the discussions and recommendations of both of these committees.

3.1 THE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE PASS AND GENERAL DEGREE

Immediately following the Second World War, the University of Toronto, along with numerous other universities across Canada,190 undertook a thorough revision of its non-honours arts degree. The pass degree – or general degree as it was called at most other institutions191 – had a reputation as an inferior and substantially less academically rigorous alternative to the honours degree. This reputation posed an ongoing challenge to educators who believed that there was inherent value to developing a class of students who, while rigourously educated, would not be rigidly specialized. This challenge became even more important to resolve in the immediate post-war period as the value of broad, liberal arts education suffered a crisis in perceived value in the eyes of the public and of policy makers because of the relatively minimal contribution of these fields to the war effort, when compared to the perceived contributions of advanced scientific research and the scientific professions. At the same time, students and veterans crowded into the universities in never-before seen numbers, and public support and expectations for university education expanded dramatically in response. The new degree that the committee developed substantially altered the

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191 To complicate matters, during the 1940s the Faculty also offered a “general” degree in addition to the pass and honours program, which offered students the opportunity to complete two years of general study before completing the final two years of an honours program. This program did not attract substantial enrollment and was not considered successful – Kirkconnell and Woodhouse call it a “failure” and argue that it “inherited the disabilities of the pass course, instead of rising securely to the standard and prestige of the honours courses” (Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 60) – and did not serve as an inspiration for the committee’s work on the pass degree; during the committee’s deliberations they agreed to vote for the abolition of the current general course even if their recommendations for a new course were not adopted.
non-honours options available to undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Toronto in response to these challenges and demands.

In May of 1947, President Sidney Smith recruited some of the Faculty of Arts’ leading academics to form a Committee to Investigate the Pass and General Degree (henceforth “the committee”), charged with the responsibility to develop a new undergraduate program that would provide a rigorous but broad undergraduate course of study in the liberal arts. Smith had relatively recently arrived from his position as president of the University of Manitoba where he had been a champion of the liberal arts, advocating a four-year series of courses in “Western Civilization” that would provide an overview of the physical, social, historical and creative context of contemporary society. This experience at Manitoba, however, had also highlighted for Smith the importance of institutional and administrative support for curricular development; the proposed Western Civilization program was never fully implemented because, as Morton explains, the necessary instructional resources were never allocated.

The committee included members from both college and university departments and from across the broad disciplinary divisions of the Faculty. The committee was characterized by the seniority of its members: all but one of the participants was an Associate or Full Professor in their respective department, and some also held substantial administrative roles. Moffat Woodside, for example, was both a Professor of Classics and the Registrar of Victoria College; Louis Joseph Bondy was both a Professor of French and Head of St. Michael’s College. The committee was chaired by Edgar McInnis, of the university Department of History, who, after the committee completed its work, left the University to “become president of the Canadian Institute for International Affairs.” The committee began its regular meetings in the 1947-48 academic year. Over the course of the next two years it met regularly and consulted widely, releasing an early draft of recommendations for departmental feedback in April 1948 and a final report, incorporating this feedback, a year later. Students saw the result of the committee’s work as they began the first year of the new program in the 1951-52 academic year.

In the same year that the committee was established, Kirkconnell and Woodhouse completed a survey of the humanities in Canada for the newly-established Humanities Research

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Council that included a summary of the structure of pass and general arts degrees across the country. What they found was that this degree was very hard to summarize at all, because each institution had nearly distinct program structures and, often, goals.

Toronto sat at one extreme, with “the maximum of free election in the choice of pass subjects, with no compulsory courses” but a “rigid year system” that moved students through the degree in cohorts, permitting them to select only from those courses aligned with their own year of study, maintaining strict boundaries on the number of courses constituting full-time study, and organizing assessment through year-end departmental exams. Several institutions had common first-years, or even two prescribed years as at St. Francis Xavier, where all students pursued the same courses. Some institutions, like Dalhousie, were beginning to establish more modular structures, where courses could be completed in a variety of patterns and not in any particular distribution or order. At some institutions, among them the U of T, Manitoba, and Queen’s, distribution and study in a wide range of subjects took precedence throughout the program; at institutions like New Brunswick “majors” were pursued in the final years of study.

In other words, at the time of Kirkconnell and Woodhouse’s survey, the general degree was anything but generalizable; from a pan-Canadian perspective, the degree was in chaos and had no consistent structure or purpose. Furthermore, at many institutions the degree was held in rather low esteem. Kirkconnell and Woodhouse note that, at Toronto, where honours students pursued an entirely separate stream of courses, the pass course was “[left] with few students of better than mediocre ability and application, causing it to be regarded as a refuge for those who lack the gifts requisite for honours, and in subtle ways lowering its morale and effectiveness.”

While Kirkconnell and Woodhouse note that the honours degree could be found in various incarnations across Canada, the segregated structure at Toronto was “more or less unique in North American education” and the distinction between pass and honours students was therefore more pronounced. (The role of this separation in Toronto’s approach to undergraduate education as it appears throughout the curricular history of the second half of the twentieth century is discussed in Chapter 6.)

195 Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 41.
196 Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, The Humanities in Canada, 59-60.
197 Ibid, 58.
Several motivations could draw students to the pass course, but most were efforts to avoid the length, expense, or intensity of the honours course, since students who could afford the time or cost of the honours degree knew the credential would garner far more respect. The committee’s final report, for example, noted that “to a very considerable extent the choice of the Pass Course is the result of the lack of necessary qualifications for entry into an Honour Course.”\textsuperscript{198} The shorter public report identified two additional groups of students who tended to select non-specialized programs at the U of T. The first was students who took the pass course as preparation or as a prerequisite for future professional study. The second group, much smaller, consisted of students willing to sacrifice prestige (and to some degree, quality) out of a desire for a broad course of study.\textsuperscript{199}

The current pass degree, with its limited range of courses, generally did not provide for substantial specialization. As course calendars demonstrate,\textsuperscript{200} only a very limited number of fields offered a choice in courses in any year. In most fields, therefore, the maximum degree to which a student could concentrate would be three courses over three years of study. (This was particularly minimal when compared to the dozen or more courses in a single field students pursued in an honours program.) The prospect for a greater degree of specialization was not, however, foreign to general programs elsewhere; Kirkconnell and Woodhouse note examples of moderate specialization in the general program at a number of other Canadian institutions.\textsuperscript{201}

It was the students who selected the broad degree for professional or intellectual reasons that inspired the committee’s goals for the revised degree. The committee members believed strongly that the general degree should, when compared to the honours degree, offer an education that was similarly rigorous but broader in scope.

The war added another level of urgency to the need to demonstrate that a broad, liberal arts education could be of substantial value to students and indeed to the public at large. The universities had played a vital role in the war that had just concluded by supplying the country with educated men and women who could contribute to the war effort in varying ways: as doctors, nurses, technicians, and engineers; and as scientists conducting basic and applied research that contributed to the technologies that facilitated Allied victory. In describing the attitude towards sciences during

\textsuperscript{198} University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{199} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{200} See, for example University of Toronto, \textit{Faculty of Arts Calendar 1946-47} (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1946).
\textsuperscript{201} Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, \textit{The Humanities in Canada}, 41.
the war, McKillop noted the belief that “The Second World War would be won by physicists, it was said, as the Great War had been won by chemists. This view did not help the arts student.”

Federal policy further diminished the perceived value of liberal arts programs. Harris and McKillop describe how, under federal policy instituted in 1942, while students in “essential” applied and professional fields were provided reprieve from the draft, students pursuing a general arts program had to place in the top half of their class to avoid conscription. Failing any course within a general arts program also led to immediate conscription. Such policies, and social pressure on prospective students to contribute to the war effort by pursuing applied scientific or professional study, meant that while overall university enrolment declined slightly over the course of the war, relative enrolment in the arts dropped dramatically, by almost 20%, while enrolment in professional and technical fields grew both in relative and absolute terms.

The sharp decline in the value attributed to the arts was certainly exacerbated by the lack of a clear articulation of the value offered by the broad liberal arts education provided by general degrees. This lack of certainty over the contribution of the arts is reflected in a government statement highlighted by McKillop, which read that “‘throughout North America, and indeed, the world, there is uncertainty as to the fundamental purpose of university education’ . . . and the confusion must be addressed if a coherent philosophy of higher education was to be articulated for post-war national life.”

It is in this context that the degree review committee appointed by Smith began its work. Their challenge, attempted unsuccessfully several times in Toronto’s past, was to develop a non-honours degree that would make evident the inherent value of a broad, liberal arts education to graduates and to the public and that could serve as a genuine, rather than inferior, alternative to the highly-specialized honours degree.

At Toronto, the struggle to achieve these goals had historically been represented by the oscillation of the name of the degree between “pass” and “general,” with “pass” connoting a clear focus on minimal standards, and “general” representing a deliberately broad but demanding curriculum. At the request of the committee, historian C.B. Sissons developed a “Memorandum on

203 McKillop, Matters of Mind, 535-536.
204 McKillop, Matters of Mind, 538.
205 McKillop, Matters of Mind, 547.
the History of the Honour, General and Pass Courses." In this piece of historical background, he described the several attempts in the history of the university to ameliorate the status of the pass degree, which, despite these efforts, invariably slipped back into disrepute. Curricular distinction between “pass” and “honours” was formalized in 1877, but prior to that had been used to describe the relative merit of individual students, the strongest of whom completed an individualized program, and the weaker a “fixed” course, immediately aligning pass courses with mediocre academic engagement. An attempt to redress this assumption was made in 1895 when the name of the pass course was changed to “general” which, as Sisson writes, was evidence of an attempt to “[describe] the character of the course without branding it as inferior.” Backlash to this rebranding, however, occurred in 1919, when veterans were offered the opportunity to complete an accelerated general degree. Sisson notes that “The demand for a quicker degree for veterans was regarded by many members of the [Faculty] Council as further revealing an inferiority in the training given to students outside of the honours courses, and this suggested that a reversion to the term pass was in the direction of honesty.”

This historical precedent indicates the significance of the committee’s early decision to develop a new general degree rather than attempt to rehabilitate the pass. This was a statement of its desire to develop an academically, epistemologically, and pedagogically rigorous academic program. At an early meeting of the committee, Professor F.E.W. Wetmore of Chemistry was asked to articulate the means by which the committee could implement this model of education by providing his assessment, based on the committee's initial discussions, of “what should be aimed at in a new general course.” According to McInnis’s minutes, Wetmore’s assessment was found satisfactory to the other members of the committee, and became the premise on which they based the rest of their work:

Professor Wetmore reported for the Special Committee appointed at the last meeting to consider what should be aimed at in a general course. The purpose was to develop the

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206 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(3).
207 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(3).
208 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(3).
209 The early work of the committee does not indicate any evidence that, in the process of identifying their broader goals, they reviewed models of other institutions, or that they were responding to any particular environmental considerations, such as rapidly rising enrolments, or the influx of veterans. A strange exception is, among the committee’s papers, a report on “The Future of Adelbert College.” Adelbert College was one of three small liberal arts colleges combined to form Western Reserve College, which itself was a precursor to Case Western Reserve University. UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
student both as a person and as an individual in society. The general course should provide a bridge between the specialists and the non-specialists in society. For this it was necessary that the student should have a training which would allow him to appreciate the problems of the specialist, yet would give him an adequate breadth to serve as a link with the public at large. A certain amount of specialization would be needed for this, but covering a broader field than the Honour Course.  

It was with this broad goal in mind that the degree review committee set to the pragmatic work of designing the new general program.

Within these broad conceptual goals, several practical priorities quickly emerged, and in relatively short order – by April of 1948 – the committee had produced a draft proposal to circulate to departments that would, with a number of relatively minor changes, become the new general degree. The committee’s proposal clearly matched the initial goals described by Wetmore. It raised standards, restructured the arrangement of subjects across distributive groups, and in its most dramatic departure from its previous structures, introduced a moderate degree of specialization.

As the committee moved towards a degree that could achieve the goals that Wetmore had articulated, it also balanced characteristics of the existing pass degree that it hoped to preserve. Most importantly, the committee believed that the general degree should serve a distinct but important alternative to the honours degree; it should not approach it too much in structure. At a May 1948 committee meeting, Professor G.H. Duff “expressed the view that whatever steps may be taken to offer a stronger course for the existing Pass Course, care must be taken to prevent the introduction of a course which would be something like a general Honour course, and with this view the Committee were in definite agreement.”

The first priority of the committee, in concordance with the impetus for its establishment, was to find a way to raise the academic standards and reputation of the pass degree. While McInnis noted that among the committee members “There was . . . expressed a desire to find some way of making the standard of any general course closer to that which was set in the honour courses,” the amount and means by which to raise academic standards in the new general degree was a surprisingly contentious issue in a university that prided itself on its academic reputation. Committee

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210 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
211 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
212 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
members and faculty members in a number of departments appear to have been genuinely committed to ensuring that the new general degree remained academically accessible even as it raised academic standards. The existing pass degree demanded “the Ontario Secondary School Graduation Diploma in the General Course, and the Ontario Grade XIII certificate, or equivalent certificates”\(^{213}\) with credit in at least four subjects including English and a language for admission. The honours degree, by contrast, required this at a minimum, but could also set particular subject pre-requisites and requirements for standing (e.g. third or second class honours).\(^{214}\) To progress from one year to another, students needed to maintain an average of 50% in all courses, and several exemptions and alternative examinations were available in order to help students maintain this average. Even according to these relatively flexible regulations, however, approximately 21% of students failed first year and were unable to continue to pursue the pass degree.\(^{215}\)

While many agreed with the need to raise standards in principle, several committee members and faculty members were concerned, in light of these relatively high failure rates, that raising standards or admission requirements too high would limit the university’s ability to meet its mandate to serve its constituents, and could compromise some of the underlying principles of the proposed degree. Indeed, these concerns demonstrate a clear conviction that the general degree was intended to serve as a means for a relatively large proportion of students in the province to be able to pursue university education if they so wished. Enrolment was still limited to a very small proportion of the population – by the mid-fifties, the percentage of the Ontario population between 18 and 21 currently enrolled in university was 7 percent, though the percentage of the Toronto population was “11 per cent and rapidly rising”\(^{216}\) – but it did not feel appropriate to members of the committee to subject potential general degree students to stringent academic regulations. Concerns among the committee about raising entrance standards particularly applied to the populations who might not meet new regulations. Members of the Faculty Council raised objection to elevated entrance standards, citing “fear . . . that the raising of standards for admission might work hardship on students from the rural areas.”\(^{217}\) They recommended that standards only be raised in “co-operation

\(^{213}\) University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts Calendar 1946-47*, 47.
\(^{214}\) University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts Calendar 1946-47*, 47.
\(^{215}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/074(6).
\(^{216}\) Friedland, *The University of Toronto: A History*, 401-3.
\(^{217}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
from the other Universities in the province”\textsuperscript{218} in order to ensure that students who might be turned away from Toronto could be accommodated elsewhere.

Ultimately, the new general program did include somewhat stricter admissions standards. The Faculty Registrar had provided statistics to assure the committee that demanding third class honours would substantially improve the likelihood that students would pass first year and complete the degree. Under the revised requirements, students needed to demonstrate Grade 13 standing in five areas – English; Latin or mathematics; modern languages; another language or science or mathematics; and one of history, music, another language, science, or mathematics. This would presumably indicate preparation to pursue a wide breadth of university subjects. Furthermore, students needed to demonstrate “at least third class honours”\textsuperscript{219} in four of these subjects. These standards helped to ensure that students were prepared for the distributed fields they would need to study, and would be prepared, as will be discussed later, to concentrate in at least one area. Standards for progression through the degree were also somewhat tightened. The committee had recommended that students be required to obtain at least 60% in their field of concentration in addition to maintaining a 50% average in all other courses, and, after much debate, this change too was accepted.\textsuperscript{220} The new entrance and standing requirements were, it was hoped, strict enough to permit for a more challenging course of study and to ensure that accepted students would be able to successfully complete the degree, but would not be so stringent as to bar entry to wide swaths of the population.

In an attempt to facilitate a more rigorous course of study, the committee also explored the possibility of required study in particular courses or fields. Kirkconnell and Woodhouse note several examples of this at other Canadian institutions, including, for example, a requirement that all students study English literature and composition at Queen’s.\textsuperscript{221} Rudolph similarly notes the prevalence of required courses in post-war American curricula, and indeed describes the introduction of required course as the characteristic element of post-war curricular reform in the

\textsuperscript{218} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{219} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{220} This change was not adopted in the first year of the general degree (when no students would yet be pursuing courses in a field of concentration) but does appear in the 1953-1954 calendar. University of Toronto, \textit{Faculty of Arts Calendar 1953-54} (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1953), p. 36.
\textsuperscript{221} Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, \textit{The Humanities in Canada}, 41.
United States.\textsuperscript{222} As Rudolph describes, required courses often served one of two goals. The first was the teaching of needed or remedial skills. As the population attending university, particularly with the influx of veterans in the post-war period, brought with them increasingly heterogeneous academic preparation, required courses could serve to ensure that all students shared an equal skill set as they moved through their degree. A second goal was the communication of a broad “orientation” to academic study – like those courses that had been advocated by Sidney Smith at Manitoba – or to a particular set of cultural “traditions,” whose transmission was assumed to form part of the goals of university study.\textsuperscript{223} Despite their prevalence elsewhere, however, the committee at U of T voiced a resounding opposition to the possibility of mandating any particular courses for both pragmatic and philosophical reasons.

One specific debate over required courses deliberated the value of a potential English composition course. For some time, evidently concerned with the writing skills of pass course students, the committee debated requiring a course that would assess and improve students’ writing and rhetorical skills. The members of the committee – as well as guest representatives from the registrars’ offices and from the English departments – voiced concern that this would demand substantial additional resources of English departments, which could not be guaranteed in the current environment of enrolment pressure. While the committee revisited this possibility frequently, constraints on resources rather than concerns about needed skills seemed to determine the outcome of the committee’s decision. The committee eventually attempted to recommend an aptitude test in English composition with a required remedial course if this test was failed, but even this was deemed too resource-heavy to administer and assess, and no requirement or even suggestion regarding composition was included in the description of degree requirements in the 1951-52 calendar.\textsuperscript{224}

Required courses of any sort, however, were also rejected because they would place limitations on student choice. McInnis’s notes detail how “Professor Crawford made a further suggestion that in the First Year English from Group I, Mathematics from Group II and Philosophy from Group III be compulsory, and one subject from each of these groups be required, but objection was made to this on the ground that it would limit the choice of subjects to a greater

\textsuperscript{223} Ibid, 257-263.
\textsuperscript{224} University of Toronto, \textit{Faculty of Arts Calendar 1951-52}. 
extent than was advisable.”\textsuperscript{225} While the desire to provide students with broad autonomy over their degree was frequently reiterated, the committee never explicitly articulated its understanding of the ways in which student choice contributed to the pedagogical goals of the degree.

In agreement that it did not wish to implement required courses, McInnis notes that “The Committee then discussed the possibility of constructing a [degree program] with options confined to definite groups in order to provide the general basis of education sought in the original proposal.”\textsuperscript{226} Mandating distribution across broad disciplinary groups was characteristic of the structure of many Canadian general courses, which, note Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, “usually provide for a minimum of required work in the humanities, the social sciences, mathematics and the natural sciences.”\textsuperscript{227} The committee’s initial distribution proposal was quite structured: McInnis writes that the committee explored the possibility of the following program of six courses: “Two of English and the group of Foreign Languages[,] One each of Humanities and the Social Sciences[,] Two of Science and Mathematics.”\textsuperscript{228} Students would have choice of which subject they pursued within these groups, but would be compelled to spread their first-year choices according to this distribution.

As might be expected, this initial proposal received some pushback. In the committee’s minutes, McInnis notes that, in response to the draft proposal, the Department of Political Economy “criticized what they believed was an inadequate provision for the Social Sciences in the First Year.”\textsuperscript{229} It noted that because of the presence of Religious Knowledge in the social sciences group, a student could avoid taking what they viewed as a true social science course at all in the first year, which they argued was “a choice which was hardly defensible in a course that aimed at providing a general education.”\textsuperscript{230} The Department of Philosophy also argued that “the requirement of two mathematical and physical sciences in the first year is excessive,”\textsuperscript{231} noting not only the demands this would place on faculty and space in those departments, but the current interests of students, who, according to the philosophy department, evidently did not wish to pursue science and math to this degree.

\textsuperscript{225} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
\textsuperscript{226} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{227} Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, \textit{The Humanities in Canada}, 40.
\textsuperscript{228} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{229} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{230} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
\textsuperscript{231} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
Swayed by concerns about undue pressure or attention offered to individual departments, the committee and the faculty agreed to require relatively minimal distribution requirements, mandating, in the first year, a single course from each group, leaving two additional courses to be chosen at the student’s discretion.

To further emphasize its own educational priorities, however, the committee proceeded to advocate a rearrangement of subjects within these distributionary groups. Previous versions of the pass course had distributed courses into three groups: foreign languages; the sciences, including geography and household science; and the humanities and social sciences, including psychology, military studies, and religious knowledge. Though students were not, strictly speaking, required to distribute their work across these groups, they were limited in the number of courses from each group they could pursue. In their first year, students were restricted to “not more than three subjects . . . from any group,” necessitating study in at least two of the three divisions.²³²

The proposed redistribution of subjects in the new general program primarily conserved the language and science groups, but divided the final group into two separate fields: the humanities and the social sciences. Students would be required to select one course from each of these four broad fields. One primary effect of the division of the humanities and social sciences into two separate fields, in combination with the proposed distribution requirement, was to ensure that all students would pursue at least some study in the humanities. Presumably, this division therefore emerged from the committee’s previously mentioned desire to reinstill the value of the humanities within a post-war environment still infatuated with the sciences.

Naturally, disagreement about the placement of particular subjects in each group began immediately. Some departments objected on the grounds that study in a particular discipline spanned more than one group. Geography, for example, felt it should be classified in both social sciences and sciences; history in both humanities and social sciences. In the final report of the committee, McInnis noted an effort on the part of the committee to limit the cross-listing of departments, which though such a cross-listing may reflect the nature of the disciplines had several negative implications for students’ programs: because of the relatively substantial distribution requirements mandated by the new degree, students would effectively choose one subject in a group at the expense of the group’s other fields. Cross-listing departments meant that students could

²³² University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts Calendar 1946-47, 62.
choose two courses in the same field but in two different groups, further limiting the range of
subjects they would pursue. For the committee, this contradicted the fundamental goal of the
general degree to provide substantial breadth.

In distributing courses into groups, the committee balanced administrative simplicity, goals
for breadth, and the nature and priorities of the individual disciplines in question. In response to
departmental concerns about the location of particular disciplines within the four groups, McInnis
conceded that many of the choices for grouping subjects had been made for practical reasons,
explaining “that the Committee had introduced and later abandoned certain dual listings. He
believed that the Committee had finally placed the subjects in those groups in which it felt they
would serve the widest constituency.”233 For example, the committee was concerned that if the study
of English was placed in the “humanities” group, where it might most logically belong, students
would select English at the expense of other humanities subjects. To the committee, this was
counter to the liberal arts orientation of the degree, and this concern convinced the committee to
place English with modern languages rather than humanities. Alternatively, some faculty members
proposed taking certain dominant fields out of the groups entirely – English and Mathematics, for
example – and allowing them to be substituted for a course in any group so that the selection of
these courses would not affect the distribution of the student’s other choices,234 but this proposal
was ultimately not enacted.

When the new program was finally published in the calendar, the committee’s original
groupings remained relatively intact in spirit – that is, they still represented the four basic groups
initially identified by the committee – though new fields had emerged in the interim, and the
placement of others had been modified according to the administrative and epistemological
concerns described above. There was, however, a significant change to the groupings that does not
appear to have been discussed either in committee or in Faculty Council. This is the division of
particular fields into one or more versions – e.g. “Mathematics A” and “Mathematics B.” These
letters represent a clear distinction between two aspects of a field. In the case of Mathematics, for
example, “Mathematics A” refers to subjects such as Geometry and Calculus, while “Mathematics
B” courses focus on applied topics, such as Statistics and “The Theories of Life Annuities and Life

233 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
234 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
Similarly, Chinese was divided into “Chinese A,” a series of language instruction courses, and “Chinese B,” the study of Chinese art and culture. In this case, the two branches of the field were placed into different groups.

A related problem was encountered in the sciences, which some felt should be divided into “Experimental” and “Descriptive” categories. Professor Wetmore’s comments at the meeting of October 27, 1948 indicate that this emerged from a concern that without specialized training, students would not be prepared to effectively conduct laboratory experiments. Courses in the “Experimental” category would therefore need to be sequenced beginning in first year. Ultimately, the committee did not formally divide the science category into two, but future versions of the calendar do reference “laboratory science” as a sub-category with particular regulations even though they do not define which fields constitute laboratory science (presumably, this would have included courses with an associated laboratory component). For example, the 1954-55 calendar includes a regulation that “only two laboratory subjects from Group II may be chosen.”

Ultimately, these priorities and concerns resulted in the following groupings as they appear in the 1951-52 calendar, the first year in which the new general degree was offered:

Table 1. New General Degree Distributionary Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>Group II</th>
<th>Group III</th>
<th>Group IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese A</td>
<td>Astronomy</td>
<td>Art and Archaeology A</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Botany</td>
<td>Art and Archaeology B</td>
<td>Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Chemistry A</td>
<td>Chinese B</td>
<td>Philosophy A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Chemistry B</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek A</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Greek and Roman History</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek B</td>
<td>Geological Science</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>Household Science</td>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian A</td>
<td>Mathematics A</td>
<td>Oriental History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian B</td>
<td>Mathematics B</td>
<td>Oriental Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Philosophy B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>Zoology</td>
<td>Religious Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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235 University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts Calendar 1946-47*. See page 65 for a list of required courses, page 135 for Actuarial Science course descriptions, and page 175 for Mathematics course descriptions.

236 University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts Calendar 1944-45* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1944), 44.

237 University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts Calendar 1951-52*, 65-66.
The changes to admission and standing requirements and to distribution requirements, however, were relatively minor compared to the committee’s most dramatic departure from the previous pass degree requirements: the introduction of a moderate amount of specialization into the general degree. As previously noted, moderate specialization was in place in the general programs at a number of other Canadian universities; Kirkconnell and Woodhouse note, for example, that “Acadia and Mount Allison demand pass ‘majors’ in the final two years” and that “at McGill provision is made for a fixed minimum of subjects to be carried through the second, third and fourth years.”

The existing pass degree at U of T had in fact offered a *de facto* version of minimal specialization on the McGill model through a requirement in most fields that subjects must be taken in the first year to be pursued in the second, and that, with a few exceptions, fields studied in the second year must be continued in the third. In this way, students were required to take more than one course in most fields. Nonetheless, as previously noted, further specialization was dramatically limited by the small number of course offerings in each year in each field.

While the committee clearly expressed a desire to ensure that the new general degree would preserve the broad study that defined the goal of the general degree and did not replicate the specialization of the honours degree, they also strongly advocated for the value of additional specialization. The committee proposed that, beginning in the second year, students would take two of their five courses in a field of concentration, for a total specialization of five of a student’s 16 degree courses.

They offered two primary justifications for this specialization. The first was that students with a deeper familiarity with a particular subject, but acquired within the broader context offered by the general degree, would be able to communicate the essential elements of that discipline with those outside of it. This was the means by which, as articulated in Wetmore’s early statement, the general degree would “serve as a link” between highly specialized honours students “and the public at large.” The second justification was that specialization, even of a moderate degree, offered a particular kind of intellectual discipline and skill set that could not be acquired through general study.

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238 Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, *The Humanities in Canada*, 41.
239 Ibid, 41.
240 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
alone; that “a reasonable amount of specialization . . . will provide a solid training in intellectual techniques.”

Interestingly, the committee’s justifications for specialization vary dramatically from those offered for the specialized components of some American undergraduate programs under development during the same period of time. The 1945 Harvard curricular report *General Education in a Free Society* (commonly called the Redbook) saw specialization as a necessary evil whose only contribution to undergraduate education was to appease the demands of students who clamoured for a direct return from their education in the form of vocational training. The Redbook proposed an educational model whose goals – provided through their proposed program of broad, general education that would precede specialized study – and specialization were fundamentally opposed. Indeed, the goals of these educators, as described by Rudolph, was to “compensat[e] for the narrowness that made specialization so dehumanizing, divisive, and incapable of providing any common ground or bond among educated people.” In this formulation, the only value of specialization is as job training; it fulfills none of the goals of liberal learning attributed to it by Toronto educators. Rudolph quotes a section from the Redbook that notes that “General education . . . is used to indicate that part of a student’s whole education which looks first of all to his life as a responsible human being and citizen; while the term special education indicates that part which looks to the student’s competence in some occupation.” These alternative interpretations of specialization are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 6.

Indeed, these concerns were far from the minds of Toronto educators, who accepted the proposal to incorporate specialization without a single identifiable objection in principle. However, a number of committee members and departments expressed concerns, both pedagogical and logistical, about how this specialization might be implemented. Concentration meant that students in the new general program would be pursuing more advanced and varied content than had students in the former pass course. This meant both that new courses would have to be created in order to accommodate the additional subject requirements in each year, and that students would need to strengthen particular skills in order to be able to study fields in some depth.

241 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
242 Rudolph, *Curriculum*, 256.
243 Ibid, 258.
One primary concern of departments was the resource implications of mounting multiple general courses. While the previous pass program had emphasized breadth and had prohibited students from pursuing more than one course in a single subject each year, the new general course would not only permit but require students to take two courses in the field of concentration in the second and third years of the degree. Most departments, as noted, had offered only a single general course in each year; the concentration requirements therefore doubled the number of general courses they would need to mount. Especially in the years of rapidly expanding enrolments that immediately followed the war, departments struggled to staff their existing courses, let alone introduce new ones.

In their history of the Department of Political Economy, Drummond and Kaplan note the challenges faced by faculty, who had cut down on all other forms of scholarship in order to staff the department’s courses:

Certainly some of the survivors recall that they were harried by students during the late forties. To supplement such recollections, one might look at the record of publications. In 1947-51 the Department members averaged 12 publications per year, the same number as in 1938-39, when they were far less numerous. It seems there was a limit to what flesh and blood could do.244

In this department, the proposal for introducing additional general courses in these conditions was, not surprisingly, met with “concern.”245 Despite these resource constraints, however, there is no record that departments demonstrated any interest in combining general and honours courses.

Another area of concern for departments was the perceived difficulty of offering a substantive program of concentration without being able to demand or assume significant previous academic work in a particular area. This was not a challenge in the honours program, with its specific high school pre-requisites and rigid sequencing. Departments argued that the scope of what they could teach would be limited by students’ background and skills such that mounting more than a single course in each year would be a challenge. For example, McInnis’s notes record that:

Professor Heard believed that any sequence of courses in Astronomy would require Mathematics as a prerequisite. Professor Crawford pointed out for his department that

244Ian M. Drummond with William Kaplan, *Political Economy at the University of Toronto: A History of the Department, 1888-1982*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Faculty of Arts & Sciences, 1983) 89.

245Ibid, 92.
although an introductory course in Physics need not have Mathematics as a prerequisite, a three-year sequence or a concentration in that subject would certainly require such a prerequisite.”

A proposed potential solution was to require particular courses at the high school level for students who wished to pursue particular concentrations, but the committee felt this too much approached the direct admission to program of the honours degree.

However, the issue of concentration and the associated clamour for pre-requisite knowledge also brought the committee back, once again, to its concern over student choice. The Faculty Council on February 14, 1949, collectively requested that the minutes record a concern that “in the scheme proposed freedom of choice was illusory, being restricted by the provision for specialization.” Not only did concentration necessarily limit the number of courses students could pursue outside of their field of concentration (one fewer per year under the proposed general course than under the existing pass course) but, if pre-requisites and or co-requisites were to be introduced, as some departments argued would be necessary for substantive concentration, students would quickly find their limited slots filled, and their other choices restricted because of the distributive groups.

This led some members of the committee to propose the option of allowing students to take extra courses. Students had previously been restricted to five courses per year in the second and third years, and there was strong opposition to any change to this system for a variety of reasons. Some faculty felt this would encourage further concentration; others felt that less academically skilled students would become overwhelmed. Ultimately, this was permitted in the second and third years as long as “not more than three subjects in either year be chosen from any of the four groups.” In other words, students could not use the extra subject to pursue further study in their field of concentration.

The committee’s revised final proposal, passed by the Board of Governors on May 27, 1950 therefore recommended the following degree structure:

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246 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
247 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
248 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
249 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
250 University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts Calendar 1953-54 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1953), 44.
251 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
Table 2. Proposed General Degree Requirements\textsuperscript{252}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year I</th>
<th>Years II and III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Six courses in the First Year</td>
<td>• . . . five [courses] in each of the Second and Third Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There are no compulsory subjects as such, but the student in the</td>
<td>• In the second and third years, subjects must be chosen from at least three of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first year is required to choose at least one course from each of four</td>
<td>these four groups, and in addition, two courses in a single subject or, in special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>main divisions representing the languages, the natural science, the</td>
<td>cases in closely related subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>humanities and the social sciences</td>
<td>• [At least one subject] in the Second and Third Years [shall be selected] from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In the First Year at least one subject shall be selected from each</td>
<td>at least three [of the four groups]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the four groups</td>
<td>• One extra course may be chosen in each of the Second and Third Years by a student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with clear standing, provided that the choice be confined to subjects offered in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the General Course and that not more than three subjects in any year be chosen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from any one of the above groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The introduction to the final report describing the new general degree strongly echoes the committee’s initial goals that its graduates would, as stated by Wetmore early in the committee’s deliberations, “provide a bridge between the specialists and the non-specialists in society.”\textsuperscript{253} The new degree aimed to provide both enough breadth coupled with enough depth that the student would be able to both understand the perspective of the specialist and communicate with the population at large. The committee argued that:

In the field of the Liberal Arts there are two tasks which no curriculum can neglect. One is the transmission of knowledge about the more fundamental aspects of our society in both its structure and its heritage. The other is the provision of an intellectual discipline which will provide adequately trained minds.\textsuperscript{254}

After it received final approval from the Faculty Council and the Board of Governors by the end of the 1949-50 year, the administration prepared to implement the new degree. Students began the first year of the program in 1951-52, and by 1955, the old degrees had been phased out, and only the new general program appears in the calendar. In the 1953 President’s Report, Dean Woodside (a member of the committee that designed the general degree) described what he perceived to be encouraging indications that the degree was successful. He wrote:

\textsuperscript{252} University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts Calendar 1951-52* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1951), 65-68.
\textsuperscript{253} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
\textsuperscript{254} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
It is, of course, too early to make any valid judgment on the extent to which this course is meeting the needs of students or realizing the hopes which were held for it . . . Although there may well be other factors in the situation, the fact that 51 per cent of the students of the first year in 1952-3 (as against 43 per cent in 1951-2) chose the General Course would indicate that the course is not unattractive. Furthermore the gratifying decrease in the number of petitions received from students seeking either exemption from stated requirements, or other special privileges, would suggest that the new course is meeting their needs more effectively than the old Pass Course. 255

As the first class graduated, Dean Woodside argued that the new degree was both an improvement over the old and that it was fulfilling the goals set for its establishment, writing that:

In June, 1954, the first group of students to enrol in the new General Course received degrees . . . The impression made on the Revising Committee and others is that the work done in the General Course represents on the whole an improvement over the work done in the old Pass Course . . . Approximately half of those students in the first year who wrote the annual examinations in May, 1954, were enrolled in the General Course. This would seem to indicate that there has been no decline in the attractiveness of the course since the session 1952-3, and presumably a course which is attractive in spite of raised standards in meeting a need. 256

President Smith concurred, stating that “The higher standards provided for the General Course warrant a new respect on the part of staff and students.” 257

Though modestly expressed, these statements calling the new degree a success suggest that the new course matched both student and faculty expectations for the content and goals of undergraduate education, and that it fit Toronto’s educational and institutional culture and context. In other words, the model of undergraduate education expressed in the general course was broadly accepted and shared among the university’s varied populations and constituents.

255 M. St. A. Woodside, “Report of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts,” in University of Toronto President’s Report for the Year Ended June 1953 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), 49.
3.2 DEVELOPING THE GENERAL SCIENCE COURSE

While the explosion of post-war scientific research and study is a well-documented influence on American and U.K. universities and undergraduate programs, similar growth in scientific fields in the post-war period was somewhat tempered in Canada, primarily because, as Harris explains, of limited human, infrastructural, and institutional resources to support expansion in scientific study.

Another limit to the immediate expansion of the study of science at the University of Toronto, however, was curricular. As the Committee to Investigate the Pass and General Degree was, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, reviewing the structure of the general program, a number of challenges surfaced in attempting to fit post-war scientific structures into a liberal arts degree. In general, these emerged as debates about the need for pre-requisites and for sequenced courses that fell outside or contradicted the mandate of the new general degree which aimed to balance moderate specialization with broad study across the humanities, languages, sciences, and social sciences. As the general degree was being developed, science department faculty expressed concern that, if their students lacked a significant preparatory foundation in mathematics and scientific technique, they would be extremely limited in the scientific topics they would be able to teach. As previously noted, during the development of the new general program, Professor Crawford of the Physics department, for example, had argued that “although an introductory course in Physics need not have Mathematics as a prerequisite, a three-year sequence or a concentration in that subject would certainly require such a prerequisite.” Similar arguments were voiced by other science departments.

These concerns had several substantial implications for the future place of science in the undergraduate curriculum and its place as a core subject of the liberal arts. At the time the new general program was being developed, many Canadian educators argued that the basic sciences were in fact a component of the humanistic study that characterized study in the liberal arts. Kirkconnell and Woodhouse argued that:

The humanities are not the sole custodians of a liberalizing or humanizing education. It is the spirit in which they are studied, and the fact that they lend themselves to


260 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/087(5).
such study, that makes them especially helpful in humanizing the imagination, the whole background and outlook, of the students. Pure mathematics *can* be studied in such a way as to liberalize and educate the student’s outlook. So can the natural sciences.\(^{261}\)

Similarly, at the 1944 meeting of the National Conference of Canadian Universities, President Carleton Stanley of Dalhousie stated confidently that “From the humanities no wise person excludes Mathematics or Science.”\(^{262}\) Indeed, in the general programs proposed at other Canadian institutions at mid-century, science was indeed taught as a humanities subject; while science was the topic, the approach was historical and philosophical. Science was the focus of the first of the four year-long “Western Civilization” courses proposed at the University of Manitoba, but was, as promoted by Smith, deliberately “not designed to prepare a student in arts for advanced work in any of the physical or biological sciences” but instead aimed to “deal with man in his physical environment.”\(^{263}\)

This line of rhetoric is reflected in the name of the Faculty of *Arts*. In the President’s Report from the 1956-57 academic year, Smith argued that “The full scope of the Faculty of Arts is sometimes misunderstood. In some universities, ‘Arts’ is regarded as distinct from ‘Science,’ but at Toronto the Faculty of Arts embraces the social sciences, . . . Mathematics, and the physical and natural sciences . . . as well as the humanities. Courses in all these fields lead to the degree of Bachelor of Arts.”\(^{264}\)

However, the concerns about the place of science in the general degree ultimately demonstrated that the rhetoric that science was a humanistic field of study was hollow; educators in fact believed that science was a field of its own, and required a curriculum particular to the intellectual approaches and foundational knowledge demanded for its study. The changes proposed to the undergraduate program of study in science during this period at the U of T were indicative of a broader change in the approach to instruction in science and mathematics during this period that Harris characterizes as “a veritable revolution . . . the general consequence of which was a shift of attention from the classical physical or descriptive approach to one that centred on analysis and

\(^{261}\) Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, *The Humanities in Canada*, 7.

\(^{262}\) Sidney Smith, “The Liberal Arts: An Experiment,” 62.

\(^{263}\) Ibid, 11.

structure.\textsuperscript{265} This new approach demanded, as members of the general science course committee and other U of T faculty explained, a structured and cumulative undergraduate science curriculum that could not be accommodated within the existing structures of the general program.

Educators at the U of T began to argue, therefore, that there were insufficient opportunities for students to learn and, indeed, practice science in the existing general program. As science and its applications continued to grow in importance to the post-war intellectual landscape and economy, this quickly came to be perceived as a substantial curricular gap that urgently needed to be filled. At the U of T, unlike at American and British institutions, however, the focus was not on preparing students to conduct basic research in the pure sciences, but had a professional focus: to prepare students for careers as science teachers or as professionals in science-based programs. It was certainly the case that undergraduate students in the 1940s and 1950s had limited opportunities to pursue the basic sciences in a manner comparable to the opportunities available to them to study the arts. The primary option for advanced scientific study was honours programs in particular scientific fields, but students perceived and experienced the level of challenge and scope of instruction in these courses as significant barriers to completing these programs. For example, a description of the Chemistry honours program by a committee of secondary educators concerned with the lack of university graduates qualified to teach science noted that “The honour chemistry course by itself is much too narrow and tends to too great a degree of specialization . . . Relatively few students are capable of or desire this type of concentration.”\textsuperscript{266} They attributed the “high percentage of failures in the first two years”\textsuperscript{267} to these characteristics of the degree.

Outside the honours courses, however, students had very little access to substantial science instruction. In the general program, the sciences were grouped in one of four distributive areas across which students were required to spread the majority of their studies; while general program students also pursued an area of concentration, this was deliberately limited to no more than two courses per year, with further limits on the students’ ability to pursue additional courses in the same disciplinary group. Students were therefore limited to a maximum of two courses in science in the first year and three in the second and third years. Within these restrictions, students were further

\textsuperscript{265} Harris, \textit{A History of Higher Education in Canada}, 522.
\textsuperscript{266} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/130(9).
\textsuperscript{267} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/130(9).
limited to a maximum of two laboratory science courses in any year. This level of science training was not sufficient, many believed, to serve as preparation for most careers involving science.

Professionals in affected fields strongly felt that for the purposes of preparing future colleagues for scientific careers and careers in which scientific aptitude was essential, the current general degree would not suffice. In particular, two concerned groups of professionals, and those responsible for their education, began to argue – separately, but at the same time – for an alternative degree structure that could adequately prepare students who might wish to pursue a career in their fields: the first group was concerned with the lack of qualified secondary science teachers, the second with the pre-professional preparation in the scientific professions. In a report advocating a general course in Science, Wetmore describes how:

> there have been numerous attempts to use the [existing general course] as a partial training in science, not intended by either the humanists or the scientists, but possible within the necessarily flexible framework of the prescription. It is clear that neither the General Course in liberal arts nor the honour courses in science can fill the needs of students who wish to pursue an integrated course in the sciences rather than an intensive course in a particular branch of science.”

The consequent inability of general course graduates to pursue scientific careers led President Smith to argue that the public was facing a crisis of science comparable to the crisis of the humanities faced during the war. He quotes Dean Woodside in the 1954-55 President’s Report, writing that:

> if present trends continue, there will be a desperate shortage of science teachers in the schools, the quality of students entering science courses will inevitably decline, and the ultimate results for the schools, for the universities and for all the many areas of society in which science is important might be disastrous.

Smith adds his own affirmation that “There is a perilous need throughout the country for competent, as well as for illustrious, scientists.”

There was particular concern among those who foresaw a dramatic shortage in university graduates qualified to teach science at the high school level. Future teachers were required to pursue

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268 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(17).
269 Sidney Smith, “Report of the President,” in University of Toronto President’s Report for the Year Ended June 1955 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955), 21
270 Ibid, 21.
an honours degree in a scientific field, which, educators argued, was so challenging and specialized that the content of the degree both turned away many potential future science teachers and did not reflect the level and scope of content that would be most valuable for future secondary educators. The Science Graduate Shortage Committee, primarily composed of high school science teachers and administrators, but with representation from the U of T by members of the Chemistry department, argued that the level of specialization provided in the honours degree “may be required for research work or for industrial application but is unnecessary for high school teaching.” The committee’s initial hope was that several Ontario universities would establish “a Science Specialist’s course designed primarily to prepare teachers of science but which would be recognized by the Universities as an honour course in Science and would have the same validity as each of the present honour science courses in case a student changes his mind and decides against teaching.” In effect, this was a proposal for a broad, rather than specialized, honours course in science.

Those in the medical professions were equally dissatisfied with the curricular options available to prospective professionals in their fields. In the mid-1950s, the medical program remained a direct-entry undergraduate program. Students began their studies with two pre-medical years of study in the basic sciences, as well as courses in the humanities and social sciences, all offered by the Faculty of Medicine (though instructors were drawn from the Faculty of Arts), and completed their program with three years of specialized medical studies. The medical school, however, was dissatisfied with this arrangement because of the limited opportunities it left students who did not wish, or were not able, to continue from the pre-medical years to the medical component of the program. Students, for example, who decided to pursue an academic rather than professional program, or who did not feel they possessed skills appropriate to the medical program, were not permitted to transfer from the pre-medical years to the general program. Students who completed some but not all of the pre-medical and medical program, in other words, were left with no credential or courses that could be counted towards another degree. The same was true in other science-based professional fields such as dentistry and forestry.

These limited pathways dissuaded some students from studying science-based professions and left the professional programs with, they felt, the obligation to offer an alternative to those students who began but could not or did not wish to complete a professional degree. The medical

271 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/130(9).
272 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/130(9).
school, therefore, advocated for a solution that would allow more substantial overlap between the pre-medical program and a route towards a general degree. However, in the opinion of the Faculty of Medicine, the current general degree did not offer adequate scientific training that would prepare students to complete the medical years of the program.

In the course of discussions between the Faculties of Medicine and Arts, the idea that many of these challenges could be solved by the introduction of a general degree in science emerged; this degree would serve as a stand-alone degree, but its first two years could also serve as preparation for professional training in medical fields. Dean Woodside of the Faculty of Arts wrote to president Smith that:

The problem, if pre-medical work is to be done in the Faculty of Arts, is to devise a complete course, two years or more of which would satisfy the requirements of the Faculty of Medicine and all of which would meet the requirements for a B.A. degree. During the early stages of discussion it occurred to me and to some others that such a new course might produce the badly needed teachers of science in the high school, and, in fact, might well produce a few students whom the Graduate School might be glad to accept for graduate work in science. The proposal which is gradually taking form is that a three-year General Course in Science should be established.273

This General Course in Science would permit students to pursue substantially more science courses, and laboratory science courses in particular, than was currently possible in the general degree, but would allow students to study a broader range of scientific fields than was permitted in an honours course, and would also permit for relatively substantial exposure to study in the humanities and social sciences.

A General Course in Science was formally proposed in 1956 in the Report of the [Committee on the General Course] Sub-Committee Appointed to Re-examine the Principle of Concentration as it is Now Working in Actual Practice. One of their four recommendations was that “Having in mind the demonstrated need for science-teachers in the Ontario high-schools and the fact that the present honour-courses are not now providing such prospective teachers . . . The committee recommends that consideration be given to inaugurating a specially constructed three-year science course (in the Faculty of Arts) in preference to attempting to satisfy this need within the

273 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/130(9).
present regulations of the General Course." The standing Committee on the General Course immediately accepted this recommendation, and set to work on the design of the new degree. The committee’s main task was soliciting and balancing the input of the three groups most invested in the structure of the new degree: the science departments whose course would form the foundation of the degree; the arts departments whose courses would provide a broad introduction to the humanities and social sciences, which was deemed essential if the course was still to be considered a general degree; and the professional programs who would enroll the graduates of the General Course in Science.

The first broad draft of the degree came from the science departments and their interaction with the professional faculties. Dean Woodside had, with their input, compiled two proposals for the General Course in Science. While the original proposals are not available, the discussion of the Committee on the General Course highlights the primary difference between Proposal A and Proposal B: mathematics. This conflict highlights the dual role the General Course in Science was meant to fulfill. On one hand, many of the faculty members of the science departments felt that two years of mathematics was the minimum required to provide the necessary grounding in fields like Chemistry and Physics. For example, “Professors Gordon [of Chemistry] and Ireton [of Physics], although they conceded the fact that students might be able to take two years of Physics and Chemistry without any mathematics course, were of the opinion that such students would experience difficulty in doing so.”

By contrast, those who were most concerned with drawing as many students as possible into the sciences, and those who saw the degree primarily as providing pre-professional training for teaching and for science-based professions, wished to minimize mathematical requirements which, they were concerned, would limit the appeal of the degree to potential students. Indeed, their priorities matched the administrative justification for the degree: Louis Joseph Bondy of the French department in St. Michael’s College and chair of the General Course Committee, reminded the committee members as they continued their deliberations “that the main purposes of the proposed course were to (a) train teachers of Science for the secondary schools, and (b) provide pre-

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274 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/004(23).
275 (UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/004(23).
276 Bondy had also been a member of the Committee to Investigate the Pass and General Degree.
professional training for the Faculties of Medicine and Dentistry.” The reminders of this priority continued. As faculty debated what courses should comprise a general education in science, “Professor Fisher was of the opinion that students should have three years of Chemistry to be Scientists and Dean Gordon pointed out that the graduates of this course would not be considered as ‘Scientists’” differentiating these graduates from those who had completed a full honours course in the subject; these students would use science in their professional lives, but would not be scientists as would those who explored and tested the boundaries of their fields.

Those faculty who kept foremost in their minds the goal of the degree to expand professional options in science to U of T students argued that “the compulsory Mathematics was dissuading students from enrolling in Chemistry and Physics in the present General Course” and noted that “there are no mathematical requirements for the students in the Faculty of Medicine who take two courses in Chemistry and a course in Physics which is deemed more than the equivalent of Physics 1a.” Ultimately, the committee came to a compromise, agreeing that two years of mathematics could be required as a prerequisite for particular course sequences (such as physics), but that no more than one year of mathematics should be compulsory for all students.

With their basic framework for the degree established, the standing Committee on the General Course struck an ad hoc Committee to Consider a Possible General Course in Science, appointing F.E.W. Wetmore, Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry, as Chair. This was not Wetmore’s first venture into curricular planning; he had recently served on the Committee to Investigate the Pass and General Degree described above. Indeed, Wetmore was a leading member of this committee, articulating the goals for the new degree at the outset of its deliberations. Bondy, as chair of the standing General Course Committee, would also sit on the General Science Committee.

This group’s task was to establish the structure of the proposed general science course. They considered the discussions that had already taken place and established consensus on several fundamental elements of degree: the degree’s length, ultimately determining that “few students would choose a General Course of the same length as the honours course, since the latter would

277 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/004(23).
278 (UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/004(23).
279 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/004(23).
offer professional advantages over the former,"\(^\text{280}\) that is, that students would be better off with an honours degree than a four-year general degree and therefore a three-year, rather than four-year, course would be developed; and that the course should introduce students to a range of scientific fields.\(^\text{281}\) They also returned to the question of mathematics. They conceded that a degree whose content was "less mathematical than that of the honours courses would be realistic [as] College registrars ascribe the sharp drop in enrolment from the first to the second year of Physics in the General Course to the demand for collateral Mathematics."\(^\text{282}\)

The ad hoc committee quickly ran through several versions of the proposed degree in their next three meetings. Unlike the existing general course, the general science course would not be structured on the basis of distribution. Indeed, in general the committee seemed much more comfortable with a far higher level of prescription than would have been tolerated in the regular general course. While the general course committee had rejected the idea of a common first year out of hand, first-year students in the general science course would pursue a common set of courses; these would, according to the committee, "[lay] a base in mathematics and the natural sciences."\(^\text{283}\) In their first year, therefore, students would pursue seven courses. Five of these were to be in scientific and mathematical fields, including a mathematics course and four laboratory courses in Botany, Chemistry, Physics, and Zoology. This set of courses offered substantially more laboratory experience than the maximum of two laboratory courses allowable in any one year of the existing general course. Additionally, students would select a non-science subject from an approved list, and a one-hour Religious Knowledge course (or a replacement option).\(^\text{284}\) While the course load was heavy, the common first year was proposed to be well-coordinated to enhance student support and eliminate redundancies between the subjects. Courses would be developed "with the understanding that the content of each course must not be permitted to exceed the capabilities of students faced

\(^{280}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18).

\(^{281}\) Initially the committee had intended to mandate concentration in the general science course as in the existing general course, arguing that "there is liberal value in going deeply into one subject and therefore that concentration should be included in a General Course," UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18). Ultimately, however, the committee determined, based on the structure of their initial recommendations, that "Because of the number of compulsory courses, the unity among the sciences, and the likelihood that most students will choose to concentrate, compulsory concentration is not recommended." UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(17).

\(^{282}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18).

\(^{283}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(17).

\(^{284}\) Please see Chapters 2 and 6 for additional information about Religious Knowledge courses at the U of T.
with such a wide variety of subjects." Furthermore, “In order that a measure of regulation of content will be possible, it was agreed that detailed syllabi of the courses will be prepared and distributed among the students, staff, and committee concerned.” The general science course, in other words, would be highly prescribed and co-ordinated not just for students, but for instructors as well.

After three sets of minor adjustments over the second, third and fourth meetings of the ad hoc committee, proposals for the second and third years of the degree were also set. These two years each followed a similar structure, combining the study of what the committee identified as “fundamental” fields in each year (Chemistry and Physics in year two, and Biology in year three), with similar non-science options as in year one. The remaining courses (two in year two and three in year three) would be selected from a range of courses in additional science fields. After three sets of minor adjustments over the second, third and fourth meetings of the ad hoc committee, the general structure of the degree was set.

With the general structure of the science courses in the degree in place, all that remained to be finalized by the committee were the “non-science” and Religious Knowledge courses that would be offered by humanities and the college departments. The committee hoped to identify those courses which would provide general science students, with their relatively limited opportunity for study in the humanities and social sciences, with the most valuable interactions with these fields. Wetmore called on the chairs of each department to propose a series of courses to be included in the general science degree, which each department did enthusiastically; many with an expression of support for the new degree. The French department, for example, recommended for first year “a study of Voltaire, *Candide*; Prevost, *Manon Lescaut*; Saint-Exupéry, *Vol de nuit*; Gide, *La Symphonie Pastorale*,” while Philosophy recommended “Modern Ethics” for third year.

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285 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18).
286 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18).
287 While such co-ordination of instruction may seem somewhat alien today, the existence of common, departmentally-designed (as opposed to instructor-designed) end-of-year examinations had established a tradition of limited instructional autonomy in undergraduate courses; this was to become an issue in the mid-1960s deliberations of the Macpherson Committee (see Chapter 4).
288 Most of these additional science options were in those fields considered most central to the professional fields for which the degree would offer preparation, but students could also elect to pursue one of these options in a science field that may have been of interest but was not directly professionally germane, such as astronomy or geology, or could choose an additional non-science (that is, humanities, language, or social science) option.
In the 1958-59 academic year, the new General Course in Science was formally launched. For admission, the course required a Grade 13 average of at least 60% and preparation in English, Math, a foreign language, and two sciences.\footnote{The 60% admissions average was shared with the existing general degree, but the pre-requisite subjects allowed fewer options than the existing general degree.} The program as presented in the calendar closely followed the structure proposed and justified in the committee’s proposal outlined above: a set first year, with core science courses in second and third years accompanied by additional optional science courses and non-science options:

**Table 3. Requirements for the General Science Degree**\footnote{University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts Calendar 1958-59* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1958), 49-51.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours/week</th>
<th>Program requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Year</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Botany 1y – Elementary Botany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4 | Chemistry 111 – General Chemistry  
Chemistry 161 – A laboratory course to accompany 111 |
| 3 | Mathematics 1y – Calculus |
| 4 | Physics 1y – Mechanics, heat, properties of matter, sound, electricity (first part). |
| 4 | Zoology 1y – A . . . course on the principles of form and function of animals stressing the many descriptions of Zoology and zoological research. |
| 1 to 3 | One of:  
English 1a – Composition  
English 1b – English Literature from Chaucer to Milton  
French 1a – Representative works of French literature. Pronunciation. Composition.  
German 1a – Introduction to modern German literature, composition, oral practice.  
History 1a – History of Europe from 400 to 1945  
Russian 1b – Elementary Russian |
| 1 | One of:  
Anthropology 1b  
English 1g – Sophocles, Oedipus Rex, Shakespeare, Congreve, Wilde, Shaw, O’Neill, O’Casey, Eliot  
French 1b – Reading of modern French texts.  
Music 1b – Music of the Baroque Era  
Near Eastern Literature 1b (C) – for University College student only – The development of religious thought in the Near East  
Religious Knowledge |
| **2nd Year** | |
| 5 | Chemistry 213 – Elementary Organic Chemistry  
Chemistry 252 – Laboratory to accompany 213 |
<p>| 5 | Physics 2y – Electricity (second part), light, atomic and nuclear physics, cosmic rays. |
| 3 to 5 | Two of: |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Year</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 to 5</td>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Botany 2y – Morphology and Evolution of Plants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Botany 2z – Plant Systematics and Plant Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chemistry 232 – Analytical Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND 262 – A laboratory course to accompany 232.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics 2a – Calculus. An extension of course 1a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics 2b – Solid Geometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics 2z – Physical Electronics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoology 2y – Veteranbrate Zoology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoology 2z – Ecology and invertebrate Zoology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astronomy 2a – Astrophysics and Stellar Astronomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR Geological Sciences 1a – Elementary Geology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR another subject from the following group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 One of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics 2a – Principles of Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 2a – Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND 2b – English Literature from Dryden to Keats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French 2a – French literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German 2a – German literature of the eighteenth centuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 2a – History of Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy 2a – Ethics: Historical and Systematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or 2b – History of Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or 2a (M) – Problems of philosophical psychology; Definition and nature of ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or 2b (M) – Logic and the Philosophy of Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science 2a – Governments of Great Britain, the Commonwealth, and the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian 2b – Nineteenth century Russian literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND 2j – Intermediate Russian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 One of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and Archaeology 2d – Classical Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics 2c – Introduction to Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 2g – The Novel and the Short Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French 2c – Reading of Modern French Plays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music 2b – Music of the Classical and Romantic Eras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near Eastern Literature 2b (C) – UC students only – The literature of the Hebrews to the fourth century B.C. with particular reference to the prophetic movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Biology 3y – Cytology, Genetics and the Mechanisms of Evolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 5 Three of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Mathematics 3 – Two-dimensional statues and dynamics; motion of a projectile; circular planetary motion; small oscillations; elementary problems in electricity and magnetism; introduction to relativity theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botany 2z – Plant Systematics and Plant Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Botany 3y – Plant Physiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry 321 – An introduction course in Elementary Physical Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND 355 – Laboratory to accompany 321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry 332 – Inorganic Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND 358 – Laboratory to accompany 332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics 3b – Geometry I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3 | One of:  
|   | Economics 3a – Economic Theory  
|   | English 3a – The writing of essays on subjects connected with the Third Year course in literature  
|   | AND 3b – English Literature from Tennyson to the Present  
|   | French 3a – French literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries  
|   | German 3a – German literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries  
|   | History 3a – History of Canada and the United States  
|   | Philosophy 3a – Modern Ethics  
|   | or 3b – History of Philosophy from the Renaissance to the present time  
|   | or 3a (M) – Social and Political Philosophy  
|   | or 3b (M) – Metaphysics  
|   | Political Science 3a – Political Theory and Comparative Institutions  
|   | Russian 3b – Twentieth century Russian literature  
|   | AND 3g – Advanced Russian  

| 1 | One of:  
|   | Art and Archaeology 3d – The Art of the Renaissance in Western Europe  
|   | Economics 3c – Modern Economic Institutions  
|   | English 3g – Modern Poetry  
|   | Greek and Roman History 3c – The place of Greece in world history  
|   | Music 3b – Music of the Late Romantic and Contemporary Eras  
|   | Near Eastern Literature 3b (C) – The religious development in Palestine from the fourth century B.C. to the first century A.D.; a study of the literature of Judaism and early Christianity  
|   | Philosophy 3f – Modern Ethics  
|   | Religious Knowledge  

The establishment of the general science course did not alter the structure of the existing general course, although that program began to be referred to colloquially as the “general arts course.” Students were still able to elect to concentrate in science fields in the general arts course if they so chose. However, in recognition of the challenges of science instruction in the general arts course, the 1956 Sub-Committee Appointed to Re-Examine the Principle of Concentration As It Is Now Working in Actual Practice had also recommended “that a suitable science program (or programs) of an introductory nature be provided in the natural sciences for students who will not be concentrating in such sciences.”

This recommendation led, some years after the establishment of the general science course, to the proposal to develop a single broad scientific course for general arts course students.

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291 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/004(23).
Professor Patterson Hume of the Physics Department chaired a small Committee on Science Courses for Non-Science Students in the spring of 1962, which consulted with the chairs of Physics, Chemistry, Geological Science, Astronomy, Botany and Zoology. The committee’s report describes their objective as designing a course that could “[present] scientists’ ideas about the nature of the physical world and the changes that have taken place in it.” The course would outline the fundamental tenets of the essential ideas of each of the participating departments “in a cooperative effort to provide, for students in the humanities, a unified look at science.” Adhering to the model of scientific topics taught within a humanistic framework, the topics of the course would be threaded together as a narrative. Its topics would begin at the micro level, discussing the structure of atoms, and gradually expand in scope, addressing the structure of the earth, the evolution of living beings, and finally into the structures of the universe. The course would model the scientific process by including multiple demonstrations of experiments and other “displays and visual aids” but would not include the laboratory component that defined the post-war “revolution” in science instruction that Harris describes.

With the establishment of a separate curriculum for arts and science students, and the development of descriptive science courses exclusively for arts students, the distinction between learning in the arts and learning in the sciences was firmly drawn. A presumption that had guided the development of the general course ten years prior had been that the basic sciences were a component – indeed, essential – part of the liberal arts, and that they could be learned and taught in much the same manner and with much the same starting knowledge as fields in the humanities and the social sciences. As the new general degree introduced concentration to the general program, the need for particular pre-requisite knowledge – mathematics and particular, but also familiarity with the other sciences and with experimental methodology, became apparent to educators in those fields. For example, in outlining the new general science course, Wetmore inadvertently voiced this new division between science and the arts by drawing a distinction between the topics taught in the new general science degree and the “liberal arts,” noting that in the new degree, science students would pursue “A minimum of four hours per week in the liberal arts . . . in each year.”

292 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18).
293 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18).
294 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(18).
295 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, Office of the Dean, A1987-0018/005(17).
More and more, it seemed, the name “Faculty of Arts” no longer adequately represented the Faculty’s activities or priorities. Only a few years before, as described above, the university had defended this title, arguing that the “arts” included the basic sciences. However, by 1960, its desire to emphasize science as distinct from the arts contributed to the change in the Faculty’s name from the “Faculty of Arts” to the “Faculty of Arts and Science.” In the 1960 President’s Report, Dean V.W. Bladen assured the general public that this was a change in name only, and not in fundamental approach. He wrote:

On July 1, 1960, the name of this Faculty will change to the Faculty of Arts and Science. This is more accurately descriptive and more commonly used in Canada. It may possibly be a prelude to the introduction of a new degree, Bachelor of Science, but it is not a prelude to separation of Arts and Science into two faculties, nor even to that partial separation into divisions which has been adopted by the School of Graduate Studies.296

As he had predicted, in the year following the renaming of the Faculty of Arts to the Faculty of Arts and Science, Bladen reported that graduates of the new general science program and of honours programs focused on science would receive “a new degree, Bachelor of Science.”297 This recommendation was both reflective of and facilitated by the clear distinction that emerged during this period between undergraduate education in the arts and in science and which shaped the major curricular development of the mid-1950s: the development of the general science course.

3.3 THE GENERAL PROGRAM REVIEWS – DISCUSSION

As Jones argues, the immediate post-war period in Canada represented a time of “evolutionary expansion”298 for higher education. While the importance of university education had increased, and while more students were attending university, there were few shifts in the fundamental structures of higher education in Ontario. The same could be said for this period of curricular development at the U of T. While the Faculty recognized that the new post-war environment made new demands on the curriculum, and identified curricular structures that would better meet these demands, the curriculum committees made no move to alter the fundamental structure of the undergraduate

296 V.W. Bladen, “Reports: The Dean of the Faculty of Arts,” in University of Toronto President’s Report for the Year Ended June 1960 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), 35.
297 V.W. Bladen, “Reports: The Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science,” in University of Toronto President’s Report for the Year Ended June 1961 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 33.
curriculum – namely, the separation of honours and general courses and students – even though it was this separation and its perceived negative effects that inspired both program reviews.

Within this context, however, the decisions and recommendations of the general program review committees demonstrate some of the assumptions made by the committees as they developed these programs. The most significant, directly shaping the mandate and motivation of both committees, was the assumption that the curriculum provided by the U of T should meet the needs and demands of the province and its youth. The review of the general program emerged from the conclusion that the pass degree was not providing an education of high enough quality to those who pursued it. The assumption that the U of T should provide an education that suited the needs and goals of all students, not just those who wished or were able to pursue an honours degree, and that the education of all students should be of equal quality even if it was not the same was not necessarily the same conclusion that would be drawn at all institutions or in all jurisdictions. Similarly, the fact that the Faculty accepted a responsibility to contribute to the preparation of future scientific professionals, including science teachers, and was willing to reshape its curriculum substantially to this end, further demonstrates the connection these educators perceived between the responsibilities of and demands on the curriculum and the broader educational needs of the province and its students.

The individual program reviews also each illuminate assumptions made by the respective curricular review committees about the structures that would best allow students to meet these educational goals. In seeking to improve the quality of the general program, the primary changes made by the committee were to introduce a moderate amount of specialization, and to clarify the distinct purpose of the general degree, ensuring that students and the public interpreted its purpose not as parallel to the honours degree but with reduced standards, but rather as a program with its own distinct role in meeting the educational needs of students and of the province. The committee’s understanding of the necessary structural elements of high quality education therefore include the belief that specialization offered “a solid training in intellectual techniques”299 not available through broad study alone, and that the educational needs of the region were best met by offering parallel programs with their own goals and structures.

299 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
The development of the general science degree similarly illuminates some important assumptions. In this case, the curricular review committee was responding both to the increased importance science was assigned more broadly, and to their perception of the changing demands of science pedagogy. While the belief, as described above, that science was a component and indeed essential part of the liberal arts was frequently reiterated at the U of T and elsewhere in the immediate post-war period, the conception of science as part of the liberal arts began to disintegrate during the 1950s, and science instead came to be seen as something in need of its own curriculum, pedagogy, and degree designation. At the U of T and elsewhere, this distinction appears to have developed out of a belief that science required a more strictly sequenced and cumulative curriculum that included strong quantitative preparation, and out of the increasing focus on experimental and laboratory work in scientific study, as opposed to a narrative and descriptive approach to science education. Wetmore, for example, argued that students should not be allowed to start a science subject that included a laboratory component after the first year and proposed a division in the calendar between “descriptive” sciences – those taught through the narrative form of lecture – and the “laboratory” sciences – those that asked students to observe the scientific method at work.  

Indeed, Wetmore captured the growing gulf between the arts and the sciences by arguing that science was not just an area of study, but that “Science presented a mode of thought not present in the subjects of study with which it was usually placed in opposition.”  

While these beliefs certainly reflect a broader shift in thinking about science that took place across North American and European universities during this period, they further reaffirm the assumptions voiced by the General Course Review Committee of the value of dedicated study in a particular area and of the consequent need for multiple educational options. In other words, the General Science Committee did not seek to integrate their understanding of the demands of science instruction into the undergraduate curriculum more broadly, but instead supported the development of a dedicated stream of study that would meet these specific demands.

The general program reviews of the 1940s and 1950s, therefore, ultimately reaffirmed the existing structures of education at the U of T, both by sustaining the separation of honours and

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300 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
301 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1973-0029/010(11).
general programs and students, and by, more broadly, promoting multiple pathways to the degree based on the premise that the province and its students had particular educational needs, and that the array of these needs were best met by different types of study. At the same time, in the quest for educational quality, the General Course Review Committee and the General Science Committee both promoted sequenced, relatively specialized study (compared to the previous pass degree, though not to the highly-specialized honours program). These reviews, therefore, while representing “evolutionary expansion” and not the fundamental changes to curricular structures that will be seen in the following decade, nonetheless provide clear indications of the assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education in the Faculty and about the curricular structures that would best support these goals.
The changes to higher education across Canada and indeed globally between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s were dramatic, as students crowded into the university in numbers that would have been unimaginable two decades before. This chapter addresses the ways in which the curriculum at the U of T likewise underwent dramatic changes. Indeed, the changes during this period were so substantial that they were, by necessity, iterative. This chapter therefore outlines in detail the gradual process of the development and review of the New Programme. First came the U of T’s most public and political curricular review to date: the deliberations of the Macpherson Committee. A second section then discusses the multi-stage process by which the Macpherson recommendations were translated into what became known, fittingly, as the New Programme. The chapter then concludes with a discussion of the educational motivations and assumptions underlying both the eliminations of the U of T’s traditional curriculum and of the goals and dissatisfactions indicated by the development and revision of the New Programme.

4.1 THE MACPHERSON COMMITTEE

The recommendations of the Macpherson Committee, released in 1967, advocated a revolution in Toronto’s arts and science programs, challenging the fundamental curricular structures that had been in place in one form or another since 1890. When compared to the general degree committees of the 1950s, the Macpherson Committee launched its work with a much larger scope — indeed, with the goal of rebuilding undergraduate education at the University of Toronto from the ground up.

The Macpherson Committee, officially called the Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts & Science was, as the name suggests, a presidential initiative, instigated directly by Claude Bissell. In the mid and late 1960s, Bissell was a president acutely aware of and concerned with the public and student opinion of the university. For Bissell, the establishment of the Macpherson Committee had two primary objectives. The first was a sense that the shape of undergraduate education perhaps no longer fit the responsibilities assigned to higher education in the 1960s.

Indeed, the decade between 1955 and 1965 was marked with spiraling enrolment accompanied by spiraling public anxiety about and investment in the future of the universities. During this period, driven both by the demographic surge of the baby boom and the increased
demand for highly educated and skilled workers, enrolment in Canada’s universities more than doubled. Planning for this enrolment focused public and government attention on the importance of postsecondary education to the post-war economy; Axelrod argues that “If any date can be isolated as a pivotal point in raising to unprecedented levels public consciousness over the value of education, especially over the increasing importance of higher education, 1956 would surely qualify.” Axelrod refers to the 1956 meeting of the National Conference of Canadian Universities in November of that year, convened to discuss the 1955 Sheffield Report that predicted “that, though demographic pressure alone, [Canadian] university enrolment would double to over 120,000 by 1965” and would double again between 1965 and 1975. Even though these predictions were shocking at the time, Bissell notes that “as it turned out,” they were “almost absurdly below the reality.” Reflecting the tenor of the expectations for the effects of this expansion, the title of this conference was “Canada’s Crisis in Higher Education.”

The effects of this expansion were expected to be highly disruptive to the business of higher education. While the university had welcomed large numbers of veterans in the years immediately following the Second World War, this bulge in enrolment had, as Friedland describes, been temporary and had thus been accommodated through temporary means: the establishment of portable classrooms and the temporary expansion of class sizes and section offerings. Drummond and Kaplan note how enrolment in the Department of Political Economy during this period “behaved like an accordion – contracting painfully during the War, expanding at frightening speed in the post-war veterans’ boom, then contracting once more in the early fifties.” The enrolment projections for the 1960s, however, demonstrated to Canadian universities that they faced a permanent and fundamental shift in operations. Canadian universities faced the challenge of securing sufficient funding and faculty to support this expansion, and of accommodating the new students on often restricted physical plants. For many institutions and for the U of T in particular,

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304 Ibid, 23.
306 Ibid, 45.
307 Friedman, for example, notes that “By 1950, almost all the veterans had graduated, and overcrowding was no longer a serious problem.” Martin L. Friedman, *The University of Toronto: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 382.
308 Ian M. Drummond with William Kaplan, *Political Economy at the University of Toronto: A History of the Department, 1888-1982* (Toronto: University of Toronto Faculty of Arts & Sciences, 1983), 84.
the necessary adjustments would clearly be substantial – considering that in many ways the U of T operated much as it had in the nineteenth century. Bissell describes the state of the university when he became president in 1958 as having, at core, changed very little since the its initial founding: “University College, for instance, remained much as it was when it was rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1890; an undergraduate of that day suddenly transported to the present would have experienced no environmental shock.”

Ultimately, as discussed in Chapter 6, the changes necessitated by the growth during this period marked the transformation of Canadian higher education from an elite to a mass system, and the transformation of the U of T in particular to that mass institution, the “multiversity.” Kerr coined this term to define the similarly-expanded research institutions in the United States, which were defined by their multiplicity of goals, constituents, and priorities. The term quickly entered popular usage, however, as shorthand for the challenges associated with rapidly expanded institutions, especially as they affected the increased and increasing numbers of undergraduate students, including large, impersonal classes and faculty assumed to be more dedicated to their research agenda than to teaching. These complaints expressed the common anxiety caused by two conflicting impulses. First, undergraduate education had been promoted as increasingly essential to the economic and cultural well-being of the nation. Jasen writes of “an intensive public-relations campaign conducted by the universities and government to justify the enormous expansion of the university system,” based on human-capital theory, that led “government and the private sector [to assume] that the gross national product would increase in proportion to the country’s investment in higher learning.” At the same time, however, the universities that had been at the centre of this expansion had failed to properly accommodate the new student numbers. Consequently, Jasen concludes that “the advantages of a sojourn in the overcrowded multiversities failed to correspond to this ideal” and many students, and the public, “felt betrayed.”

Bissell’s second objective in establishing the Macpherson Committee was therefore to head off the student unrest that he felt was an inevitable outcome of not acknowledging this shifting role of the university. Immensely disruptive student protests had, by the mid-60s, become commonplace.

309 Bissell, Halfway Up Parnassus, 44.
310 Clark Kerr, The Uses of the University, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).
312 Ibid, 247.
at a number of postsecondary institutions, including the dramatic 1964 Berkeley sit-ins. These protests, Altbach writes, were in some cases “militant and sometimes violent” and, internationally, “succeeded in disrupting universities, stimulating political crises, and on several occasions precipitating revolutionary upheavals.” While the root of these protests is primarily attributed to the desire for political change – for example, in the American context, the protests flared over Civil Rights and American involvement in Vietnam – Jasen argues that the curricular influence on these protests is often understated, noting a statement from the “New Left Caucus of the Toronto Student Movement” that “The smorgasboard of irrelevances that constitute the staples of the general arts course is at the heart of student discontent.” While Canada might have been able to avoid some of the political causes that drove students to protest in other countries, Canadian universities nonetheless faced similar criticisms of “the mass-teaching techniques that facilitated expansion” and the “confusion of educational aims that beset arts faculties” that led student activists to believe, as Jasen argues, that “the university merely contributed society’s problems by suppressing, rather than encouraging, free inquiry and genuine social change.”

Bissell was anxious to avoid a Berkeley-style eruption at the U of T. The need to take some action became more clear to him as he observed the gradual expansion of activism in Toronto’s own students; a 1965 “Teach-In on the topic of ‘Revolution and Response . . . began with small seminars and sessions; but the final, climactic form was series of mass meetings in Varsity Arena, each with a capacity audience of some 6,000 and extensive media coverage.” In general, Bissell reflects on his sense that, during this period, “student leaders were beginning to look inward, to locate the establishment not in some distant and comfortably unassailable foreign country but at home, specifically in the university.” Bissell’s solution was to pre-empt student antagonism by opening a large and public debate into the purposes and structures of undergraduate education. This would, it was hoped, defuse tension and unite, rather than splinter, student and administrative interests.

315 Ibid, 247.
316 Ibid, 247.
318 Ibid, 125.
As the central focus of this debate, therefore, the Macpherson Committee was announced to the public as a “committee to study student unrest” in the Globe & Mail.\textsuperscript{319} The following day, prompted by this announcement, a larger article about student unrest in Ontario universities appeared in the Toronto Star. It described an increasingly volatile situation on many Ontario campuses spurred by these changes to the nature of the university and students’ changing expectations and demands within this new institution – though not one that seemed on the brink of violence:

All major university campuses in Canada are seething. Why? The answer is ‘multiversity’. A word invented to designate the complexity and bigness of the modern university . . . Our undergraduates aren’t hotheads ready to create disturbances at the drop of a slogan. But they do want the true higher education they have expected, and to be treated as a valued part of the academic community.\textsuperscript{320}

The Macpherson Committee was therefore launched with a broad and, indeed, activist mandate. The goal was not to confirm whether or not the existing curriculum was appropriate and make necessary adjustments where weaknesses were found. Rather, the committee was founded on the basis that the current curriculum and undergraduate instruction in general was dysfunctional, and that new structures needed to be established. Bissell emphasized to the press the scope of the proposed investigation, explaining that “the committee would investigate the methodology, pedagogy and departmental organization in the Faculty.”\textsuperscript{321}

This perceived need for significant change seems to be why Macpherson was selected as the committee chair. A Professor in the Department of Political Economy who Friedland calls a “towering figure”\textsuperscript{322} in his field of political theory, Macpherson was from the beginning eager to run the committee in public and with a consultative approach that had not been emphasized by the small committees of senior faculty that had previously driven curricular reform. He launched the committee with a perspective shared with Bissell that a public debate over the purposes of university education could defuse campus tensions, and with a clear enthusiasm and intention to dramatically

\textsuperscript{319} University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
\textsuperscript{320} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
\textsuperscript{321} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
\textsuperscript{322} Friedland, \textit{The University of Toronto: A History}, 479.
overhaul undergraduate instruction in the Faculty of Arts & Science. Macpherson himself indicated substantial sympathy for the student cause, telling the Globe & Mail in May, 1966 that the committee “will try to find out of the undergraduates are getting a square deal. We hope the committee’s findings will be a preventative in the problem of unrest but it also might be a cure.”

Emerging from this perspective and context, the recommendations of the Macpherson Committee proposed a curriculum that advocated greater student flexibility and choice, promoted equality and curbed what it perceived as the elitist structure of the segregation of honours and general programs and courses, and attempted to identify ways to improve teaching and personalize instruction that had increasingly come to be seen as a victim of the expansion and consequent standardization of undergraduate education.

Having selected Macpherson as chair, Bissell appointed the rest of the committee. Macpherson had hoped to include on the committee members from constituencies that had not been represented on previous curricular committees: he asked Bissell whether they might appoint “an undergraduate, or an immediate ex-undergraduate (say, a first-class person graduating this June) as a member of the committee? Without this, there is danger that the old hands will just talk to each other and get carried away by self-satisfaction and desire not to hurt colleagues' feelings.” He also hoped to include “a member from outside this University . . . [to] avoid a purely inbred view; and there is nothing more ludicrous than a commission of enquiry made up entirely of the people to be enquired into.”

While the second request was deemed reasonable and H.S. Harris from York (which only very recently had become an institution entirely independent from the U of T) was appointed to the committee, Macpherson’s first request initially went unheeded, and no student member was appointed. However, at its first meeting, the committee members revisited this issue, and debated the possible merits of including a student on the committee. Macpherson pointed out that the committee had been assigned a research officer, who would manage and analyze the information and feedback coming into the committee; Macpherson suggested, to the committee’s

323 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
324 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
325 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
agreement, that, as a recent graduate, the research officer could become a full voting member of the committee, and thereby represent the student voice.

Bissell’s broad goals for the committee both provided a clear direction for the committee and left it with, in the words of Macpherson, “deliberately vague” terms of reference.\(^{327}\) The committee was charged, as noted above, to explore and comment on “the methodology, pedagogy and departmental organization in the Faculty.”\(^{328}\) Faced with this substantial mandate, the Macpherson Committee immediately began meeting weekly, and early on debated its terms of reference and the scope of its work. Prior to the committee’s first meeting, Macpherson sent out a letter setting the agenda for its first discussions. He hoped that the committee might be able to articulate their own interpretation of the broad terms of reference, and decide on a process for evaluating the current curricular context and making recommendations for change. Its broad mandate, Macpherson suggested, also indicated to the committee how they might best approach their own decision-making process. In keeping with the cathartic and communicative goals of the committee, Macpherson proposed a process in the style of a Royal Commission—inviting written briefs on particular questions from every conceivable constituent. At the University of Toronto, this primarily included academic administrators, faculty (including “every member, sessional and permanent”\(^{329}\)) and current and former students. The committee would also organize a series of public hearings, where some of the briefs would be discussed and where opportunities for additional statements and questions would be offered.

By November, 1966 the committee had laid out a plan for its work. Each committee member would select or be assigned what would eventually become a chapter of the report. Each meeting would be devoted to discussing the content of a draft of this chapter, debating any contentious issues, and the author or authors would, based on this discussion, develop a revised version that would become a portion of the committee’s final report. In this “Plans for Committee Operations” document, Macpherson set out the topics for briefs. This plan therefore structured the committee’s work and remained consistent through its operations; the topics and order of the planned documents parallel closely the structure of the final document, suggesting that the focus of

\(^{327}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.

\(^{328}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.

\(^{329}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
the final document was known and planned well before the committee began its version of a Royal Commission.

Table 4. Proposed Topics of Committee Briefs and Table of Contents of the Final Report

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As the committee developed and debated its own reports, they also received vast quantities of input from members of the university community through briefs and hearings. A tally of the briefs received showed the enthusiasm with which university populations responded to this invitation. The committee received a total of 431 briefs representing likely over 1,000 individual voices; 114 of which came from individual faculty members and faculty groups (for example, a collective brief from members of a department, college faculty, or less formal ad-hoc collegial submissions), and 317 from individual students and student clubs and societies. Additionally, the committee scheduled a series of hearings at which a number of these briefs would be read by the contributor and community members would have an opportunity to discuss their contents.

Data from these briefs were supplemented by a set of surveys sent to the constituents listed above; these surveys were designed both to gather a thorough portrait of current undergraduate education through questions for students about workload, assessment methods, and patterns of study; through questions for faculty about teaching loads and course assignments, teaching support structures within departments; and through a broad, overall question intended primarily for department chairs: “Above all, the Committee would welcome the opinions of the Department or any members of it on the situation disclosed by the answers to the above questions. Is it satisfactory?

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330 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001 and Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), vii-ix.
Or deplorable but irreparable (given the pressures of the discipline and society)? Or deplorable and reparable by some re-arrangement of our present or foreseeable resources? 

Whether the committee was overwhelmed with information, or whether it simply found that it could not identify a valuable way to synthesize the wide-ranging feedback, there is no indication that the committee developed a comprehensive assessment of the feedback it received, and meeting minutes do not indicate a direct engagement with the feedback received either from the briefs or the surveys. There is no evidence of a compilation or overview of survey responses, although the individual responses are available among the archival documents. An overview of the received briefs was developed, arranged both by common topic and by author. Macpherson claimed responsibility for reviewing the submitted briefs, telling the committee that “he intended to go through all the briefs himself and pick out the salient points.”

This was, however, perhaps deliberate to a degree; while Macpherson was committed to a public discussion of the curriculum, he was not committed to shaping the committee’s recommendations exclusively on this public input. Macpherson described this balance in the introduction to the committee’s final report: “We thought it insufficient to go entirely on the opinions submitted to us. And, of course, we could have made no recommendations on that basis alone: we should have had at least to decide which of the many value assumptions implicit in the views submitted to us – some of which were contradictory – we could endorse.”

These briefs, and the committees subsequent discussions, would, unlike the previous two committees, focus not just on the content, number, and type of courses that should comprise a bachelor’s degree, but on what might be called an early version of the student experience as we conceive of it today: all elements, curricular and co-curricular; in class and in interactions with other students and faculty; and in the physical as well as epistemological structures of education. Indeed, the Macpherson Committee did not, initially, consider itself to be primarily a curriculum committee, which it understood as focusing primarily on degree requirements. In a letter to recent graduates soliciting their input on their undergraduate program, Macpherson writes that “We are neither a...
grievance committee nor a curriculum committee. Our concern is with the adequacy of the whole organization of teaching and learning in the Faculty.”  

Arguably, the public discussion about the curriculum and the development of actual programmatic recommendations represented, for the Macpherson Committee, two overlapping but distinct processes with distinct goals: the aim of the former was to, as Bissell had intended, defuse student, faculty, and public concerns over the inability of the undergraduate program to meet the changed needs of the multiversity; the aim of the latter to develop a feasible and implementable updated undergraduate program of study. This duality of aims was not dishonest or cynical; indeed, as Awbrey describes, many curricular exercises are at least as much about communication and catharsis as they are about actual structural change, but this had never (and has never since) been as explicitly and transparently a goal of a curriculum review committee at the U of T as it was for the Macpherson Committee.

With this duality of aims, however, the Macpherson Committee faced the significant challenge of translating broad and sometimes abstract concerns into policy. Indeed, because of the deliberately broad and inclusive mandate of the committee’s initial information-gathering public stages, much of what the committee and the university community had discussed in briefs and at hearings fell outside of the traditional jurisdiction of curricular committees. This applied in particular to the focus, in its initial interactions with the public and with the university community, on undergraduate “instruction.” The committee faced the challenge of translating these conversations discussing elements of undergraduate education that traditionally fell under the jurisdiction of individual instructors and of departments into curricular structures that could be implemented at the divisional level.

The committee’s approach, therefore, as it began to develop its recommendations, was to identify structural means that could influence the type – in addition to the amount and sequence – of education that students would receive without intruding into areas outside of the jurisdiction of a curriculum committee. As it began to formulate its recommendations, the Macpherson Committee, therefore, attempted to influence change in the classroom by proposing structures that would indirectly change practice; either by making it difficult for instructors to continue a particular

334 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/001.

traditional practice, or by providing them additional flexibility to implement and experiment with alternative methods. Most notably, this approach shaped the committee’s recommendations on lectures and examinations.

The Macpherson Committee spent a considerable amount of its energy discussing and debating the value of lectures in meetings and in hearings, and heard much about them in briefs. The consensus across the university seemed to be that “the university should at last leap out of the Middle Ages by giving up lectures altogether.” Lectures, the briefs argued, and did not permit the individualized learning experience that the committee, and many others within the university, saw as the undergraduate ideal. While it was possible, the committee argued, for lectures to be used to educationally beneficial ends, it conceded that despite these possible positive educational outcomes from lectures, “we do not find that the present system of lecture courses encourages the performance of these functions. What it does is encourage . . . the transmitting of information which the student must know.”

Overall, the Macpherson Committee hoped that classroom instruction would provide more opportunities for students to explore their own interests, to learn for the sake of learning, and to experience assessment that would more accurately reflect these pedagogical values. At this time, instruction in the Faculty proceeded according to the following pattern: students attended either three hours of lectures per week in each course or two hours plus a laboratory or tutorial, and at the end of the year, students wrote an examination set by the Faculty rather than by the individual instructor. The Macpherson Committee – supported by the feedback it received – argued that this approach to teaching and learning stifled student curiosity and distorted educational priorities and values.

336 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 9.
337 The Committee, in its final report, listed five potentially ways in which lectures could be educationally beneficial, by:
   (i) providing an overview of a subject, or branch of a subject, not readily obtainable in any one or a few printed works;
   (ii) conveying to students the professor’s enthusiasm and zeal for his subject in a way that cannot be done in print;
   (iii) showing the students how to tackle problems of interpretation, and theoretical or experimental problems generally, so that they can tackle some on their own;
   (iv) showing a scholar’s mind at work grappling with ideas, theoretical relations, intractable problems;
   (v) conveying to the students theoretical insights and advances in knowledge that are unique to a particular professor. Ibid, 10.
338 Ibid, 11.
One assumption made by the Macpherson Committee was that using lectures as the primary means of instruction was at the origin of many of these problems. The committee argued that “We believe that lectures should not be regarded by the undergraduate as the sole, or main, or sufficient, substance of learning; a student who is not learning on his own is not learning much of value.” So many of the briefs submitted to the Macpherson Committee took for granted the ineffectiveness of lectures, and, the committee pointed out, the consequent assumption that alternative forms of instruction were necessarily better. Lectures were impersonal and mechanistic; the assumption held by many of the students and faculty who submitted briefs was that their obverse, the personal and individualized small class, was thus necessarily a solution to all the instructional woes described to the committee. But while the committee noted problems with particular types of lecturing – the types that, they agreed, seemed to be most frequently practiced at the U of T – they nonetheless maintained that lecturing as a mode of instruction could have substantial potential value. The committee therefore sought ways not to eliminate lecturing entirely, but to change the role of lectures within the Faculty.

One problematic aspect of this present system, the committee argued, was the practice of concluding each course with a departmentally-developed end-of-year examination. Professor Cook argued in a committee meeting that “while ostensibly discussing lectures, the Committee was really taking about examinations.” The result was that, Cook argued, “the system of year-end examinations specifically attached to each lecture course sets up or confirms the tendency to use lectures to pour into the student all he needs to know to cover the course: lectures become exercises in the presentation and accumulation of examinable material” and therefore that “The main evil we have found in the present system of examinations is . . . that it reinforces the tendency to make lectures into what they should not primarily be, a means of transmitting to students most of what they are expected to know.”

The committee therefore identified an opportunity to indirectly shape lecturing in the Faculty by shifting the emphasis away from content-driven, cumulative, and common examinations and towards alternative possibilities for exams that might “ensure that every examination [would]
require thought, rather than or as well as recall of information.” They argued for the elimination of most of these exams; traditional end-of-year course exams would only be required in the first year. The second year would be free of exams, to “get away from the regurgitation effect” and encourage students to think of the second and third years (for many students, the final years of their program) as a more unified experience. Third year, therefore, could be used for “a few comprehensive or combined examinations” that would “certify the student’s attainment” of the fundamental requirements of university work. They foresaw no need for examinations in the fourth year, though they argued that it would be “desirable that there be some way in which the fourth year student can register his achievement” and thought this might best be accomplished through “the writing of a senior thesis [or] a single comprehensive exam.”

Having withdrawn the pressure on faculty to prepare students for a set exam, the committee sought to replace this force with additional recommendations for classroom practice that would promote the committee’s vision for undergraduate education. First, the committee recommended an overall reduction in course contact hours to two per week from the current standard of three (or two lecture plus two laboratory), so that “no undergraduate should have more than ten classroom hours a week (apart from laboratories).” Instead, students would use their time to complete additional term work (which, with the elimination of the old examination system, faculty could now feel freer to assign) or explore issues of personal interest. As the committee wrote, “we want students to have more time to read and to develop their minds and their understanding of their subjects by applying the insights and methods of analysis which they should be getting from the lectures (and from reading).”

The committee notes, for example, that this limitation on lecture hours would “make it impossible for professors or students to use the lectures to ‘cover’ the course, and [would] thus . . .

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343 Ibid, 25.
344 The committee’s argument for retaining examinations in the first year was that:
   Given the inherent imperfection of any practicable set of admission requirements in distinguishing between those who can and those who cannot handle university work, the abolition of examinations at the end of first year would mean keeping incompetent or idle students at the university for the whole of second year, with a consequent waste of resources that could scarcely be justified . . . We therefore cannot recommend doing away with examinations in first year. Ibid, 27-28.
345 Ibid, 28.
346 Ibid, 29.
347 Ibid, 28.
348 Ibid, 21.
restore (or confine) lectures to their proper function” by compelling instructors to use lectures for synthesis or demonstration. They also hoped their recommendations would encourage experimentation not just through restrictions but by lifting demands; they note that a reduction in examination requirements would allow instructors “to assess the quality of the candidates’ performance better than they now can do” under the pressure to “read and appraise 150 3-hour examination scripts within a week or so.”

These reduced lecture hours, the committee imagined, would be replaced with alternative modes of instruction that would encourage the kind of active, individualized, and self-directed learning that the committee felt would be more productive. Consequently, they argued that opportunities for students to practice scholarship, through tutorials (of 10-12 students) and laboratories, would “enable the students to develop their own abilities along these lines . . . and hear each other doing so, in the presence and with the help of a more experienced mind, whether a professor or a teaching assistant.”

Despite its attempt to influence in-class instruction through these recommendations about the structure of courses and classes, the committee noted that its potential to influence practice was limited, and acknowledged they could not ensure that changes would take place. They state, for example, that “the mere reduction of lecture hours will not by itself have the desired double effect of converting lectures to their proper uses and enabling and requiring the student to think more on his own.” Tutorials, when then existed, often “come to be used primarily to ensure that students have received and absorbed the information so transmitted” rather than giving students an opportunity to practice scholarly work and thinking, a tendency that would not be solved through a cap on tutorial sizes.

With recognition of these limitations, the Macpherson Committee came to the conclusion that several more substantial changes to the curriculum were necessary in order to adequately address the significant concerns with undergraduate instruction. The limited jurisdiction they had over the individual instructional choices of faculty helped committee members to recognize that many of the challenges facing undergraduate instruction at the University of Toronto could be

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350 Ibid, 19.
352 Ibid, 32.
353 Ibid, 21.
354 Ibid, 32.
resolved not by changes to the nature of undergraduate courses but instead would be best addressed through changes to the structure of undergraduate degrees.

The committee identified two major and fundamental problems in undergraduate education at the U of T. On the one hand, students in honours programs were, some committee members believed, and many of the submitted briefs agreed, overspecialized, especially when compared to American programs. At a January committee meeting, a member who had completed his degrees in the United States said that “he felt that the whole system at the University encourages premature specialization. At almost all universities in the U.S., the maximum amount of specialization is in fact what is called the General Course at the University of Toronto.”355 From the perspective of those members of the committee who preferred the American model, this early and intense specialization had transformed the degree into essentially a vocational model, preparing students not for intellectual pursuits but for professional life. In his working paper for the committee on course structure, Harris summarized these assumptions, writing that:

   Many students and some faculty members have made the following criticisms: 1) Most Honour courses are too intensive and “narrow”, especially in the first two years, where some students particularly wish to have a broader range of subjects . . . The total effect of some Honour courses is said to be “professional training” for graduate school or industry, rather than “liberal education.”356

The committee argued that this stemmed in part from the historical origins of the education offered at the U of T; that “Toronto took over the English and Scottish pattern at a time when postgraduate degrees were little used, and when, consequently, a high-level first degree was all-important for the reputation of the university and the quality of its graduates.”357 The honours B.A., in other words, was initially designed as essentially a terminal degree when no additional educational options were available, and was meant to “carry the students as far along the path of knowledge of his particular discipline as was possible within the four undergraduate years, even at the cost of possible narrowness or over-specialization.”358 Furthermore, members of the committee argued, the value of

355 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/004.
356 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/006.
357 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 55.
358 Ibid, 56.
the honours degree had also become outdated as an intellectual or academic model. Shepherd, Professor of Greek and Registrar of University College, suggested that, with the expansion of graduate study in Canada and North America, the honours degree should no longer be the primary means of training future scholars. He noted that:

the system at Toronto is fundamentally the same as the British system in that the aim is to specialize as early as possible. Until recently it has not been very concerned with any degree beyond the first degree. Whereas the American tradition has been the opposite since 1890 when Harvard led the way in introducing the system of options and the growing emphasis on the graduate school. The University of Toronto has the problem of building an American type of graduate school on a British type of undergraduate system.\(^{359}\)

Now that graduate courses had become a major part of the university, however, some argued that the current approach to the first degree was not only no longer necessary but was indeed detrimental. In its final report, the committee argued that “The Honour Course system by its nature requires that the student make an early choice of his specialism and that he stick with it whether or not he was mistaken”\(^ {360}\) and that, therefore, “Our system provides a lot for those who know exactly what specialty they want to devote themselves to, and who have assessed correctly their capacity for it. It does not provide for those who guess wrong.”\(^ {361}\) They argued further that “the pressure generated among students and faculty within many of the Honour Courses by the supposed demands of graduate work and sometimes by the mere proliferation of subject-matter – the ‘knowledge explosion’ that is particularly evident in the natural sciences – has led them to try to pack in an ever increasing bulk of knowledge”\(^ {362}\) which had exacerbated the tendency for instruction to emphasize the transmission of facts rather than the development of higher-order thinking.

The criticisms of the honours program, however, were balanced by equally sharp criticisms of the general degree. At the same time that the honours program had become, the committee argued, narrow and vocationally-oriented professional training, the general student had become “a second class citizen.”\(^ {363}\) Department resources were funneled to the honours program, and a

\(^{359}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/004.

\(^{360}\) Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 56.

\(^{361}\) Ibid, 56.

\(^{362}\) Ibid, 57.

\(^{363}\) Ibid, 58.
“student who does not choose to enter a specialised Honour course from the beginning must resign himself to work of a lower standard in whatever combination of subjects he does choose.” 364 The criticism of the Toronto general program that Kirkconnell and Woodhouse had launched in the mid 1940s – that it was “regarded as a refuge for those who lack the gifts requisite for honours” 365 – was repeated with ever more urgency in the 1960s. The committee observed that:

Specialism is equated with the high-standard work, generalism with watered-down work. The non-specialist cannot get the first-rate work in any subject: each department reserves that for its own specialist students. The generalist is a second-class citizen, not because he is necessarily less capable but because he will not commit himself to high specialization. 366

As a consequence, as the final report of the Macpherson Committee stated, the “intellectual cost of the Honour Course system in its present form looms even larger” 367 when brought into relief with the effect it had on the general course.

One additional issue of context and comparison that reflected negatively on the separation of honours and general programs was the emerging suburban campuses. The campuses at Erindale, in Mississauga, and in Scarborough were one means by which the U of T, urged by the province, hoped to accommodate the anticipated influx of students. Initially organized as colleges of the Faculty of Arts & Science, the new campuses were limited to offering the three-year general degree. For the new campuses, this was an uncomfortable arrangement; Erindale expressed to the Macpherson Committee its concern that the suburban campuses would become “academic ghettos within the University of Toronto” and would not “achieve their potential merely as overflow campuses.” 368 Scarborough almost immediately began advocating for autonomy over its own curriculum, and the concern about a gap in academic status soon shifted to St. George. The committee noted that the new colleges “are bound to offer something better than the present General Courses.” 369 The consequence for the St. George campus, “If they improve their General

364 Ibid, 58.
365 Ibid, 60.
366 Ibid, 58.
367 Ibid, 58.
368 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/001.
369 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 60.
offerings and the St. George campus does not, [will be that] the General Course on the St. George campus will become an academic slum.**370**

With the conviction that the current course structures were detrimental to both general and honours students, and that this was due directly to the “complete separation of Honour from General students,”**371** the committee suggested a fundamental change to the structure of undergraduate degree programs in the Faculty of Arts & Science: the elimination of the rigid streams that had separated honours and general courses and, consequently, students. They proposed instead “introducing such flexibility within the Honour structure, and between it and the General, as will reduce the present intellectual costs and prevent the further domination of undergraduate work in Arts and Science by professionalism.”**372**

The committee did not, at this time, recommend the complete elimination of the distinction between honours and general programs. Instead, it made several recommendations that would permit students to select either a specialized degree, much like the existing honours degree, or a broader course of study, somewhat like the existing general degree, but with the elimination of the immediate and complete structural distinctions between the two programs that had suggested the academic superiority of honours and the consequent academic inferiority of the general program. This was to be accomplished in two primary ways: through the end of direct enrolment into either the general or honours program, which, the committee argued, would ensure that “No student is . . . compelled, before entering the University, to commit himself as a generalist or a specialist, or to commit himself to a particular specialty,”**373** and through the introduction of the ability for students to pursue either the generalist or specialist course of study for either three or four years.

In the proposed first year, students would be able to choose five courses with only one relatively minor restriction: they must take courses in at least two broad disciplinary areas (for example, the humanities and the social sciences). This flexible structure, the committee noted, would “enable the entering student either to specialize in his first year . . . or to spread himself over more than one [area]; [and enable] a student who did not do the maximum in his first year in one area and in one subject to go on to a specialty in that area in his second year.”**374** This change meant, most

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370 Ibid, 60.
371 Ibid, 58.
373 Ibid, 60.
374 Ibid, 60.
importantly, that both first-year generalist and specialist students would be subject to the “same admission standards and passing standards”\textsuperscript{375} and in the first year, all students would have access to the same courses whether they intended to pursue a general or specialized degree. This would eliminate, the committee hoped, the perception of the strict structural divide between honours and general students, and give students an additional year to both identify whether they wished to pursue a specialized degree and, if so, to identify a field of interest. To simplify the process of distribution across divisions, the committee recommended that the current structure of four distribution groups be changed to three representing the humanities, mathematical, physical and life sciences, and social sciences, so that they could offer “a somewhat freer choice than exists at present.”\textsuperscript{376}

This change to the common first year was the most substantial programmatic change recommended by the committee. Indeed, with the exception of this first year, the specialized and general programs would remain relatively intact. This recommendation brought the U of T in line with the programs at most other Canadian institutions – Harris notes, for example, that “Only at Toronto was the student identified as an honour course student in his first year; in most cases the program began at the beginning of the second year.”\textsuperscript{377}

Beginning in the second year, the committee advocated, students would select one of two choices. One would be the identification of an area of specialization. The Macpherson Committee agreed that many students entered university with a strong desire to specialize, and that for these students, the educational experience was more engaging and effective if they were allowed to pursue a highly specialized program in their fields of interest. They did not propose dramatic distinctions between existing honours programs and the proposed fields of specialization, noting that “in the transition from the present Honour courses to the proposed Specialist Programs the latter would, initially at least, in most cases be built on the former.”\textsuperscript{378} However, they built in more flexibility than had existed in the direct-enrolment honours programs. The committee suggested that no program

\textsuperscript{375} Ibid, 60.
\textsuperscript{376} These three groups were not only a change from the four distributionary groups developed by the general course committee of the late 1940s which divided courses into the languages, the humanities, the social sciences, and the life sciences, but also varied from the three groups that preceded the work of that committee: The pass degree of the mid-1940s divided subjects into the sciences, the social sciences and the humanities, and languages. This gradual shift away from languages as its own distinct group (languages were grouped with the humanities by the Macpherson Committee) marks a decline in the centrality of language study to undergraduate education in the arts and sciences. Ibid, 66.
\textsuperscript{377} Robin S. Harris, \textit{A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1960} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 508.
\textsuperscript{378} Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, \textit{Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science}, 63.
should require more than two pre-requisite courses for entry, and each of the second, third, and fourth years of the program must incorporate at least one course that would remain a “completely free option.” 379 This latter requirement was “intended to ensure that no specialist student can be required to specialize completely,” but the committee issued an accompanying “proviso that those administering any specialist program may permit the student to specialize completely.” 380 They clarify that their recommendation “is intended to ensure that no student is forced to take a subject outside his main field of interest.” 381 Despite its concern about the over-specialization of students in existing honours programs, the Macpherson Committee was evidently hesitant to limit students’ opportunities for specialization if that was the path they chose. Students who wished to graduate after three years would therefore complete the second and third years of a program of specialization; departments would also design a fourth year for students who wished and were admitted to complete a fourth year.

The alternative, continuing in a generalist program after first year, allowed students to, as in first year, “choose five courses (but not necessarily five subjects) spread over at least two divisions, and no more than two courses in any subject.” 382 However, the breadth of the generalist program was somewhat managed by the recommendation that “as a general rule students [should] continue most of their second year subjects into third year.” 383 The committee was optimistic but not certain that generalist and specialist students could continue to share many of the same courses after first year, noting that:

with the same first year requirements and standards for generalists and specialists, generalists entering second year would be equally as capable of taking the second year courses. There seems to be no reason therefore why they should not take at least the core courses in second and later years with the specialists. 384

Pre-requisites, not well-established in the existing general program and unnecessary in the prescribed honours programs, would also encourage a certain degree of specialization as students would find their third- and fourth-year options limited without previous preparation in the field or related areas. All told, the recommended generalist programs, whether the student elected to complete three or

379 Ibid, 72.
380 Ibid, 72.
381 Ibid, 72.
382 Ibid, 73.
383 Ibid, 73.
384 Ibid, 74.
four years, “would allow, but not require, the same degree of specialization that now goes under the name of ‘concentration’ in the General Arts Course,” and would also allow students to pursue a similar program to the existing general science course.

To ensure the flexibility they desired but to manage the different goals of students, the committee advocated for the designation of different types of courses at the first year. They proposed four types of courses: Basic, Additional, Collateral, and Combined. Each course would be developed and designated as one of these types. Basic courses were “to be taken equally by intending specialists and intending generalists who might want to continue that subject in later years.” They were, in other words, the foundational courses in a field. Each department would offer one Basic course; these could be supplemented by “one or two Additional courses designed for those who want to try or who know they want more work in first year in that subject” — for example, future specialists in the field. The committee described “a third sort of course, which we call . . . a Collateral course. Such a course . . . would be designed for those who need or want some work in that subject, contributory to their expected main work, but who do not need or want as much or as rigorous work in that subject as to those who expect to make formal courses in it a continuing part of their work.” The committee, however, imagined these taking place in only two fields: Mathematics, “for those who are going on in some of the physical and life sciences and some of the social sciences,” and English, because “all students should have access to some work in it” and because “the kind of course that would fill such a general want would not be the same as a Basic course.” They also noted the possibility for the development of combined courses, which, in their description, would offer a general introduction to a broad field of study (e.g. the life sciences) rather than to a specific discipline.

The second major structural change recommended by the Macpherson Committee was the opportunity for students, regardless of whether they chose to pursue a specialized or generalist

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385 Ibid, 73.
386 Ibid, 62.
387 Ibid, 62.
388 Ibid, 62.
389 Ibid, 62.
389 Ibid, 63.
390 Ibid, 63.
391 They specify that “The two cases which we have in mind are a first year course in Physical Sciences which would offer as much physics and chemistry as is needed by those who are going on in some of the other sciences, and one in Biological Sciences which would offer as much botany and zoology as is needed by those going on in certain combinations of subjects.” Ibid, 63.
program, to graduate with either a four-year degree, which would be called an honours degree, or a three-year, “Ordinary” degree. The honours designation would therefore be based primarily on degree length, rather than denoting specialized study – that is, all four-year degrees, whether general or specialized, would be honours degrees, and all three-year degrees, whether general or specialized, would be Ordinary. The new honours degree would also designate academic achievement, while eliminating the existing connection between academic achievement and specialization: under the Macpherson Committee’s proposal, both generalists and specialists could elect to complete a three-year degree, while permission to pursue the fourth year would depend on students having attained “second-class or first-class standing [currently 66-100%, or an ‘A’ or ‘B’] in their third year.” This recommendation represents a change in the meaning of “honours” at the U of T from describing a particular, specialized type of study to representing degree length and academic achievement.

In recommending this shift to the definition of honours, the committee consequently needed to justify both the opportunity for general students to pursue a four-year degree, and the opportunity for specialized students to end their programs after three years. The need for such justification stemmed from the assumption that honours degrees were longer because they were specialized. In terms of the former, the committee’s justification was primarily that this ensured that the status of general and specialized degrees would remain relatively equal. They argued that:

Our reason for recommending that the generalist be able to stay on for a fourth year may most easily be put negatively: we see no reason why he should not. Since we believe that the educational value of a general program is potentially as great as that of a specialist program we see no reason for limiting the former to three years. The provision of a fourth year would make it evident that the University valued general studies as highly as specialized studies.

A fourth year, they noted, would also qualify generalist graduates for a wider range of graduate and professional options, and would “replace the somewhat anomalous ‘make-up year’ that graduates of the present General Course are taking in increasing numbers.” The four-year degree was, they

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392 “Ordinary” is the term in use for a three-year degree at most U.K. institutions, but had not previously been used at the U of T nor was it in common use elsewhere in Canada.

393 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 77.

394 Ibid, 77.

395 Ibid, 77.
noted, normally required for admission to graduate programs, and would offer a more straightforward equivalence to American degree models.

The justifications put forth from the committee for allowing a three-year specialist degree draws on the complicated historical relationship between the two programs; the committee’s arguments are based on the continued assumption that the fourth-year – previously reserved for honours students – should be available only to those of superior academic ability. They argued that “the quality of the fourth year work would be improved by screening out at the end of third year those who were not likely to make very good use of a fourth year . . . They are not screened out now because it is considered, quite rightly, unfair to send them away after three years of at least satisfactory work, without a degree.”

With recommendations addressing what it perceived to be a major barrier to effective and equitable undergraduate education in place through its new, unified program, the committee turned to an issue that had occupied fewer passions but which was nonetheless frequently identified as a challenge that needed to be addressed and improved: the academic role of the colleges. Many of the briefs argued that colleges had lost much of their influence on the academic experience of students; that the quality of instruction in college courses was low; and that college departments resulted in a “wasteful multiplicity” of teaching resources. The committee was careful to acknowledge the potential value of the colleges, arguing that they put Toronto “in a very favourable position to counteract the dangers of the monolith and the anonymous mass, dangers to which the size of the University, and even of the Faculty of Arts and Science, expose it.” Nonetheless, the committee could not deny that the role of the colleges was changing. As described in Chapter 2, since their federation, the colleges had been assigned responsibility for teaching what thereafter became known as the “college subjects,” all in the humanities. The college subjects were administered through a separate department in each college that selected its own faculty; college faculty taught courses only for students in their college. Other fields were “university subjects,” administered through a department within the Faculty of Arts & Science; courses in these subjects were taught for students from all colleges.

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396 Ibid, 77.
397 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/002.
398 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 83.
While college and university subjects had originally been relatively evenly divided, new subjects (for example, Slavic Studies) automatically became university subjects, tilting the balance; furthermore, as interest in the science and social sciences grew dramatically after the war (see Chapter 3), students moved increasingly away from the humanistic college subjects, limiting the college’s influence on an undergraduate’s academic experience. Therefore, the committee acknowledged that “the great majority” of current students “get none or little of their instruction from their college”; the 1959 Woodside Report on college instruction notes that the “academic connections with his college of even a student living in a college residence are increasingly tenuous,” while the limited flexibility and variety inherent in the organization of college subjects further marginalized the academic value of those fields.

Furthermore, the structure of college and university departments had created “inefficiencies inherent in the duplication and quadruplicating of teaching staffs in college subjects.” These duplications also limited the total teaching resources of the university; the committee quotes the Woodside Report which describes that, despite the fact that Classics at the U of T had a number of faculty that “in any other university . . . would be welcomed because it would afford freedom for graduate instruction and research,” the effect was not the same at the U of T “because four separate honour courses in Classics are being offered to exceedingly small classes, and a comparatively huge staff is giving a great deal of time to undergraduate instruction.” The duplication of courses and faculty, however, further meant that the academic diversity and specialization of college faculty was less likely; rather than reflecting a range of interests relative to their combined size, the college departments in their duplication ultimately offered less than the sum of their parts to the university.

The Macpherson Committee therefore proposed several radical changes to the organization of colleges – but changes that the university community, as demonstrated in briefs and hearings,

399 Soares reports similar events at Oxford’s colleges; tutors there, once so fundamental to the undergraduate program, were drawn almost exclusively from the arts, and had little interaction with the growing ranks of students studying the sciences. Joseph A. Soares, The Decline of Privilege: The Modernization of Oxford University (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 121.
400 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 84.
401 Ibid, 86.
402 Ibid, 85.
403 Ibid, 87.
404 Ibid, 87.
agreed were necessary. Demonstrating a particular concern with students’ transition into university, the committee argued that the primary role of the colleges should be in the provision of first year instruction, both in the form of tutorials for larger courses, and in lectures. They argued that “this could be done, in a way that would minimize any inefficiency from otherwise unnecessary multiplication of lecture sections” by streamlining the structure of academic appointments throughout the Faculty. The distinction between college departments and university departments would be eliminated, so that, for example, rather than Trinity and Victoria English departments, a single English department, administered at the Faculty level, would be established. Existing faculty would become members of these amalgamated departments. Rather than faculty being appointed either directly to college departments, where applicable, or to university departments (and therefore without an academic presence in any of the colleges), all faculty would henceforth be appointed directly to university departments, and would then be cross-appointed to colleges. These cross-appointments would not be limited to the old college subjects; rather, “a financial incentive [should] be given [to] the colleges to spread their cross-appointments over enough subjects to enable them to do a substantial part of the teaching of all or almost all of their students, at some time in each student’s undergraduate career.”405 This financial incentive would be provided by funnelling all tuition fees through the Faculty of Arts & Science and then redistributing grants to the colleges based in part on the amount of teaching provided. The hope was that this arrangement would provide for students not only increased opportunities for personalized, small-class instruction, but would provide them with an academic community within the ever-expanding University of Toronto.

With its recommendations for the colleges in place, the Macpherson Committee had addressed the primary issues Macpherson and Bissell had identified at the committee’s outset, and that had been affirmed through the committee’s solicited briefs, survey responses and hearings. The committee proposed an undergraduate program with significant choice and flexibility and that postponed choices about program of study as long as possible; rather than enrolment directly into a set program with few opportunities to change their minds, student would instead, after an open first year, select either a specialized or general program, and later would choose between a three- or four-year degree. As they progressed through the degree, students would experience fewer lectures and exams and as a consequence, the committee hoped, a less standardized experience. At the same

time, many of the existing structures could, if students wished, be replicated, albeit often under a different name, whether in the form of the moderate specialization within breadth of the existing general degree or an intensive, highly specialized four-year degree. These structures and distinctions, however, would, according to the committee’s recommendations, be responsive to students’ elections and not a rigid administrative structure, and alternatives would also be available, whether identified by students or developed by faculty. The undergraduate degree proposed by the Macpherson Committee was therefore placed into the hand of students and faculty – the former could explore and choose a path to a far greater degree than before, while the latter was no longer bound in their course planning and execution by common exams.

At the same time, the proposed program declared its values and desired outcomes through its structure: instruction should, and indeed was required to be, more personalized and interactive; programs and courses were no longer hierarchical and separated. The recommendations of the Macpherson Committee, therefore, advocated a curriculum that fit the social and educational priorities and shifting context of the day: it recognized the challenges and disruption association with the massification of the U of T during this period and responded to student and faculty demand to address the inequitable structures of the existing program. And while it responded to growth through a public and political process of curricular review, the structures it proposed would also facilitate the further expansion of the university in the coming years in ways that would become evident only in hindsight, and that would shape the agenda of curriculum committees for the rest of the century – as will be seen.

The Macpherson Committee had conducted its work in the study of a Royal Commission, soliciting the feedback and opinion of all who had a stake in the Arts & Science undergraduate program. As such, its actions served as a focus for the anxiety, hopes, goals and values of undergraduate education. As previously mentioned, curricular review, when conducted in such a manner, can be a cathartic exercise, and this had indeed been an explicit hope of Macpherson and Bissell in establishing the committee. The hundreds of briefs, multiple hearings, and public debate in the University of Toronto Varsity and Toronto’s newspapers seems to have accomplished this purpose. When released to the public, the reaction from those who had, though the very public process, participated in the development of the Macpherson Committee’s recommendations, was by and large positive. The Toronto Star suggested that the proposals, if implemented, “would provide
the same quality of teaching as the honors program but with more flexibility of subjects,” and a headline in the Varsity promised that the report would “favour better staff-student relations.”

Ladd reports some relatively minor opposition, first to “what was seen as an attempt to undercut departmental autonomy” and to “the meshing of the honours and general programs,” although he notes that the latter was confined to the English and classics departments.

However, despite its generally positive reception, the work of the Macpherson Committee still faced a considerable challenge before implementation. The broad scope of the committee’s conclusions and the jurisdictional breadth of its recommendations and suggestions meant that translating the committee’s perspective into actionable items would take substantial effort. Furthermore, just as the committee’s report was released, Macpherson and Bissell, the champions of the effort and its recommendations, were both slated to depart for a year’s leave. The complex and controversial story of the implementation of the recommendations of the Macpherson Report and its long-reaching implications that shaped curriculum in the Faculty of Arts & Science through the rest of the century are the subject of the following section of this chapter.

4.2 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW PROGRAMME

After the Macpherson report was released, faculty and curricular planners at the U of T faced a new challenge: its implementation. The report was initiated as a presidential priority, but its broad recommendations would need to be translated into implementable degree requirements. Complicating this process substantially was the fact that, as noted in the final report of the Berlyne Committee, established in 1972 to review the New Programme (discussed in more detail below), only about 1/5 of the Macpherson Report actually dealt with the structure of programs and degrees, issues that could be determined and approved by Faculty Council and its subcommittees. The remainder of the Macpherson Report addressed issues generally not within the realm of divisional-level curriculum committees, such as departmental course offerings, teaching strategies, student-instructor relationships, and the relationship between the colleges and the university. The broad

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406 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/003.
407 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/003.
409 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
410 While the implementation committees of the New Programme were unable to make significant changes to the instructional role of the colleges because these were arrangements that could only be reviewed at the institutional
scope of the Macpherson Report therefore limited its ability to be transformed into a coherent “curriculum.” Indeed, the history of its implementation as argued by the “Short History,” described below, suggests that in the process of implementation, “the unified concepts of Macpherson’s report were altered from, relatively speaking, a ‘teaching philosophy’ to implementable practical ‘bits’ of curriculum change.”

Many members of later curricular committees and of the U of T community in general often believe that the “New Programme,” as it came to be called, essentially represented the implementation of the recommendations of the Macpherson Committee. In fact, the New Programme in many ways little resembled the document that had so captured the good will and attention of much of the U of T community. The files of the Berlyne Committee contain an anonymous memo outlining “A Short History of the Development of the New Programme” includes a statement that the New Programme “got developed politically rather than rationally.”

The result was “more a case of a seat-of-the-pants development of a programme, heavily supported by Dean Allen and ‘inspired’ by Macpherson . . . than any coherent development of [what became] that new sacred cow, the New Programme.” The story of the implementation of the New Programme, then, is in its deviations from the Macpherson Report and in the attempt to translate the broad recommendations of the Macpherson Committee into practical and manageable degree requirements.

In the years immediately following the release of the Macpherson Report, its recommendations went through several steps in its ultimate transformation (however loose) into a curriculum. The first was the New Programme, initially launched in 1970 after a committee to implement the Macpherson Committee’s recommendations was chaired by Dean Allen. The New Programme was reviewed beginning in 1972 by the Berlyne Committee, which called for fairly substantial changes and in many ways developed a new curriculum in and of itself. Finally, the

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411 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/003(30).
412 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/003(30).
413 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/003(30).
recommendations of the Berlyne Committee were reviewed by an implementation committee chaired by Foley in 1973, which made further changes to the structure of the undergraduate degree.

Both Ladd, writing about the Macpherson Report, and the “Short History” concur on the basic events of the initial implementation process beginning after the initial release of the report in 1967. Shortly after the report had been approved by Bissell and released to the general public, both Macpherson and Bissell, who, as previously noted, were both the instigators of the review and left their own imprint of educational philosophy on the report, went on leave – Macpherson to Cambridge, England, and Bissell to Cambridge, Massachusetts. The accounts of this process suggest that the absence of Macpherson and Bissell during the implementation process substantially limited the ability of the implementation committee to fully translate the Macpherson Committee’s recommendations into requirements according to the spirit of the original report.

The Macpherson Report had itself been well received. Ladd notes that the current Dean of the Faculty, Allen, who was charged with implementing the new curriculum, felt the momentum generated by the positive response to the Macpherson Report should be seized and that its recommendations should not simply be left to linger as such. He “concluded that [the report] would achieve nothing if not given some push.”414 His first step, continuing with the participatory history of the Macpherson Report, was to ask departments and their students to consider the recommendations and submit a response to him about the suggestions they supported, their concerns, and their ideas for implementation. A “Progress Report” from the Office of the Dean on the “Implementation of the ‘Macpherson Report’ and its Implications” describes this review of the initial report:

The Report..was immediately distributed widely throughout the Faculty. Each Department within the Faculty was asked to study this report, setting up for the purpose staff-student committees where these had not existed before, and to send a report to the Dean’s Office on the general reaction of the staff and students to the recommendations of the report.415

In the summer of 1968, Allen formed a small implementation committee of which he became the chair to consider the departmental reports and, from them, to develop formal recommendations for implementing the contents of the Macpherson Report. A problem for the implementation

414 Ladd, Change in Educational Policy, 49.
415 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
committee, however, immediately arose. The departmental feedback, the progress report summarizes, indicated that while departments supported the general ideas of the report, many of the more specific recommendations regarding, for example “the size and frequency of tutorials [or] the frequency and validity of lectures”\textsuperscript{416} were not universally applicable. Departments argued that many of the recommendations in the Macpherson Report would be better implemented at a departmental, rather than divisional, level.

Indeed, this initial implementation process revived the debate conducted while the Macpherson Report was being developed of the interpretation and meaning of the term “curriculum.” Ladd notes that the departmental reports “dealt primarily with matters concerning teaching and curriculum,”\textsuperscript{417} presumably in the sense of the disciplinary content and organization of courses. This was well within the jurisdiction of departments, but were not issues that could be mandated at the divisional level. Consequently, the “Short History” notes that the implementation committee was unable to make formal recommendations on issues considered areas of departmental autonomy. As a result, Allen’s summer committee was forced to ignore much of the content of the departmental reports, and in its own words, “concentrated on the structural aspects of the Macpherson proposals, since these must be approved by [the Council of the Faculty of Arts & Science].”\textsuperscript{418}

The Allen Committee completed its work over the summer, and its recommendations were brought to Faculty Council in the fall. Because of the short time frame, and because the decanal committee could not make formal recommendations on matters affecting areas of departmental authority or individual classrooms, the number and scope of recommendations, while revolutionary in recommending the end of the distinction between general and honours programs, is limited relative to the original recommendations of the Macpherson Committee and primarily addressed the structure of the first two years of study. At the same time, the recommendations of the Allen Committee took those elements of the Macpherson Report that advocated flexibility and student autonomy, and emphasized these to the extreme.

Drawing on the Macpherson Committee recommendation that “No student is to be compelled, before entering the University, to commit himself as a generalist or a specialist, or to

\textsuperscript{416} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
\textsuperscript{417} Ladd, \textit{Change in Educational Policy}, 50.
\textsuperscript{418} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/003(30).
commit himself to a particular specialty, but every student is to be free to embark on a specialty from the beginning.”\footnote{Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 60.} the Allen Committee recommended that “there will be no named or prescribed programmes of study in the first year,”\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.} so that students would not have to commit to a programme until their second year. To keep this first year as open as possible, even Grade 13 prerequisites for these courses were discouraged.\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/002(10).} This flexibility, however, extended also to students who wished to specialize early and knew what they wished to study. The Dean’s committee recommended that “a student may, if he wishes, specialise in and identify himself with any subject area”\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/002(10).} immediately upon matriculation, negating the Macpherson Committee’s recommendation that courses in the first year must be distributed across at least two academic areas.

After first year, the committee proposed a series of optional specializations, recommending that “beginning with the second year a number of named Specialist Programmes may be defined and stated in the Calendar. By his choice of courses a student may identify himself with such a programme, but he will be under no compulsion to do so.”\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/002(10).} Echoing the Macpherson Report, these specialist programs could define no more than four of a student’s five courses in the second year, leaving the fifth course as an open elective. A major distinction here with the Macpherson Report is the absence of a structured general option; students not electing a specialist program were left to develop their program of study completely independently.

The committee’s recommendations did not go beyond second year, since “only certain parts of the report, those requiring the earliest decisions and action, have been considered so far”\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/002(10).} and Allen anticipated that regulations for later years, and addressing other issues, would be determined by later committees. The committee did, however, make general recommendations for years three and four, again attempting to preserve flexibility at all stages, nothing that “Third and Fourth Years . . . will be similar to second year. It is recognized that the number of prerequisites is bound to increase in later years, but it is clearly in the interest of students and the disciplines concerned that
the maximum possible provision be made for students to begin specialising late in their undergraduate career if they have the interest and ability to do so.”

They also made some suggestions for changes to the examination system, proposing that “In the first year programme a final examination will be held in each course,” while in later years examinations could, or could not, be conducted at the discretion of the department.

One final way in which the summer Allen Committee, however, changed the curriculum from the one imagined in the Macpherson Report was through the Macpherson recommendations it did not address directly. The Macpherson Report had, out of its desire to introduce greater student autonomy and greater flexibility in courses and fields of study, incorporated a number of recommendations that allowed for alternatives to standard programs, including an opportunity for students to design their own program with faculty supervision and approval. Whether because it felt constrained by time or by jurisdiction, these recommendations, in the hands of the Allen Committee, were reconfigured not as alternatives but as an absence of requirements. The Allen Committee preserved these options by requiring very little within the degree, but did not make recommendations about processes that would support student navigation of these options. The Allen Implementation Committee, as with specialization requirements, established requirements only for curricular issues that would be “present,” not those, like a lack of specialization or of exams in second and fourth years, that would be absent. Without justification and indeed regulation for these absences, they became – like the general program being replaced by a lack of specialization – a curricular gap rather than a deliberate curricular space.

A further factor that accounted for the differences between the Macpherson Report and the New Programme was the activism of students in the implementation process. This student influence added a second stage onto the deliberations of the Allen implementation process. Ladd notes that “student demands for a voice in university decision making had become extreme.” Not yet accustomed to this kind of student participation, the “roomful of students at the first meeting of the council called to consider the report of Dean Allen’s ad hoc committee” found “several students

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425 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
426 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
427 Ladd, *Change in Educational Policy*, 50.
428 Ibid, 50.
sitting on the floor under the table at which the dean and other officials sat\textsuperscript{429} – an inauspicious start to student participation in the curriculum development process.

Student demand to participate in the implementation process increased and “the Dean, along with some key faculty members and students, put together a resolution calling for an entirely new subcommittee to consider the Macpherson report. The key feature of this resolution was that it would consist of one faculty member and one student chosen from each department\textsuperscript{430} as a means of organizing and formalizing student input. The initial recommendations of the Allen Implementation Committee would be reviewed by the new committee, and a revised version of recommendations for implementation would be produced. Ladd argues that “The clear intent of the resolution was to prevent the student power issue in overall terms from keeping the university from proceeding with implementation of the Macpherson recommendations.\textsuperscript{431}

The resulting committee – composed of two members, one faculty and one student, from each of Arts & Science’s twenty-five departments – was called the “Committee of Fifty.” They were a committed group, and as Ladd notes, “met every night for two weeks and hammered out proposals which were introduced in the council [of the Faculty of Arts and Science].\textsuperscript{432} In most cases, the proposals affirmed the recommendations of the Allen Committee. However, the main issue of contention and change from the original to the revised report, released after input was received from the Committee of Fifty, was the exclusion of any opportunity for students to receive an honours designation.

Initially, the Allen Committee had retained the Macpherson Report’s recommendation to offer an honours designation as a means to differentiate between third and fourth year, since the distinction was no longer based on a distinct and specialized honours program. The Allen Committee had therefore initially recommended, in keeping with the recommendations of the Macpherson Report, that “At the end of the third year any student who obtains standing may elect . . . to receive a B.A. or B.Sc. degree . . . Any student who obtains II Class standing (70% or better) in his third year programme may enrol in a fourth year programme. If he is successful in his fourth year he will be awarded an Honours degree . . . with an appropriate class of honours.\textsuperscript{433} They also

\textsuperscript{429} Ibid, 50.
\textsuperscript{430} Ibid, 50.
\textsuperscript{431} Ibid, 50.
\textsuperscript{432} Ibid, 50.
\textsuperscript{433} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
included a provision that a student who “takes his degree at the end of third year and later elects (and is qualified) to enrol in fourth year will, if he is successful in his fourth year, not be granted a second degree but will have his earlier degree modified to include Honours and the class of Honours obtained in fourth year.”

The Committee of Fifty, however, evidently felt that the term honours retained too-close associations with the Old Programme, and would not permit the term to be used in the New Programme. Other than the removal of the mention of honours, Ladd notes that, with relatively minor changes by the Committee of Fifty, “the proposals were accepted by the council.”

In 1970-71, therefore, the New Programme went into effect for incoming students. The enthusiasm about the fundamental changes of the New Programme – the elimination of the distinction between general and honours enrolment, courses and students – characterized much of the attention offered to the New Programme. Many argued that the New Programme represented a victory for equity and for a new student-driven pedagogy. The voices that were obscured by this celebration, however, were noting that the proposals that formed the New Programme were in fact the result of a new curricular process, “inspired by” but not tremendously reflective of the Macpherson recommendations. One of those who believed this perspective was Macpherson himself. Ladd notes that “In Professor Macpherson’s view these actions represented an ‘underimplementation of Chapter 2’ (Teaching and Learning) and an ‘overimplementation of Chapter 3’ (Curriculum).” Indeed, as the review of the New Programme (discussed below) by the Berlyne Committee concluded a few years later, their report described this distinction:

The New Programme seems, in fact, to be commonly thought of as the implementation of the Macpherson Report . . . This is, however, a misconception. The New Programme certainly bears the stamp of the so-called “Macpherson spirit” – the feeling that far-reaching changes were due and that, in particular, the inequitable treatment of undergraduates seeking Honour and General degrees should be remedied. But a detailed comparison of the Macpherson Report and the provisions of the New Programme revealed that few of the former’s recommendations were actually put into effect. Some of them were not acted on at all, whereas others were “over-implemented” (to use a

434 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
435 Ladd, Change in Educational Policy, 51.
436 Ibid, 51.
phrase attributed to Professor Macpherson), in the sense that measures pursuing the same direction as the recommendations, but going beyond them, were adopted.\textsuperscript{437}

Later in its report, the Berlyne Committee specifies the nature of these distinctions, noting in particular that:

the New Programme instituted in 1969 went far beyond the recommendations of the Macpherson Committee in virtually eliminating restrictions on the choice of courses comprising a degree programme. The Macpherson Committee envisaged a greater degree of structure. In particular, that Committee recommended the retention of recognizable programmes of specialization or generalization in which each student would register after his or her first year.\textsuperscript{438}

As its own curricular vision, therefore, the “New Programme,” inspired but not strictly directed by the Macpherson Report, was the appropriate name for the revised curriculum, as it both stood in almost complete distinction from the previous structures and captured the belief held by many in the U of T community that what was needed was something updated and different. Marshall McLuhan, in a brief to the Berlyne Committee, characterized these differences by highlighting the linearity of the Old Programme – in particular, of the old honours program – against the more variable structure of the New Programme:

The old program in most of the art subjects . . . was chronologically presented with historical background offering a great variety of viewpoints. The courses in the old program were monads with numerous windows, as it were. In effect, the New Program presents modules or monads without windows in which each course is a kind of world to itself.\textsuperscript{439}

For McLuhan, this was a positive change: he argued that the New Programme provided great opportunity for interaction between students and instructors and between students and course material, since “the less structured the material, in chronological and developmental terms, the

\textsuperscript{437} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).

\textsuperscript{438} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).

\textsuperscript{439} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(17).
deeper the involvement in the material studies, both on the part of the instructor and the student." While McLuhan’s assessment of the fundamental difference between the Old and New Programmes seems to have been felt in consensus, his assessment of lack of structure as a fundamentally good change was not.

As the initial enthusiasm began to recede, then, the university realised that while it certainly wished to retain the abolition of the Old Programme and its sharp distinction between honours and general students and courses, the hasty implementation of the New Programme had perhaps not been the ideal means by which to replace it. The general consensus in the initial years after it had been launched was that the New Programme was, on balance, superior for students than the Old Programme had been. A synthesis of briefs from members of the U of T community soliciting their feedback on the New Programme noted that:

We were impressed by the consensus in the briefs we received on the basic soundness of the free-choice system. The elimination of the distinction between Honour and General students has greatly improved the educational opportunities of the latter, especially since they are now able to devise programmes that lie between the former Honour and General programmes in difficulty and degree of concentration.

Nonetheless, this approval often came with qualifications. The motivation for establishing a Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in the Faculty of Arts and Science in 1972, chaired by Berlyne, emerged from the growing perception that “Against these advantages of the New Programme as implemented in 1969, we may cite a number of disadvantages that have, not unpredictably, arisen.” The goal of the Berlyne Committee, then, was to alleviate these difficulties while maintaining the positive elements of the New Programme on the premise that “the possible benefits of reintroducing the Old Programme would not justify the great harm that would be done.”

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440 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(17).
441 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
442 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
443 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
In reviewing the differences between the New Programme and the initial Macpherson recommendations, the Berlyne Committee ultimately determined that the primary challenges of the New Programme were caused by its voids in structure in the New Programme that failed to provide students with sufficient support in navigating their way through the degree: in its enthusiasm for opening up student choice, the New Programme had, essentially, gone too far. In particular, the Allen Implementation Committee’s failure to develop alternatives to traditional single-discipline specialization as coherent choices rather than simply gaps compounded this problem.

Like the Macpherson Committee, the Berlyne Committee began its work by soliciting feedback from all members of the Arts & Science community, requesting their view of what was working well about the New Programme and what ought to be changed. The committee summarized these briefs, developing from them a list of what they saw as seven recurring issues arising that the committee should address in its review. The majority (numbers one, two, five, six, and seven) responded to the lack of structure directing students’ choices about courses and programs. This had, in the view of faculty and students, several effects. Students experienced the lack of a natural community, which had once emerged from their program of study, especially for those students in an honours program. While this had, admittedly, previously been available only to the limited group of honours students, it was now available to no one. The committee further noted that faculty were disappointed that the degree had too little structure, which allowed some students to “distribute their studies over too wide a range” while other students could, at the same time, “concentrate excessively on one discipline.” This wide range of choice had been opened up to students without a concomitant increase in opportunities for advising and counselling, and community members believed that “it is undesirable to leave the initiative for counselling in the hands of students.” A further concern voiced by members of the U of T community was the diversity of student academic preparation and the greater diversity of courses that included what would have been both honours and general students. This, they argued, made courses more “difficult to teach,” since each class contained “students differing widely in amount of prior

444 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/004(132).
445 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/004(132).
knowledge, degree of interest in the discipline, and ability.” Finally, there was now some confusion and “concern about the functions of the fourth year,” once exclusively the domain of honours students. Few departments had fourth-year courses – or ideas for courses – that did not presume a set of highly and consistently trained students with extensive backgrounds in the discipline. Faculty and students also expressed concern that, under a new institutional funding model that rewarded departments with additional funds for high enrollments, courses were designed primarily to attract students and that, perhaps consequently, standards across the institution had dropped.

To remedy these problems, the committee noted that, as the New Programme incorporated much less structure than the Macpherson Report had initially recommended, “It seems to us desirable to move in the direction recommended by the Macpherson Committee.” The committee therefore recommended, in line with the Macpherson Report, “the retention of recognizable programmes of specialization or generalization in which each student would register after his or her first year.” To encourage the pursuit of set programs without limiting the flexibility and student direction that had come to characterize the New Programme, they also added “the proviso that the programmes should remain as flexible as possible and that the requirements for entry into these programmes after first year should be kept to a minimum” so that, for example, students could enter or change their programs over the course of their degree without substantial penalty.

The Berlyne Committee’s most significant recommendation, therefore, was for the introduction of a range of programs of specialization, beginning in second year, into the undergraduate degree. These programs were proposed not as requirements but as “desirable norms” for which, once complete, students could elect to receive certification that would appear on their transcript, and attempted to capture the wider range of areas of study that the Macpherson Report had hoped to make possible while mitigating what had been found to be the deleterious effects of an almost total lack of structure. These programs would include “a single-major programme, composed

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446 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/004(132).
447 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/004(132).
448 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
449 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
450 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
primarily of courses offered by a single board of studies” (a term used by the committee to indicate both departments as well as colleges or other units that might offer programs); “a combined-major programme,” which would, as the name suggests, combine study in two areas; “a theme programme, composed of courses offered by many boards of studies, but primarily related to a particular theme”; and, for those who wished to pursue a broad but coherent course of studies, “a liberal-arts programme, composed of courses chosen from each of the major divisions of the Faculty to provide a broad exposure to the liberal arts and science.”

For the committee, these four options represented additional opportunities for students and a greater alignment with the priorities identified in the Macpherson Report. In the first iteration of the New Programme, departments had been invited to provide “suggested programmes of study,” for students. In general, these programs represented departmental study in line with the old honours programs, primarily focused on high levels of specialization in a single or two related fields. By contrast, the new proposal would provide an opportunity for “new, broader programmes in areas such as Physical Sciences and Mathematics, Psychology and Life Sciences, General Sciences, and Modern Languages.” The Berlyne Committee also hoped to encourage the development of programs offering innovative combinations of fields, noting that “The two major subjects in a combined-major programme need not be related in the normal sense; it might be very sensible, for example, for a person intending to teach at the high-school level to study French and Mathematics.”

As imagined by the committee, these programs would be developed by both students and departments. While the single major programs of nine to 14 full-year courses (i.e. from just under two to just under three years of full-time study) would be developed by individual departments, departments would also facilitate but not direct the creation of the combined-major programs by identifying a “sub-major” of six to eight full-year courses. Students could combine two sub-majors to create a combined-major. Theme programs could be proposed by faculty, departments, and

451 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
452 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
453 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
454 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
students, and a standing committee to review theme program proposals was to be established. And all students would retain the option of completing a degree by accumulating 15 full-year courses for a three-year degree or 20 full-year courses for a four-year degree without opting for any certification.

The committee also considered a number of issues affecting the degree as a whole that they felt would support their vision for a modified New Programme. After much debate, the Berlyne Committee also cemented the Allen Committee’s decision not to designate four-year degrees as honours degrees. One member of the committee had proposed that the four-year degrees be called honours degrees, to be designated as B.A.(Hons) or B.Sc.(Hons). The committee put this question to a vote, and it was defeated by a slim margin. Once more, evidently the committee felt conflicting desires to reward and designate its strongest and most committed students, and the desire to preserve equality of opportunity throughout the degree. Indeed, to this latter end the committee went one further than either the New Programme or the Macpherson Report and eliminated any barriers to the completion of the four-year degree based on academic performance.

Like the Macpherson Committee responding to the demands of its environment, the Berlyne Committee was responding to the need for the New Programme to accommodate the changing environment of higher education. The committee therefore also revisited an issue that had been the topic of much debate during the discussions of the Macpherson Committee and which was becoming increasingly pertinent as students from all sectors of society and at all stages of their lives began to see university education as an essential contributor to their quality of life: the ability for the curriculum to accommodate full-time and part-time students, and the associated question of whether students should be expected to complete a program consisting of a particular number of years, or of a particular number of credits. Ultimately, the Berlyne Committee replaced Toronto’s year system with a credit system. This was a major change at Toronto, and one which had been debated extensively for a number of years, as discussed below. It had, however, clearly become time to make the shift.

As described in Chapter 2, under the Old Programme, students in both the general and honours programs pursued their study as a “year.” Students needed to pass both individual courses and obtain an overall average to pass the year as a whole. Students may have had limited options in each year, but could not, as a general rule, pursue, for example, second year courses in third year.

455 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(8).
Furthermore, as discussed extensively by the Macpherson Committee, the development and assessment of end-of-year exams was conducted collaboratively by all faculty in a particular area. This ensured substantial curricular consistency, and therefore limited, as argued by the Macpherson Committee, course and curricular innovation.

The first iteration of the New Programme began the move toward a more modular definition of courses, particularly through their recommendation that each course be understood "as one-fifth of a student’s programme" in each year. Although officially students still progressed through their program in years, the New Programme had, through this regulation, already gone quite far in practice in implementing the shift to a credit system. The Berlyne Committee’s report therefore argued that “distinctions are weakening in practice.” First, the New Programme permitted those students who failed a single course to retake only that course, rather than the entire year. Additionally, students were offered more flexibility in their selection of courses. Where previously third year courses, for example, could only be taken in a student’s third year, students could now take courses at any level provided they had the necessary pre-requisites.

However, the New Programme had retained the sharp distinction between full and part-time study, so that students taking any fewer than five full courses were required to drop to a maximum of three courses, withdraw from their college, and enter the Division of Extension. Part-time students enrolled in the Division of Extension directly, were not members of a college, and paid tuition fees on a per-course rather than per-year basis. The result was a situation in which “a significant number of students now lighten their course load and move into the Division of Extension for a time. This means . . . the student enters a different academic community as he leaves his college . . . There is a growing feeling that current restrictions of this sort cannot be justified and should be removed.” On the other side were students who wished to take additional courses. While an “extra” course was permitted, it was not counted in the student’s annual average and did not speed up their time to degree by permitting them to take fewer courses in a later year. In both cases, students had very little flexibility in the pace of their studies.

456 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/003(30).
457 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
458 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
Moving to a credit system, therefore, would give students greater freedom to “complete the requirements for a degree at his or her own pace.” This would both expand opportunities for part-time students – increasingly, the U of T was informed, “the part-time student is very largely the student of tomorrow,” and Trow notes that part-time study is a common element of mass higher education – and would prevent otherwise full-time students from losing their connection to their college. Students studying more than four courses per year would be considered full time, and as many courses as they pursued would be counted towards the degree requirement of either fifteen or twenty full-year courses. Tuition fees would therefore be charged on a per-course basis for all students. Furthermore, even if students enrolled as full-time rather than part-time students but then dropped down to part-time, they would remain in the college in which they initially enrolled.

For students who enrolled part-time, the committee proposed a new college in which these students “would normally but not necessarily register” which they called “College X” in their recommendations. College X would have the same features as the existing undergraduate colleges, but would address the particular needs and concerns of part-time students. When College X found a name, it became Woodsworth College.

While the need to move away from a year system to a credit system for full time students may have been a necessary practicality, some argued that this would have far more widely ranging effects on the undergraduate experience at the U of T than simply to the registration process. Indeed, as the historical debate over this issue highlights, some members of the U of T community believed that the credit system represented a fundamentally different kind of education from that offered by the year system, and that this change would have an as or more dramatic influence on the undergraduate program as had the move away from honours.

One such member of the U of T community was, in fact, a member of the Berlyne Committee, who asserted his position in a minority statement appended to the final report. A member argued that “a serious shift in this direction is bound to fragment university life still further,

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459 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
460 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1971-0011/036(1).
462 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
and continue the trend towards street-car, shopping-basket, cafeteria-style university studies.\textsuperscript{463} In a previous study in which the University had explored the associated but more extreme option of moving to a trimester system, which would mean that each course would be one semester long, and that many courses would be offered multiple times each year, Harris, Roulliard and Goudge argued that such a system would destroy the ability of the program of study to work as a coherent whole, providing the example of Spenser and Milton: "does one permit a student to take the Milton before the Spenser? . . . Unless all courses were offered in all semesters, thereby permitting students to take the split course in the proper sequence, it would be impossible to maintain the sense of the subject gradually unfolding through the centuries."\textsuperscript{464} Indeed, a member of the Faculty Council argued that "Approval would seem to indicate that accumulation of courses is the only important thing. It would attack the very life of the university."\textsuperscript{465}

These concerns, however, were the minority voice, and the recommendations made by the Berlyne Committee were passed by the Faculty Council in principle. The General Committee of the Council of the Faculty of Arts & Science first attempted to move these recommendations through implementation in a series of special meetings held in April and May, but conceded that more work was necessary and that an implementation committee ought to be formed, and that "so much interpretation is needed the recommendations of the implementation committee should come back to the General Committee" for final approval.\textsuperscript{466} In order to avoid the reoccurrence of a case in which alterations would be made to the spirit of the recommendations during the implementation process as had been the case when the Macpherson Report was addressed by the Allen Implementation Committee, Dean Foley immediately appointed a Committee Concerned with the Implementation of the Berlyne Report which he would chair and which would meet over the summer of 1973. This committee was to operate under constrained terms of reference; they were to explore only the implementation of the recommendations in the Berlyne Committee’s report, and were not to suggest alternatives or significant deviations from the Berlyne proposals. In order to ensure that they did not overstep these bounds and to appease his colleagues’ worries, Principal Russell of Innis College "suggested that the Committee’s final report should first show how each

\textsuperscript{463} UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(5).
\textsuperscript{464} UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1979-0042/002.
\textsuperscript{465} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
\textsuperscript{466} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
motion from the General Committee could be implemented, then propose any change that the present Committee would prefer." The committee agreed that this was an appropriate way to both present its results and move forward with its work, and set to translating the Berlyne recommendations into curricular requirements.

The Foley Committee, as it came to be called, nonetheless made some relatively significant changes to the recommendations of the Berlyne Report, though the fundamental recommendations urged in the Berlyne Report remained intact. While the implementation of recommendations regarding the credit system and the new college were relatively straightforward, most of the committee’s difficult decisions centred around the issue of certification: the notation of completed programs of specialization (including single major, combined major, and theme and liberal arts programs) on the transcript. For the committee, the issue of certification and its significance was an important means of communicating the value and priorities of the degree. From the committee’s perspective, certification had several potential goals, some of which conflicted with each other. It seems that most members of the committee agreed that some structure and specialization in the degree was preferable to none at all; in describing the option for students to pursue a degree without certification, in addition to the option to pursue one of the four types of certification, one committee member argued that “this was a ‘fifth norm’ but would not necessarily be considered ‘desirable.’” This opinion, however, was not universal across the Faculty – when the Berlyne Committee’s recommendations were brought to the General Committee of the Council of the Faculty of Arts & Science, “Several members spoke in opposition to the emphasis on certification and its appearance on the transcript card.”

For some members of the committee, certification was meant as an incentive for students to incorporate some structure into their degree; they did not wish to require students to complete a particular course of study, but wanted students who did so to have an opportunity to have their expertise recognized. Such recognition would also be important to future employers or graduate programs. For those who shared this motivation for certification, wider opportunities for certification were preferable. Such an arrangement would, presumably, encourage more students to complete a program with at least some structure, and would provide a easy reference of what path

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467 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
468 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
469 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
students had pursued in their degrees. Others believed that certification was meant to provide direction to students who had not yet, perhaps, identified a direction of their own, and that too many restrictions on certification would lessen its ability to act as an incentive to provide some but not overwhelming structure to the undergraduate degree. For still other members, certification represented the recognition of a particular intellectual effort or academic achievement that would presumably not be present in those who were not certified, a clear indication of the old Toronto belief that specialization was an essential component of academic excellence. For those who believed in this vision for certification, therefore, certification was something that might benefit from additional restrictions and requirements; to maintain its significance as an indication of rigour it should be somewhat more difficult to attain. These members wished to certify only the completion of programs equivalent to what were, in the New Programme, specialist programs.

Before coming to a recommendation on programs of certification, the committee also wished to clarify terminology: the committee wrestled with the proposed program names of “single major,” “combined major,” and “theme.” In effect, these terms were meant both to indicate the depth of the program and the scope of its focus: single major programs went deeply into depth in a traditional field; theme programs in depth into a particular issue; and combined-majors straddled two disciplines, with the goal that each would inform the other. The committee proposed “specialist” as a more descriptive term than “single-major” and in line with the terminology then in use in the New Programme, but a member raised the concern “that if ‘specialist’ is used [to indicate a single-major program], that would suggest that . . . “theme” is not a specialist programme.” These debates continued throughout the committee’s work.

The Foley Implementation Committee’s ultimate recommendations provided a reconfiguration of the options described in the Berlyne Report that attempted to accommodate both the different perspectives of the goals of certification and these concerns about terminology. Students could elect to receive one of three types of certification: a specialist program of between nine and 16 full-year courses, consisting of a problem following the pattern described in Berlyne’s first three options: in a single field of study, in a combined area, or in a theme; a minor program of six to eight full-year courses in a single field or theme; and a liberal arts program whose content and

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470 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
471 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
472 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
473 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
structure would be set by a future committee.\footnote{The subcommittee responsible for developing this program took a wide view of the liberal arts. The Liberal Arts Subcommittee met beginning in 1974 and recommended a program composed of one mathematics course; one history course; two social science courses; a natural science course with laboratory; two half-courses in philosophy; two humanities courses, one studying literature in a language other than English; two foreign language courses; and two half courses in writing. UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts, and Science, Office of the Dean, A1982-0040/236.} Certification in general was to be recommended, but not required.

All the recommendations of Foley’s Implementation Committee were approved by the Faculty Council, and the revised New Programme was launched in the 1975-76 academic year. This second iteration of the New Programme contained several fairly substantial changes from the first. The pursuit of any program remained optional, but the nature and duration of programs was more clearly described, and a greater range of programs had been articulated. The formal and complete shift to the credit system better accommodated the expanding numbers of part-time students, though some members of the U of T community warned that this would precipitate an even greater disintegration and decentralization of the curriculum.

In some ways, therefore, the recommendations of the Berlyne and Foley Committees represented a pendulum swing back to the centre: the Allen Committee’s version of the Macpherson recommendations had marked an extreme flexibility and lack of requirements not before seen at the U of T; the Berlyne Committee, in recommending multiple types of programs at various levels of specialization but, at the same time, prioritizing structured, specialized study over the wholly student-directed program choices of the New Programme’s first iteration demonstrated in some ways a desire to undo some of the changes of the New Programme. At the same time, the move to the credit system, the decision to leave program completion optional, and the improved provisions for part-time study recognized the fundamentally changed higher educational environment of the 1960s, and further reinforced the Macpherson Committee’s assertion that the Old Programme was fundamentally obsolete.

4.3 THE NEW PROGRAMME – DISCUSSION

In the chaotic environment of higher education in the 1960s, the implementation of the New Programme seems, in retrospect, almost inevitable. The “structural revolution”\footnote{Glen A. Jones, “Higher Education in Ontario,” in \textit{Higher Education in Canada: Different Systems, Different Perspectives}, ed. Glen A. Jones (New York: Garland, 1997): 141.} underway in Ontario higher education, demanding widely expanded access based on relatively egalitarian
principles, was paralleled in the development of a curriculum that provided the structures necessary for this expansion and eliminated the most significant of the elitist markers: the separate honours and general degrees. The elimination of this separation and the replacement of the year system with the policy of allowing students to proceed through the degree at their own pace, course by course, was the U of T’s own revolution in its curricular structure.

The focus on curricular structure explains why a number of important academic issues of the day did not appear in the curricular discussions of U of T curricular committees during this period. The focus for the curriculum committees of the New Programme rarely involved any discussion of curricular content despite the rising interest in interdisciplinary fields, including especially area studies, women’s studies, and Canadian studies, within the University of Toronto and indeed across Canada and the United States. Instead, the curricular committees of the New Programme focused on establishing the curricular structures that they believed would expand educational opportunities and that would allow students, faculty, and academic administrators to pursue study in the areas – and combinations of areas – that they saw fit, without unnecessary constraints on academic innovation and exploration.

Despite these substantial changes in regulations and vocabulary, however, in many ways the New Programme actually changed relatively little about most of the educational options available to U of T students. Many elements of the Old Programme were essentially preserved within the structures of the New. While the symbolic significance of the elimination of the distinction between general and honours streams cannot be overestimated, the flexible nature of the New Programme allowed students, if they wished, to continue to pursue both a highly specialized and structured program or a balance of moderately concentrated study and breadth. Both the honours and general programs were, in other words, still available, but went by different names.

Similarly, while the year system was replaced with the credit system, the fear that students would collect a disconnected and chronologically confused series of courses was tempered by a shift to a heavy reliance on pre-requisites. Instructors and departments retained relative control over the sequence of students’ study by mandating the completion of particular courses before others. The

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continued importance to instructors of this sequencing in fact led to rigid pre-requisite structures that would become a concern to future curriculum committees.

In other words, while the depth of the changes brought by the New Programme should not be minimized, many of the options that had been available to students under the Old Programme remained available to students who sought them out.

In addition to the retention of many of the opportunities of the Old Programme, the New Programme also offered, fittingly, new options. Most importantly, by eliminating the distinction between general and honours programs, the New Programme allowed students to make the decisions about what field (or fields) and level of specialization they would pursue after they had entered university, instead of at application. Many saw this as contributing substantially to the opportunities available from the degree, and this option was vehemently defended even as other aspects of the New Programme came under criticism. Additionally, the New Programme introduced opportunities for interdisciplinary study and novel combinations of subjects, and substantially improved opportunities for part-time students.

The New Programme, however, also had its perceived drawbacks. One major area of concern was the availability of an academic community to students. Students in honours programs had once had relatively close contact with other students and with faculty in their program; faculty took pleasure in mentoring the highly-motivated and well-trained students of the honours programs. Indeed, the strong academic support networks available to students in the honours program and not the general were one of the primary complaints about the inequity of the two streams. With the implementation of the New Programme, students did not officially “belong” to any department or program; faculty complained about the difficulty of identifying their strongest students. Both stronger and weaker students, many argued, suffered from this arrangement as they either meandered through the degree without clear direction or goals, or hewed closely to the suggested courses in a certified program without exploration or experimentation. Several attempts to address these challenges were proposed, primarily invoking the colleges, but as discussed in Chapter 7, these proposals faced institutional barriers to their implementation.

Indeed, as time went on, the flexibility provided by the New Programme increasingly came to be interpreted as chaos. The attempt at turning the structure of the curriculum over to students, with some guidance in the form of suggested programs, increasingly came to be seen as a failure. However, discussions about what the New Programme was failing to do point to underlying
curricular priorities. As described above, the New Programme in fact retained, as options, many of the curricular structures of the Old Programme. These options, however, were not enough. Complaints about the New Programme expressed the concern that the flexibility of the New Programme, while offering the benefits described above and largely retaining the educational opportunities of the Old Programme, also compromised other elements of students’ education. A number of faculty, including in particular those from science programs, argued that while pre-requisites could help ensure that students pursued courses in the appropriate order, they did not ensure that students would get what these faculty perceived as an appropriate scope and depth of education.

These concerns emerged primarily from the fact that while departments could set their own requirements for optional programs of specialization, students were not bound to follow the full program, and, provided they had the necessary pre-requisites, could select individual courses of interest. Furthermore, students could pursue either a three- or four-year degree with a self-determined amount of specialization. For many faculty, this flexibility did not translate into the appropriate standards for a degree. Science faculty argued, for example, that the ability for “students [to] avoid difficult and unpopular courses, even where specified as part of a ‘Specialist Programme’,” meant that students could “emerge at the end of a four-year programme with incomplete training in the discipline.”477 Broad study, too, however, was felt to be insufficient under the flexible structures of the New Programme; the provision of a “Liberal Arts” program proposed by the Berlyne Committee aimed, like the previous general programs, to provide a relatively structured approach to breadth.

What emerged from the critical responses to the New Programme, therefore, was the conviction that undergraduate education was most successful when it was highly structured and, in many cases, highly specialized. Curricular reform after the New Programme saw tighter curricular structure as a means to provide the integrative and developmental elements of undergraduate instruction that many felt had been eclipsed by the individualized and segmented nature of undergraduate education in the New Programme.

The significant changes to the structure of the undergraduate curriculum of the New Programme reflected the demands placed on the Faculty by the dramatic expansion and demands

477 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
for greater equality and access of the decade, and, as is discussed in Chapter 6, were essential to allowing this expansion to take place. However, while the university embraced the improved equity and some elements of the flexibility introduced by the New Programme, the quick and substantial criticism of the New Programme demonstrated which curricular priorities and assumptions were not adequately reflected in the changed structures. What quickly became clear was that, despite the relaxation of boundaries, the priorities of many faculty and the ideal outcomes of undergraduate education remained quite similar to those available in the Old Programme. The “structural revolution” at the U of T, as it shifted from the Old Programme to the New, was therefore, with some exceptions, just that – fundamental changes to curricular structures, but relatively few changes to underlying curricular goals.
CHAPTER 5

AFTER THE NEW PROGRAMME: REINTRODUCING STRUCTURE

This chapter reviews and discusses the curricular changes of the final two decades of the twentieth century, as the U of T responded to some of the unforeseen challenges introduced by the New Programme and to the institution’s increasingly dire financial circumstances. It begins with discussions of the three curricular reviews that began in the late 1970s and continued through the end of the century. It then goes into detail on each: first, the work of the Kelly Committee in the late 1970s and early 1980s that worked to reintroduce some structure into the degree; second, the recommendations of the Cook Committee one decade later that conceptualized the curriculum as a tool for learning; and finally the decision made by the 1999 curriculum review committee to eliminate the three-year degree. The chapter then concludes with an overview of the important themes and conclusions stemming from these curricular reviews.

5.1 THE KELLY COMMITTEE

In the spring of 1978, the Faculty of Arts & Science entered yet another period of curricular reform with the establishment of the Committee to Review the Undergraduate Curriculum led by Father John M. Kelly of St. Michael’s College, commonly called the Kelly Committee.

While the New Programme had been greeted with enthusiasm during its initial years, it quickly lost its lustre, and by 1978, enough time had elapsed to show instructors and students in the Faculty of Arts & Science what was and what was not working about the New Programme. Many saw that some valuable curricular elements had been lost in the move away from the Old Programme. Many too saw what was worth preserving of the New. The New Programme had put much curricular control in the hands of students and had provided substantially more leeway to individual instructors and departments. Instead of programs organized and assessed by departments (often in collaboration with other fields), each instructor was responsible for developing and assessing each course, and each student was given total autonomy over his or her selection of courses. The extent of departments’ involvement was to identify courses that comprised an optional program of specialization, which students further had the option of pursuing in whole or in part.

This devolution of curricular responsibility to instructors and students had indeed been a goal of the New Programme. Many had believed that the prescribed programs and department-driven examination system led to staid teaching and student disengagement. In practice, however, an unforeseen consequence of the New Programme was that very few instructors or students took
advantage of this new flexibility, and the New Programme in practice ironically came to look very much like the Old Programme. On the one hand, students who pursued an optional program of specialization were perceived to suffer from much of the same overspecialization in a single field as had students in the old honours program, since, according to Drummond, students and departments left to their own devices developed “programmes of study that come to look more and more like the former honours programmes, or like major programmes in other universities.”\(^{478}\) On the other hand, those who pursued generalized study faced many of the same challenges as students in the old general program: limited sustained contact with faculty, limited choices for challenging courses, from which they were often excluded for lack of pre-requisites, and ultimately a degree that did not easily translate into further academic or professional study. This decentralization of the New Programme led some to argue, as did a professor of French in a University College publication, that “The sad truth is, that the “New Programme” is not a programme at all: it is the void left by the lack of any clearly enunciated philosophy of undergraduate education in arts and science at Toronto.”\(^{479}\)

This void was made all the more acute by the loss of the honours program, a curricular element that had driven Toronto’s identity in undergraduate education since the late nineteenth century. In 1963, professors Harris, Rouillard and Goudge provided a report on the honour system in which they argue that it acts as the defining element of the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T. They quote a 1928 statement that “The pride of the Faculty of Arts at Toronto . . . is its system of Honours Courses” and argue that the statement is still representative; that “in 1928 as in 1963 the honour course system was unique, differing in essential respects not only from all other Canadian and American honour programmes but from those of Britain and other Commonwealth countries.”\(^{480}\) Without the honours program, a “clearly enunciated philosophy of undergraduate education in arts and sciences” therefore became much more difficult to articulate.

The honours system provided not just institutional identity but, to many faculty and students, an intellectual community on campus as well. Honours students knew their fellow program students well, and had extensive access to faculty who, for their part, were often happy to extend additional academic support, opportunities, and mentorship to the dedicated and well-trained

\(^{478}\) University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.  
\(^{479}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.  
\(^{480}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1979-0042/002.
students in the honours programs. Both students and faculty felt that many of the opportunities provided by this kind of interaction had been lost with the implementation of the New Programme.

By the time the Kelly Committee was established in 1978, many within the Faculty felt that the New Programme had made important strides in ensuring that access to academic resources was more equitably available to all students, but that some very valuable aspects of the Old Programme had perhaps become an unnecessary casualty of the new curriculum.

Both for students who chose to specialize and those who chose breadth, and for those falling at all points on the scale in between, the New Programme was, many argued, experienced as a modular and depersonalized curriculum, adopting the worst of, as Hayne described, “the administrative procedures of mass production industry”481 that left many students to fall through the cracks and was absent of any academic or social community. Even for students who found a home in a program of specialization, the criticism was lobbed that, because of the lack of co-ordination at the divisional level, what direction and support that was available to students was offered only by individual departments, leaving few opportunities for the coherent and innovative interdisciplinary work imagined by the crafters of the New Programme. Furthermore, faculty complained that without the strict structures and admission policies of the old honours programs, it had become increasingly difficult to maintain the academic expectations and standards to which they had previously held specialists.

In a brief submitted to the Kelly Committee from his position as Provost of Trinity College, George Ignatieff articulated his impression of the New Programme just under a decade on, writing that:

The result of all these changes is remarkable. As we perceive it, students, departments and Colleges have all suffered. Few would seriously recommend a return to all the details of the “Old Programme.” However, few could have predicted the chaotic state we have come to. The drop-out rate in the Faculty of Arts and Science has reached alarming proportions: students are visibly dissatisfied with the quality of and their experience of university education in Toronto . . . Students are offered a bewildering set of courses before they are in a position to choose well.482

481 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
482 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
Where once graduate schools had commented on the superior preparation of Toronto honours students, they now, according to Ignatieff, “have found that they need to require more and more make-up work of our graduates.”\(^{483}\) Ignatieff concluded that these problems stem from “a felt incoherence of the undergraduate programme on the part of a significant proportion of the students of the Faculty who find themselves belonging nowhere.”\(^{484}\)

It was therefore the charge of the Kelly Committee to, without reverting to the hierarchical and elitist structures of the Old Programme, find a way to revise the New Programme to strengthen the coherence and consistency of students’ programs of study; to build academic and intellectual community on campus; and to allow faculty to set the academic expectations they saw fit while retaining flexibility in programs of study and in disciplinary boundaries.

In addition to the perceived problems of the New Programme, the Kelly Committee was faced with equally challenging and complex issues within the institution at large. Most pressing was the financial environment of the late 1970s. The economic downturn across North America with its high inflation meant fewer public funds were available and that those funds bought less. The recession, too, brought an end to what many perceived as the direct connection between expanded higher education and economic growth. As a result, Axelrod describes how many students and members of the public lost faith in the idea of university education, especially in the liberal arts and science, as an investment with private and public return.\(^{485}\) Consequently, increased public support for universities had little political viability. Together, these factors led to a long period of financial difficulty and retrenchment for the university that was especially painful in the shadow of the relatively flush years of the 1960s. Axelrod describes how, over the 1970s, “grants per university student fell by 13.1 percent”;\(^{486}\) Leslie wrote in 1980 that “Canadian universities, as they move into the 1980’s, will find it increasingly difficult to think in terms of anything but survival.”\(^{487}\)

In an unhappy coincidence, the New Programme had some financial liabilities that had not been present in the Old. While, as noted, “larger and larger numbers of students [were] moving into

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483 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
484 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
486 Ibid, 180.
smaller and smaller numbers of courses," the total number and diversity of courses offered had broadly expanded. Courses were now proposed and delivered not only as core program courses, as they would have been under the Old Programme, but also as program and general electives. The committee noted that “The proliferation of courses had become very expensive and the Committee discussed whether the University ought to be offering such a variety.”

Organizational changes at the U of T also had an influence on the committee’s discussions. The new role of the undergraduate colleges, established in 1974 with the revised Memorandum of Understanding, had realigned college departments in the university and had established the academic role of the colleges foremost as a home for interdisciplinary studies. This would influence the committee’s perception of the St. George campus colleges’ potential role in undergraduate education. At the same time, the new campuses of Scarborough and Erindale were loosening their relationships with the Faculty of Arts & Science; Erindale’s so-called New New Programme, first offered in 1979, “attempted to provide a structure of breadth and depth to the New Programme” and made a clear statement that the current undergraduate curriculum in the Faculty was insufficient in meeting the needs of its students.

In this context, the committee began its demanding work. While Kelly was the chair of the committee, it is, arguably, Ian Drummond, a prominent professor in the Faculty’s largest department, Political Economy, who drove much of the conversation and shaped the committee’s process and priorities. Drummond demonstrated great commitment and enthusiasm for the committee’s work, providing several documents that substantially shaped their deliberations and their ultimate report. The first of these was a brief history of the outcomes of the Macpherson Report and the New Programme. In this history, Drummond outlined the differences between the recommendations of the Macpherson Report and the first iteration of the New Programme, the recommendations of the Berlyne Report, and his perception of the problems with the New Programme in its current form. From this document, it is evident that Drummond had substantial sympathy for the principles behind the Macpherson Report but was less enthusiastic about the pragmatic decisions made during the process of the implementation of the New Programme.

488 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
489 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
490 New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
Drummond also provided a series of questions, distributed at the committee’s third meeting, that he felt would help the committee define the goals and boundaries of the program it would ultimately recommend – a proposed outline, essentially, of the committee’s work. The questions asked the committee to consider admission procedures, requirements for specialization, and even terminology. Indeed, many of the committee’s final recommendations seem to respond to Drummond’s initial questions.

Finally, and perhaps most influentially, Drummond provided a document describing “Our Approach to the Curriculum.” In this document – through the use of “our,” seeming to speak both for the committee and the Faculty as a whole – he outlines several defining elements of the curriculum at the U of T that he believed should drive the committee’s deliberations, decisions and recommendations.

The first such argument was that the committee’s decisions should not be based on the establishment of and alignment with “first principles” – assumptions about the goals and aims of undergraduate education – that so drove the Macpherson Report. Drummond notes that the establishment of such principles could be both useless and counterproductive, since “in a large present-day university like Toronto different people are bound to have very different ideas about what these foundations should be . . . Two people who differ as to ends may support the same means in the belief that the means will serve either or both of the ends they have in view.”

Consequently, rather than debating foundational questions about the aims of undergraduate education, Drummond argued that “In a large secular university the task of the curriculum-builder is not to generate disputes about the foundations but to generate a superstructure within which people of diverse orientations can live and work and learn.” He recommended the committee abandon the search for educational aims, since “if people differ fundamentally they can only agree on the vaguest of such statements; we would rather omit the vagueness, thereby recognizing the diversity.”

Related to the diversity of goals inevitable in a large university was the recognition of the diversity of practice in the university. Drummond argued that “any curriculum, no matter how logically constructed, no matter how precisely deduced from a consistent philosophy of education,
must operate with living human beings – both students and professors.”

Drummond argued that these students and professors need support but not regulation, noting that:

Neither teacher nor student is infinitely malleable; especially nowadays, no institution can hope to staff or re-staff itself in accordance with some ideal pattern of teaching and learning . . . Many of our students arrive without any clear idea of what university is about, or of why they are here. Our staff comes from a variety of backgrounds, bringing to the Toronto scene a variety of approaches and assumptions.

In addition to the layers of people and of their interpretations of the curriculum, there are, at a university like the U of T, also layers of history that have an inevitable effect on the curriculum. Drummond argues on behalf of the committee that:

we think it reasonable to suppose that an approach to university education can and does emerge through a series of piecemeal changes by which an existing fabric is modified, or remodeled. It is never really possible to begin with a tabula rasa, unless one is founding a new university. Even the New Programme contains, in the course offerings and in the structures of specialist programmes, many echoes of the Old.

In other words, Drummond argued that the U of T should find its new, post-honours identity in the very diversity and vestigial patterns of behaviour that at the moment seemed to be a threat. The role of the Kelly Committee, then, would be to find a way to harness diversity of educational subjects and aims without abandoning students to the whims of timetables, enrollments, and pre-requisites.

Following these recommendations, the committee immediately, in its second meeting, affirmed its determination not to devote much time to determining “the philosophy of education that it ought to adopt.” Indeed, “The Committee concluded that a discussion on the aims of education was futile” because “The purposes of a B.A. degree would never be agreed to by all.”

Another factor that might have contributed to the committee’s reluctance to frame its recommendations as a broad review of the academic exercise of the Faculty of Arts & Science and

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494 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
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496 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
497 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
its decision to instead adopt a “pragmatic, low-key approach to curriculum reform” was a sense of institutional exhaustion and constraint. As noted above, the committee was undergoing its deliberations following several periods of budget cuts and general institutional malaise, and there was certainly no sense that the institution would have tremendous energy or resources to commit to a third major curricular revision in a decade. One committee member noted “that in times of budgetary restrictions, it would not be possible to innovate to any great extent”; another argued that “To attempt to dictate ends would result in resentment and hostility.”

Under these constraints, however, the committee agreed that there were substantial problems with the New Programme, and that “There was a consensus that the ‘everything goes’ philosophy is not working for students, faculty and administration.” One of the primary sources of the problems it identified was the system of optional certification. The Macpherson Committee had recommended, based on its desire to support student empowerment and innovation in fields of study, that students be given the option to design their own program of study, which would be approved by a Faculty committee designated for this purpose. Through the iterations of the Allen, Berlyne and Foley Committees, this recommendation was transformed into the option for students to decline to pursue certification in any program of specialization – in other words, students who pursued an existing program of specialization would receive certification in this field on their transcript, but no student was required to pursue this certification. The intention of the Berlyne Committee, in recommending this structure, was to encourage students to pursue an organized program of study by offering the “reward” of certification on the transcript. That committee had been reluctant, however, to close off the option for students to independently determine their course of study outside of any pre-set program as they progressed through the degree. The Kelly Committee, however, found it untenably problematic that large numbers of students were not completing a full program of specialization.

One of the challenges this created, the Kelly Committee believed, was that the New Programme with its lack of requirements had, rather ironically, limited students’ freedom to choose courses of interest and that represented innovative combinations of subjects. While, as noted, the number of courses in the New Programme proliferated, these new choices did not necessarily

498 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
499 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
500 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
dramatically expand students’ academic horizons. With the elimination of standard program structures, pre-requisites became more important to streaming students and to ensuring that they had the necessary academic preparation. Students were therefore effectively faced with a dilemma as they selected their courses: they were “free” to choose anything provided they had the appropriate pre- and co-requisites, but were in practice severely restricted by these pre- and co-requisites. The committee argued that while “The intention in the introduction of the new programme was to increase freedom[,] it is questionable whether this has been achieved . . . It was believed that the new programme provides freedom in first year but that this freedom is at the expense of freedom in the other years. A student who chooses incorrectly in first year restricts his choices in further years.”501 In this way, the New Programme had unintentionally recreated one of the primary problems with the Old Programme that it had been intended to solve.

In the absence of the previous structures that had governed student progress through a degree, including admission to a program and the organization of courses into a conventional program,502 faculty too felt strain from the ad-hoc structures that had emerged in their place. Faculty were now charged with reviewing students’ requests for certification and for the establishment of new courses and theme programs by individual departments and faculty members. Like students who found that their new freedom had in fact constrained their choice, the Kelly Committee stated that “Departments and colleges feel that their freedom has been reduced and that there is a necessity to “decommitee-ize” the Faculty.”503

The Kelly Committee also identified a second problem with optional certification. Committee members felt that optional certification promoted the idea of the curriculum as an accumulation of credit: that simply completing a specified number of courses would produce an educated adult. Toronto’s previous and longstanding commitment to the year system, made this concern particularly acute. As discussed in Chapter 2, until the late 1960s, undergraduate education at Toronto had organized and assessed student learning by the year, rather than by the course. Many within the U of T felt that the year system promoted the integration and depth of knowledge, and expressed concern that the credit system offered learning in small, discrete pieces that would quickly be dismissed and forgotten as students moved on to their next course.

501 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
502 Optional certification meant that even if students had the pre-requisites they might not have the background that would have been expected in a traditional specialist program.
503 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
The false freedom of optional certification was, therefore, the primary structural issue of concern to the committee. The committee concluded that while they may agree with freedom of choice in principle, it was not working in practice, and that indeed the way to more freedom might be to focus student choice. They agreed that there was little value to retaining the practice of optional, as opposed to mandatory, certification, and recommended that specialization be required. A brief from the chair of the Classics department to the Kelly Committee captured the spirit of this conclusion:

The way of free programmes is defended by the claim that most students follow named programmes or at least defensible combinations and that therefore no restriction of the present free choice is justified. I have never understood the logic of this. If a disorganized programme is worth discouraging it is worth forbidding, at least as long as a degree is a certificate of quality.\(^{504}\)

Indeed, inspired by the prospect of increased structure in the undergraduate degree, the committee explored but ultimately decided not to recommend an additional administrative process that would further structure students’ programs: whether, at application, students should apply to a particular degree stream (that is, to either the B.A. or the B.Sc.) or whether this decision would be better made after completion of the first year.

In favour of such an arrangement was the lopsided enrolment in particular courses and programs of specialization; specifically, there was very high demand for courses in the life and social sciences. Direct application to a particular stream would help the committee plan enrolment and course offerings more precisely. In addition to meeting student needs, this would also allow the Faculty to streamline its expenses. Ultimately, however, this proposal clashed with some of the committee’s fundamental assumptions about the goal of the first year and of university education in general. The first year, the committee argued, was meant to be a year of exploration and expansion where students could explore a variety of fields at the university level and decide which they might wish to pursue as an area of specialization. The committee felt that much would be lost if students were compelled to make this choice while still in high school. The first year was also meant to, in a small way, equalize the uneven opportunities and indeed education that students might have received in their high school – that students in small or rural high schools may not have had access

\(^{504}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
to the same range of subjects or level of instruction as their counterparts. In large, well-staffed urban high schools, and as such that these students in particular would benefit from the opportunity to explore, in their first year, those subjects which they had not had an opportunity to pursue in high school. For the committee, a first year that was flexible in both practice and spirit was a pedagogical priority they were not willing to sacrifice. In its final report, the committee confirmed these decisions, noting that:

there was some interest in the possibility of admitting students to a particular degree programme – B.A., B.Sc., or B.Com. – rather than admitting them to the Faculty at large. Since we began our deliberations it has become clear that there is very strong opposition to any such scheme, largely because some observers believe that high school programmes and grades are not really commensurable. At present, therefore, the Committee is not prepared to make any recommendation with respect to degree-admission.\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.}

Though they did not pursue this recommendation, the Kelly Committee nevertheless continued to seek ways to improve the first year. The committee had been alerted to some of the shortcomings of the existing structure by the recently-registered findings of the Task Force on Improving the First Year. This task force identified as one of the most serious problems in undergraduate education at the U of T “the lack of an overall academic orientation.”\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.} Specifically, the committee noted that “At no point does the incoming student have explained to him some notion of a liberal education, the contribution of the humanities, social science and physical sciences to his intellectual development, and what the various specializations offer.” The lack of a coherent introduction to the range of fields studied in the Faculty was, in the view of the Task Force on Improving the First Year, a “serious lacunae from which undergraduate arts and science education suffers at this university.”\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.}

With this clear mandate, the committee turned its attention from specialization to the complementary issue of breadth. Indeed, as much as instructors and students had bemoaned the chaotic nature of some students’ courses of study, there was as much concern about student overspecialization, which was equally permitted – or, some argued, encouraged – by the broad
flexibility of the New Programme. Under the New Programme students were free to take any
courses they wished. Many students chose to focus very narrowly, and this was one of the major
repeated concerns raised in the submitted briefs to the committee, as noted in its document
summarizing these submissions.\textsuperscript{508} The consequent conclusion was that without a structured
program for breadth, “the only meaningful academic structure is found in the various
specializations.”\textsuperscript{509}

While the honours programs had been the focus of the Old Programme for many faculty
and students at the U of T, the general program, as described in Chapter 2, nonetheless served an
important role in the overall educational offerings of the U of T. It was important to many that the
U of T offer a well-organized but broad alternative to the highly specialized honours degree. The old
honours programs had also mandated some breadth through the “Religious Knowledge” or “Pass
Options” courses. These were small-scale courses demanding one, rather than three, lecture-hours a
week, and provided honours students with an overview of the field under investigation. (As
suggested by the name, these began as studies of religious texts but were later expanded to many
areas of study.) Furthermore, the old honours programs offered an understanding of specialization
that often extended beyond study in a single department, and included related courses in a number
of other fields.

Concerns about overspecialization were compounded by “the lack of a general
programme”\textsuperscript{510} for students who wished to pursue a deliberately broad program of study. This had
historically been an option in the Faculty of Arts & Science in the form of the old general program,
and had been advocated by the Berlyne Committee in their recommendation for the establishment
of a liberal arts certification. With no such program currently in place, however, students defaulted
to the departmental specializations, and even if students worked to develop an alternative and
individual general program, they were left with no official curricular guidance on the matter.

Drawing on this understanding of the challenges and goals of the current structure, the
committee proposed ways to ensure space for breadth in students’ programs though limits on
specialization, by clarifying program lengths, and through the introduction of distribution
requirements. However, in planning for the provision of breadth, the committee prioritized

\textsuperscript{508} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
\textsuperscript{509} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
\textsuperscript{510} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
structures that, rather than exposing students to a range of fields at a basic level, would instead provide substantial exposure to a secondary field outside the student’s primary area of specialization.

If it was going to require students to venture outside of their area of specialization, the committee quickly recognized that they would first need to clarify the ambiguity and variability surrounding program names and lengths. The Berlyne Committee’s options for certification had introduced a terminology that made sense in the Toronto context, but was confusing when compared to terms in use at other institutions. Under the Berlyne Committee’s recommendations for the New Programme, students could pursue either a “major” – which was, at between nine and 13 full-year courses (or 14 to 16 courses in combined majors, spanning two fields), at least twice the length of what were called majors at many other American (or Canadian) institutions – or a “combined major” composed of two “sub-majors” (later called “minors”), each of six to seven full-year courses. To align Toronto’s terminology with that in use at other institutions, majors were renamed “specialists” and minors “majors.”

In theory, therefore, students could complete a specialist, combined specialist, or two majors (the former “combined major”) in a four-year degree and still have at least four courses free as “electives.” However, in the New Programme, students could, if they wished, take all courses in a single field, both as part of a program of study and as additional supplemental courses. According to the committee, student overspecialization of this nature was a significant concern. One brief to the committee noted “far too many instances of students following appallingly narrow courses of study.” The committee therefore explored the possibility of placing limits on the number of courses a student could pursue in any particular field. Ignoring the protestations voiced by a collection of professors of science against a similar proposition during the deliberations of the Berlyne Committee, who argued that departments should be able to set the demands of their own programs, the Kelly Committee recommended that at least one fifth of a student’s program – that is, four courses in a four-year program or three in a three-year – must be completed outside the student’s area of specialization. These courses were referred to as “non-specialist electives.”

With space for breadth in place, however, the committee still felt that students would benefit from structured opportunities to expand the scope of their undergraduate education. They briefly explored, and quickly dismissed (as had previous curricular committees) the idea of offering required

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511 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
512 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
“core” courses. The committee agreed with previous curriculum committees, who had felt that common courses required of all students were generally not very valuable in practice because of the difficulty of finding appropriate instructors and the challenge of identifying universally relevant or important course content. Providing input to the committee during their breadth deliberations, the Assistant Registrar at Woodsworth argued that “such compulsory courses have tended to become watered-down at other Universities where they do exist.” There was also concern that core courses, or required courses of any kind, might compromise the inclusiveness of the curriculum; the Assistant Registrar at Woodsworth stated further “that the thought of a compulsory science course or math course frightens many individuals who have been absent from University for 10 or 15 years.”

As it explored alternatives that would offer a more structured form of breadth, the committee developed a proposal for “mini-minors”: short sequences of courses in a complementary or contrasting field to a student’s area of specialization. As the committee described, “Such minors would be comprised of a series of sequential courses focusing on, for example, a study of other cultures at other times.” The benefit of these mini-minors, as the committee saw it, was that they would provide students with a more rigorous exposure to an area outside their field of specialization; the committee “believed that these mini-minors would only be successful if the area of study was investigated in some depth.” Ultimately, the committee advocated a third type of program of certification: the minor, three full courses in a disciplinary or thematic field that could be counted towards a student’s non-specialist electives but did not require, as they had debated, non-specialist electives to be completed through a set minor.

Having tackled to its satisfaction the issue of students’ academic opportunities, reintroducing a greater degree of structure while retaining some of the Macpherson spirit of exploration, flexibility, and equality, the committee turned to the next set of perceived problems caused by the New Programme: the decay of academic and intellectual community on campus caused in large part, it was felt, by the loss of the honours program. In considering this issue, however, the committee also saw an opportunity to address a campus problem that well preceded the New Programme: the declining role of the colleges in students’ academic experience.

513 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
514 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
515 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
516 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
As noted, part of the committee’s desire to reintroduce structure into students’ programs stemmed from a concern that with the loss of the honours programs students no longer had an “academic home” on campus. One way the committee felt they could address this problem was through enhancing the role of the college, allowing it to serve as a student’s academic home.

While some members of the university community attributed the perceived decline in the role of the colleges in students’ academic experiences to the introduction of the New Programme, Drummond points out that problems with the colleges had existed for some time. Indeed, the colleges had been a complication, rather than an asset, to many of the previous curricular reviews. But while the problem was not new, it was nonetheless the Kelly Committee who fully engaged with alternative proposals for the colleges, and fully explored the range of their potential roles.

In the decade preceding the committee’s work, however, many aspects of the colleges’ roles had changed. The New Programme had eliminated the “Religious Knowledge” options that had previously been the domain of the colleges. Students were therefore no longer required to complete any portion of their program within their college. More dramatically, the role of the colleges had changed substantially with the 1974 Memorandum of Understanding between the colleges and university – the first time their relationship had been substantially revisited since federation. Friedland describes this new policy, noting that “College subjects would all become university departments, paid for by the University. Staff for the new departments would no longer be hired by the colleges. In exchange, the colleges would be able to develop courses and programs that they themselves would teach.”517 On one hand, therefore, the Memorandum of Understanding therefore provided the colleges with new opportunities – the colleges were no longer restricted to teaching the “college subjects,” all in the humanities, and could begin to develop new interdisciplinary programs. However, as Friedland notes, the constrained finances of the Faculty limited the development and growth of college programs at the same time that colleges were also no longer teaching the college subjects.518 The result was that while all students had previously pursued at least one course per year in their college, by 1977, for example, “fewer than 20 per cent of Trinity students were being taught in the college.”519 Believing this to be a significant underutilization of a potentially very valuable

518 Ibid, 569.
519 Ibid, 568
resource, the committee therefore proposed several potential ways to weave the colleges through students’ course of study in the university departments.

Drummond, in his statement asserting “Our Approach to the Curriculum,” describes the colleges as a potential force of diversity of educational aims and approaches within a large Faculty. He wrote:

Some of us think that through the college system the University may be able to provide for diversity in unity. That is to say, the colleges might be able to develop their own views about some aspects of the University experience, and the University curriculum might allow this to happen without requiring it to do so. We have tried to develop our curricular recommendations with this possibility in mind, though we are far from certain that the colleges, as at present staffed and arranged, could undertake the necessary curricular development without help from the university departments.\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.}

From this platform, the committee sought ways to allow the colleges to complement and shape students’ learning without placing undue instructional burdens on colleges that were now without faculty of their own. The committee debated, with the support of some of the colleges, whether students should be required to complete a number of their courses within their college. In particular, the committee suggested that the proposed mini-minors be run through the colleges as three-course college programs. The committee suggested the possibility that “that if different colleges had different packages, the students may pick their college based on particular sequences of college courses.”\footnote{UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.} Ultimately, however, though enhancing the academic role of the colleges was a substantial goal of the Kelly Committee, the colleges simply did not have the means to provide instruction to all students, and the committee was unable to make a recommendation to this end.

A final consideration of substantial philosophical significance emerging from the committee’s discussions was the committee’s debate over whether or not to reintroduce an opportunity for students to receive an honours designation with their degree. The clear connection between honours and U of T institutional identity, as well as the sustained assertions that thehonours degree had produced exceptional scholarly training, suggested strong positive memories of the meaning of honours. At the same time, however, honours had significant negative connotations as a symbol of the inequity of the Old Programme. It was, in other words, a term heavy with
significance, and the Kelly Committee, like its curriculum review predecessors, hoped to find a way to revive the positive associations and outcomes without reviving the negative.

In renaming the certification programs (from major to specialist, and minor to major), the Kelly Committee brought Toronto terminology in line with those of other North American institutions. The opportunity for students to receive an honours designation, they argued, was another element of this. In its final recommendations, the Kelly Committee noted that while:

> No one on the Committee wishes to resurrect the rigid separation of students . . . and the invidious treatment of generalists that characterised the Old Programme[,] . . .

several members of the Committee believe that by avoiding the term Honour (or Honours) we deny our students an appropriate recognition of academic achievement – a recognition that they could achieve if they pursued a similar specialist programme in most Canadian or Commonwealth universities.\(^{522}\)

A survey of other Canadian institutions indicated that “All use the word ‘honour’ somehow or other including McGill which has no four-year programme but excluding Saskatchewan where it is called ‘advanced level.’”\(^{523}\) Across Canada, the use of the term included both an honours designation that indicated a more advanced program (e.g. the completion of a four-year rather than three-year degree) as well as a differentiation of standing within a common degree program.

The committee also further advocated the reintroduction of honours by drawing on the historical value attributed to honours at the U of T by both those within and outside of the university. They suggested that “if the public became aware that the University was re-introducing the old terminology the University’s reputation would be improved, and perhaps . . . faculty morale would be strengthened, an important matter in the difficult times that confront both staff and students.”\(^{524}\) Finally, the committee argued that the term honours was not only “more comparable and traditional but also more accurate” since “some of the ‘Specialist’ Programmes, especially the theme programmes, are in no sense specialized” and consequently “the present terminology is an absurdity.”\(^{525}\)

Ultimately, the committee’s final report stated that several members of the committee believed that “the Faculty should change the name of the Specialist and Combined Specialist

\(^{522}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
\(^{523}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
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\(^{525}\) UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
Programmes to Honour(s) Programmes, making no other subsequent changes in the organization of studies or in the streaming of students." This recommendation would, effectively, make the fourth year an “honours” year, with no distinction of honours or non-honours students before that point. For some members of the committee, however, the priority of maintaining equality of opportunity for all students superceded the benefits of some students being able to receive honours. Consequently, the committee followed this statement with a large caveat. The committee’s report notes that “Other members of the Committee feel that by re-introducing the old label the Faculty would encourage a retrogression toward the Old Program.” The committee remained deadlocked, and therefore concluded this section of the report by stating that “the Committee transmits the question to the General Committee without recommendation, but in the hope that the members of the General Committee may consider it once they have dealt with our recommendations.”

Evidently, the general committee sided with the dissenters, for the U of T remained without an honours designation for another 15 years.

In their final report, the Kelly Committee described their vision for the ideal curriculum as one in which students would study subjects in depth, with structured programs leading to both their primary area of study and, optionally, to a secondary area of study that, while substantially shorter, was just as thoughtfully designed. The final report states that their “primary aim”:

is to ensure that each student’s programme of study has academic worth and coherence and that it provides a cumulative experience of increasing knowledge and mastery in a chosen area while at the same time requiring the inclusion of courses in more than one discipline. In a Faculty as large as ours feelings of anonymity and impersonality can be mitigated by . . . the formal association of students with particular programmes whose courses they follow in an ordered pattern.”

Indeed, this statement accurately summarizes the assumptions and goals of the Kelly Committee. The committee had set out to harness both the intended flexibility and diversity of the New Programme and the community and academic coherence of the Old. To support both structure and flexibility, the committee recommended that students in the three-year program complete a major program of five to seven full-year courses, and that students in the four-year

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526 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
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529 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
program complete either two majors, a specialist program of nine to 13 full-year courses, or a combined specialist of 14 to 16 full-year courses. They also structured the degree from the opposite direction, designating three courses in a three-year degree and four in a four-year as non-specialist electives, which were required to be completed outside of a student’s primary area or areas of study. Ideally, these non-specialist electives would be completed (in part for four-year students) through the pursuit of a three-course minor program which would allow students to study, over the course of their degree, two fields in at least some depth. While academic coherence was their first priority, the committee also hoped that by enforcing the pursuit of a program, students would have access to an academic community, which had been elusive for those students who were not following a set program of specialization.

Other goals, however, were unmet. The committee’s attempts to identify an enhanced role for the colleges were limited by the financial constraints facing the Faculty. These financial constraints limited the colleges’ capacity to offer courses and provide instruction under the arrangements of the new Memorandum of Understanding. All told, however, the Kelly Committee made substantial strides in bringing together the best of the Old with the important benefits and opportunities of the New.

5.2 **The Cook Committee**

By the late 1980s, the university was reeling from over a decade of continued budget cuts while accepting ever-larger numbers of students. Despite the concerns of the Kelly Committee about their own budgetary context, the U of T’s situation had only gotten worse. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada noted in a 1990 report that “With regard to finances, Canadian universities were, of necessity, much learner in the late 1980s than they were in the late 1970s”\(^5\) At the same time, the student population of the Faculty of Arts & Science had increased to over 15,000 full time equivalents, an increase of nearly 50% since the late 1970s.\(^5\)

In 1987, President Connell released a planning document, *Renewal 1987*, that attempted to propose solutions to what he saw as the “abundant evidence of the effects of financial attrition and a

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\(^5\) The Committee’s final report notes that “Total full-course enrolments in the Faculty were 56,859.5 in 1976-77 and are 81,735 in 1988-89.” Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee (Cook Committee), *Report to the Dean* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1989), 4.
widely-shared view that the University is not achieving its full potential.” The current curricular structures in place in the Faculty of Arts & Science, it appeared, only exacerbated these challenges. The reforms of the Kelly Committee recognized but, this report implicitly argues, had not gone far enough to address the financial and pedagogical challenges of maintaining a widely diverse, decentralized, and still relatively unstructured curriculum in the current environment.

Renewal 1987, therefore, set a broad mandate for curriculum renewal. Connell spent 20 of its 60 pages discussing “Undergraduate Teaching and Learning,” all but two pages of which was devoted to “Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in Arts and Science.” The mandate for curriculum renewal provided in Renewal 1987 echoes and builds on the priorities and recommendations of the Kelly Committee. Connell noted that the Kelly Committee’s “recommendations represented an effort to embrace a return in some parts to a more structured undergraduate program.” Renewal 1987 argued that these efforts had led the undergraduate curriculum in the right direction, but that much work still needed to be done to provide enhanced intellectual structure and academic community and support. Connell further introduced a new priority – the ability to compete with other Ontario institutions to attract the province’s best students.

In describing the current state of the curriculum, Connell argued that, in defining “specializations and major and minor . . . by numbers of courses rather than by objectives and content,” the existing program did not clearly communicate the goals and values of undergraduate education to students and that “What the Faculty of Arts and Science has achieved is a compromise somewhere between the poles of pre-Macpherson and the New Programme, but it has not arisen from a vision of undergraduate education with a set of unifying principles to give meaning and weight to the educational enterprise.” As a result, the undergraduate curriculum, Connell argues, is bewildering to students in the first year, and did not equip them with the necessary skills and information to be able to make appropriate choices. Connell described the increasing diversity of students and of their academic preparation, as well as the increasing diversity of potential academic pathways through the degree. He argued that the current loose curricular structures did not manage or harness this diversity very effectively. Connell therefore recommended the “maintenance and

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533 Ibid, 28-29.
534 Ibid, 29.
improvement of undergraduate programs and a redesign of undergraduate programs in the arts and science.”  

Dean Armstrong in the Faculty of Arts & Science took up this recommendation as an urgent mandate for yet another curricular review, and established a curriculum review committee at the outset of the 1987-88 academic year. The committee, chaired by M.E. Cook, professor in the Department of English and Associate Dean of the Faculty, was large and included a number of chairs, college principals, Associate and Vice-Deans of the Faculty of Arts & Science and of related divisions, including the School of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Medicine, as well as a number of student representatives. The Cook Committee submitted a working draft of proposals to the university community at the end of the 1987-88 academic year; much of the following year was devoted to consultations on the recommendations of the working report with unit and department chairs and with representatives from the colleges. A final report, with some variations from the draft document, as described below, was submitted at the end of the 1988-89 academic year.

Ultimately, spurred by the message in *Renewal 1987*, the Cook Committee’s work took as its starting point an expanded understanding of the role of curriculum. This understanding had begun to emerge with the Kelly Committee, and operated in almost complete distinction from the wholly independent and student-directed curriculum of the New Programme. The Cook Committee’s work suggested not only that curricular structures and requirements should be revisited, but that, within a large and diverse Faculty, the curriculum must in fact take on the role not simply of organizing students’ studies, but should perform this organization in such a way that the curriculum itself would clearly, transparently, and explicitly serve as a learning tool by communicating the goals of undergraduate education, by guiding students’ intellectual development, and by helping them identify compelling connections and ideas.

The committee therefore focused a major portion of its recommendations on developing a curriculum that would serve as a learning and guidance tool by identifying a series of modular and linear structures of movement through the degree, from admission through program requirements. These structures would, the committee believed, both help streamline the degree and would help students navigate their way through.

In developing a curriculum based on students’ movement through the degree, the committee naturally started with admissions. Admission policies had been addressed by previous curricular committees, normally in the context of expected standards or prerequisite courses. The Cook Committee, however, saw the potential to use admissions not just to address the over-saturation of particular fields, but as a way to contribute to guiding students through their program.

As noted above, the issue of admission to program (that is, direct admission to a particular field of study) was one that had been taken up by previous curriculum committees. Indeed, as noted in Renewal 1987, these issues had, in 1984, been explored in depth by a committee struck for this purpose and chaired by Peter Silcox. Ultimately, this committee “rejected the proposal on academic grounds,” namely, that “it is undesirable from an academic point of view to ask students to make what would have to be long-range decisions before having access to courses in a wide range of disciplines.”537 The New Programme, after all, had assigned substantial priority to opening up the first year for exploration, and many remained reluctant to slot students into particular streams at the time of application. However, circumstances had changed, even since the Silcox Committee had drawn its conclusions. The open and relatively unstructured first year, which, after the Kelly Committee, included a number of “non-specialist electives” as well as introductory courses for prospective programs, had created enrolment management challenges that kept some students out of their preferred courses and fields and was beginning to have a negative influence on the U of T’s appeal to and competitiveness for students. Once admitted to the University, the popularity of particular programs – including especially those in the life sciences and social sciences – meant that these areas faced “intense enrolment pressure”538 and were forced to impose intensely competitive entry restrictions to their programs starting in second year. These restrictions left many strong students frustrated both during first year as they struggled to qualify for limited spaces in these programs, and in future years of their program if they found themselves unable to study in their field of choice.

In response to these pressures, the Cook Committee revived one of the proposals the Silcox Committee had deemed the most desirable way of introducing streamed admission: admission not directly to a particular program, but the somewhat more flexible process of admission to one of five “academic areas”: the humanities, social sciences, life sciences, mathematics and physical sciences,

537 Ibid, 36.
538 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 6.
and commerce and finance (leading to the B.Com.). The committee envisioned that such admission could help balance and predict the number of students who would pursue particular areas, and could also, as will be discussed below, provide a means of increasing the U of T’s competitiveness in attracting top students.

The first year was a priority for the Cook Committee, and admission to academic areas was a cornerstone of the Cook Committee’s proposals for improving first year. Since the initial implementation of the New Programme, each curricular committee had struggled to identify means to ensure that the first year served several quite different and sometimes seemingly competing goals. Especially for students who might have had limited academic options in high school, the first year should provide an opportunity to explore new fields of study with the ultimate goal of identifying potential programs of specialization. The first year also, however, needed to serve as preparation for that specialization; many programs, entered in second year, required specific first year pre-requisites. Finally, the relatively broad study provided in first year was also intended to enhance students’ understanding of their future program of study by encouraging students to consider connections between fields.

The Cook Committee considered both the types of courses they might require in first year as well as the type of education the student would receive in those courses. To describe their ideal outcomes for the first year, the committee recognized it would need to articulate their ideal outcomes for first year courses. The committee also identified as a problem the “large and bewildering array of first year courses” in many fields, accompanied by limited direction for students to help them select appropriate courses or identify a prospective program of study. Furthermore, the committee was concerned about variations in the goals and scope among existing 100-level courses, and believed that these variations were a strong contributing factor to what they saw as an often overwhelming and unsatisfactory introduction to university for U of T students. Consequently, they recommended that “programs should offer only a very small number of 100-level courses that serve to introduce the student to the principles of the discipline” and that “All in

539 Ibid, 10.
540 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee (Cook Committee), Working Report (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988), 3.
541 The Cook Committee specified that “programs [should] normally offer no more than two 100-series courses from a single Department or College Program, with a few exceptions (some language courses, some mathematics courses, writing courses, and a few others to be determined).” Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 11.
all, the total number of 100-series courses should decrease, and those remaining should be more generally consistent in their approach.”

To support its goals for the first year, the committee offered a series of recommendations about 100-level courses representing “a general view of what the first year . . . should be accomplishing for the student and for the subject.” These courses, the committee recommended, should be broad and not overly specialized, should be built explicitly on Ontario high school curricula, and should clearly define and communicate the academic expectations and methods of the field at the university level. “All this,” the committee argued, “needs to be done clearly and fully and engagingly” and must “be carefully paced, especially in the first few weeks.” Accordingly, the committee proposed the establishment of a standing committee, across all academic areas, that would meet annually “to consider the character and the teaching of 100-series courses.”

A further challenge to a first year that would be clearly distinct in aim and scope from the program years was the tendency, noted also by the Kelly Committee, for programs to make substantial pre-requisite demands that limited students’ first year choices significantly. The Kelly Committee had responded by requiring that programs leave space for at least one non-specialist elective in each year. The Cook Committee, added additional limitations on study in a single field in first year. The committee proposed a restriction “that students take no more than one 100-series course from a single Department or College Program.” These restrictions prevented programs from requiring more than one disciplinary pre-requisite in the first year.

The most significant component of the committee’s deliberations on the first year, however, addressed the development of a breadth requirement that would play a significant role in students’ programs. The Kelly Committee had set aside room in students’ programs for non-specialist electives, but a more structured requirement for breadth was seen by the Cook Committee as one means by which it could address some of the problems that had been identified by Renewal 1987 and by the committee’s own assessment of the current landscape. The committee noted in its Working Report that “External reviewers often remark that we require a very high, perhaps too high, number of courses in some programmes. Some of the faculty, though not all, in such intensely

542 Ibid, 12.
543 Ibid, 11.
544 Ibid, 11.
545 Ibid, 17.
546 Ibid, 12. One exception to this “would allow a student in, say, Spanish, to take a course in the Spanish language along with a course in Spanish literature.” Ibid, 12.
specialized programmes worry about the wider education of their specialist students, that is, about distribution.”

In a brief to the committee, New College expressed concern that little in the curriculum connected all the fields in arts and science, and questioned whether the Faculty of Arts & Science was simply “an umbrella for a series of barons, each with territorial interests . . . or do we have something to say about the humanities, social sciences, and sciences to non-specialists?”

Despite the desire to improve opportunities for breadth, the committee did not see breadth and specialization as opposing curricular goals. While a better breadth requirement was important to the committee, they still clearly saw the Faculty’s commitment to specialized education as an asset. They noted that “this Faculty has long maintained some of the best specialized programs available anywhere” and recorded that they:

recognize that the longstanding University of Toronto is to try to draw on the best traditions of both British and United States higher education. Neither the strongly focussed undergraduate curriculum associated with British universities, nor the much more diffused curricular pattern associated with United States universities, should prevail here. Rather, we should continue to adapt from both, according to our own situation.

Indeed, even while attending to breadth, the committee conceived of the degree they would ultimately propose as primarily specialized with breadth serving in part as a means to support that specialization. Furthermore, in promoting breadth, the committee also recognized that a focus on breadth at the expense of opportunities for specialization might frustrate students who were highly motivated to begin a specialized course of study immediately. They acknowledged that “Some students arrive with a strong interest in one subject” and stated that they did “not wish to discourage students from pursuing this interest, even in their first sequence of courses.”

Indeed, three of the five courses in first year were to be taken in a student’s academic area. The committee therefore argued that it was not “clear that massive undergraduate specialization is necessarily the best

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547 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Working Report, 1.
548 New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
549 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 4.
550 Ibid, 4.
551 Ibid, 12.
specialized model” but rather that “Patterns of thinking outside the discipline can be invaluable for the imaginative and innovative specialist.”

Fitting with this conviction, the committee’s initial attempts to develop a breadth program identified a particular set of requirements for students in each academic area that would complement their planned disciplinary focus. The committee noted how important it was for each field to be sensitive to the priorities and approaches of other areas. For example, the committee noted that “A student in the humanities or social sciences should not remain willfully blinkered about ways of thinking in the sciences.” Students in the humanities would be particularly likely to go on to roles in public service or communications; in these roles they would need to evaluate and use scientific information. The committee therefore argued that such students should be scientifically literate, noting that “This is especially so at present, when informed public responses to scientific issues are needed more and more urgently.” The committee concluded that all areas of study could benefit from an introduction to other fields that would provide some “precise knowledge” that would serve as an “antidote” to the “stereotypes of work in [other fields] . . . that can lead to trivializing such work.”

The committee used the academic areas to organize exactly what “precise knowledge” of other fields would be important to each group. The committee proposed a specific set of requirements for students from each area of study rather than a single set of requirements that would apply to all students. In the proposed requirement, the primary focus was on broadening the perceived gap between art and science. This focus had the effect of somewhat marginalizing the social sciences. The committee’s recommended breadth requirement mandated three full-year courses “chosen from one or more area of study other than the student’s main area.” The distribution of these courses, however, would vary according to the student’s academic area. There was, therefore, a science requirement for humanities students, and a humanities requirement for science students. Social science students were required to complete both a humanities and a science requirement, but there was no social science requirement for any group.

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552 Ibid, 4.
553 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Working Report, 1.
554 Ibid. 1.
555 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 8.
556 Ibid, 15.
Table 5. Cook Committee Proposed Breadth Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For humanities students:</th>
<th>Three courses from a list of science and social science courses</th>
<th>One of which must be a science course</th>
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<tr>
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<td>One of which must be a 200+ series course</td>
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<tr>
<td>For social science students:</td>
<td>Three courses from a list of humanities and science courses</td>
<td>One of which must be a humanities course</td>
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<td>No more than two of which may be language courses</td>
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Another important component of the committee’s breadth requirement, and the one that most distinguished it from previous formulations of breadth in the Faculty of Arts & Science, was a depth-in-breadth requirement. Indeed, in requiring some depth in breadth, the committee was, intentionally or not, reviving the Kelly Committee’s unrealized goal of making minors an integral part of the pursuit of breadth. The committee included in its breadth proposal a requirement that at least one of the breadth courses be completed at the 200-level or above. Because of prerequisites, this would mean that in many cases students would take a 100- and 200-level breadth course in the same field. The committee’s early arguments for sequenced breadth courses, first emerging in the committee’s draft report, argued that the goal of this proposed requirement was to “encourage the study of another area in depth,” and indeed hoped that, having taken two courses in a second field, a student would choose to add a minor to their program by completing two additional courses, one of which would be at the 300- or 400-level.

In addition to distributionary breadth requirements, the committee expressed concern “about the lack of well-defined, demanding, more general programmes.” Following in the footsteps of many previous curricular committees, who believed that students who did not wish to pursue a highly specialized program should have access to a thoughtful broader option, the Cook

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557 Ibid, 15.
558 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Draft Report (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988), 7.
559 Ibid, 7.
560 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Working Report, 1.
Committee in fact hoped to provide a range of options for general, rather than highly specialized, study – one in each academic area. However, rather than attempt to design distinct general programs in the humanities, social sciences, and life and physical sciences, the committee instead proposed that the minors in a single academic area would also form the foundation for a general course of study in that area. Two minors in the same academic area could be combined to form a general program for a three-year degree, and three minors could form a general program for a four-year degree.\(^561\)

Collectively, these recommendations represented a renewed focus on and additional structure for breadth. However, the committee also recognized that requiring courses outside of a student’s primary area of study could only partially ensure that students’ experience with breadth met the committee’s goals. Like the Macpherson Committee, the Cook Committee recognized that for breadth courses to be thoroughly effective, pedagogy, in addition to course structure, would need to be addressed. Like the Macpherson Committee too, the Cook Committee could not mandate a particular pedagogical approach, but could recommend instructional and governance structures that would encourage a particular type of teaching.

One strategy to this end was to recommend that departments and units develop courses that would be aimed specifically at non-specialists, rather than courses that primarily served as introductory courses for prospective specialists. This recommendation was worded more strongly in the committee’s working report, which advocated that departments review their existing introductory courses to ensure they were appropriate for students who might have motivations for pursuing the course other than preparation for more advanced study in the field. They advocated that “Departments and programmes . . . involve their best teachers, scholars and researchers in these courses.”\(^562\) At this time, the committee also proposed “broadly conceived and multi-departmental courses” in which “related departments [would co-operate] to teach an Introduction to (say) some civilization or culture.”\(^563\) These proposals, however, evidently met some opposition, and the committee’s final report tempered this recommendation, offering it only as a suggestion for departments who might have a particular motivation to improve their breadth offerings. The

\(^{561}\) Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, *Report to the Dean*, 14.

\(^{562}\) Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, *Working Report*, 3.

\(^{563}\) Ibid, 3.
committee also advocated the development of an approved list of courses from which students would be required to select in order to fulfill their breadth requirements.

The committee also believed support for first year as they imagined it might come not from departments but from the colleges. Overall, unlike the Kelly Committee, the Cook Committee paid relatively little attention to the role of the colleges in their curricular recommendations, but did believe that the colleges could serve an important role in the first-year experience. This could, the committee noted, take many forms, including offering special courses and programs, curricular and co-curricular, in the first year, or by hosting lecture and tutorial sections within the colleges. The committee did not, however, formulate any specific recommendations.

Having dealt to their satisfaction with the first year, the committee considered their second major priority: ways in which students’ choice of courses throughout their programs could be made more transparent and deliberate. One of the challenges noted in Renewal 1987 was the “difficulties of access to and quality of counseling for students.”\textsuperscript{564} Clearer pathways through the degree that demonstrated the implications, opportunities and limitations inherent in each choice of course would provide a very basic level of counseling and guidance that would be available to all students. Movement through the degree, the committee proposed, would therefore be planned and presented to students as a “tree.” The courses students selected in each year would lead to multiple, but limited, choices in the following year. Admission to academic area would serve as the trunk of this tree, guiding students’ choices beginning first year. For example, students within the “social sciences” academic area were informed that first-year courses in “Economics & Mathematics” as well as “History and/or Political Science” could lead to programs including “International Relations.” The committee argued that “The ‘tree’ structure should help students to see just where their options lie, and how they may fulfil various requirements for breadth, specialization, and so on.”\textsuperscript{565}

\textsuperscript{564} Connell, Renewal 1987, 30.
\textsuperscript{565} Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Working Report, 4.
These trees could also facilitate the desired streamlining of programs. As the committee explained it, in many units there was relatively minimal overlap between the courses required for minors, majors and specialists. This had several challenging outcomes. First, students could not easily change their program from one level of specialization to the other; this conflicted with the principle introduced by the Kelly Committee that students should not have to choose between a three- and four-year degree before the third year. Second, these discrete program offerings reinforced the tendency towards the proliferation of courses, an expensive habit. The Cook Committee instead proposed that the different programs within each unit should be understood as

Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, Appendix 2 page 3.
cumulative or more intensive versions of the same study. This conception of programs would not only give students more flexibility and make it easier to communicate the implications of each choice, but would also, in theory, allow many departments and units to pare down their course offerings.

Understanding programs in this way, however, would first require a discussion of a complicated and historically fraught issue: whether the U of T should continue to offer and promote both three- and four-year degrees. There were two elements to this debate. First, there was a growing sense that the three-year degree was becoming increasingly obsolete and inconsistent with the pedagogical goals of the Faculty. Connell described a vision for the degree that effectively required four years to complete:

I believe that a strong case can be made for redesigning the structure of undergraduate work to give special emphasis to programs of four years’ duration. Most programs should be relatively broad in the early stages, to ensure that students have a good experience of general education at the university level. In the higher years a few programs might remain broad in character while others would permit students to enrich their experience in particular disciplines.\(^{567}\)

The Cook Committee agreed with the assessment that four-year degrees could better ensure the successful attainment of educational objectives. The committee, however, did not recommend eliminating the three-year degree in the immediate term. Instead, they simply predicted its eventual demise. The Working Report argued that it was inevitable that “all degree programmes will eventually be four-year programmes.”\(^{568}\) This inevitability, however, influenced their conception of the relationship between majors and specialists. The committee proposed that not only should programs be modular and cumulative, but that this modularization should be hierarchical, with specialist programs as the starting point. In other words, each unit would design a four-year specialist program; they would then eliminate a year’s worth of courses to develop a major and another for the minor. In theory, then, as discussed in the Working Report, students’ progress through the degree within a particular area would be the same through the third year, at which point students would preferably continue through the final year but would have the option of leaving with

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\(^{568}\) Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, *Working Report*, 2.
a three-year degree. The committee, in other words, suggested that a specialist program “may subsume the Major,” which in turn might subsume the Minor.

The committee’s view of the three-year degree as a secondary and temporary option, however, was met with substantial opposition. The committee’s final report noted that “When the Working Report predicted the demise of the three-year degree, this caused a good deal of concern in some parts of the campus.” One such expression of concern was voiced by the Principal of Woodsworth, Arthur Kruger, who argued that the committee’s proposed degree structure ultimately “assumes that all students are in specialist programmes but that some drop out after three years without finishing the full programme.” The major was, he suggests, reduced to an incomplete specialist program. Kruger conceded that designing only specialist programs would “simplify our range of offerings” – certainly a priority of the committee and the institution – but that this simplification would occur “at a very high cost.” In particular, he expressed concern that it would prevent students from “structuring programmes involving unrelated majors.” Kruger instead proposed the inverse of the committee’s recommendations, arguing that majors should be the norm, with specialists providing an optional addition; that “the Specialist become a Major plus certain requirements rather than the Major become a Specialist minus the fourth year.” Swayed by these and other concerns, the committee conceded that it had been premature in marginalizing the future potential of the three-year degree, writing that “On reflection, we thought we should wait for the demise before embalming the body. Should the University at a later time decide to move to 20-course degrees, the structure here can readily be adapted.” Ultimately, the committee did not make a clear recommendation in its Final Report. They noted only that “In some programs, students who complete a Major program may not be able to complete a Specialist program simply by adding courses. Students need to plan ahead with care, seeking advice from the Department or College Program of their choice.”

569 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 13.
570 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 8.
571 New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
572 New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
573 New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
574 New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
575 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 8.
576 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 14.
Having put in place structures it believed would better support all students, the committee turned its attention to those students they felt might benefit from additional opportunities. While the desire to provide a more supportive curriculum was certainly its first priority, a secondary focus of the Cook Committee was, again reflecting the priorities identified in *Renewal 1987*, the preservation or resuscitation of U of T’s competitiveness within the province, especially among exceptional students. Very much unlike the assumptions made during the years of expansion when the U of T had understood its role as one of co-operation with other provincial institutions in accommodating the expanded student population, *Renewal 1987* now stated that it was time for the U of T to consider whether it “Ought . . . to be different from the others – distinctive in certain respects? Should our special traditions, our resources, our geographical advantages be reflected in the experience of our undergraduates, or are we to be simply one among a number of Ontario universities?”

Within the environment of continued financial constraint, the U of T evidently saw opportunities in a differentiated institutional role. The issue at hand, as Connell notes, is that “we are, frankly, in competition for students . . . If the University does not attract the very best students whose ability and motivation match our expectations, the University will not realize its full potential.”

Part of the challenge for the Faculty of Arts & Science, therefore, was attracting Ontario’s and Canada’s best students, who recognized that it might not be to their advantage to be a small fish in a big pond. These students looked at the U of T and saw the chaos and overcrowding that the committee was trying to manage, and recognized that even after being admitted, there was no guarantee that they would be able to secure a place in their program of choice. Part of the challenge in competing for students, the Cook Committee identified, was the fact that two of the faculty’s broad areas of study – the social sciences and the life sciences – were unable to accommodate the number of students who wished to pursue majors and specialists in these areas. This, they argue, runs counter to what a university should be able to provide to students it admits – namely, “a guarantee of some program in the subject area that interests a student.” Admission to area once again emerged as a means to support this goal. Admission to area was not binding – that is, students retained the option to pursue programs in any academic area – but only students in the relevant

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578 Ibid, 33.
579 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, *Report to the Dean*, 6.
academic area would receive priority in applying to programs of specialization within that area. Students from other areas could enter programs as space permitted. The committee also recommended that “a student accepted in a certain Academic Area has the chance to complete some program in that Area, given passing grades. For example, a student admitted to [the Life Sciences] might not be admitted later to a specialist program in Biochemistry, but would be guaranteed some program in the Life Sciences.” However, to students for whom a specific program of study was a high priority, even this arrangement was too much of a risk to take, and many of these students chose not to attend the U of T in favour of institutions that could guarantee them the opportunity to study in their field of choice. In its final report, the committee noted that “Very able students sometimes go elsewhere (so we are told) because we cannot guarantee them the program of their choice.”

The committee therefore hoped to combat this problem directly, by offering top students from Ontario high schools not just admission to an academic area, but guarantee of a spot in their program of choice. Such offers, the committee proposed, might be extended to “the top five per cent” of applicants in each academic area.

Furthermore, the committee argued that attracting top students would require rewarding them during their time at university by providing some additional academic opportunities and ensuring that their achievement was recognized. Again, very much unlike its approach during the New Programme, the U of T saw the ability to offer some elite experience in a mass institution key to their ability to compete for students.

In its Working Report, the committee had proposed a “special program” for “students talented in different areas and interested in a broad, rigorous training.” This programme “would have high entry requirements [and] high requirements to remain in the program” and would provide specially-designed and restricted-entry courses in first and second year that would broadly address fields within either science, social science, or the humanities, and which would allow participants to fulfill the Faculty’s breadth requirements.

This proposal, however, may have struck the University community as a bit too reminiscent of the segregated streams of the old honours program. A student representative from New College,

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580 Ibid, 10.
581 Ibid, 9.
582 Ibid, 16.
583 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Working Report, 5.
584 Ibid, 5.
for example, registered his strong opposition to what he saw as an elitist and retrogressive proposal. In the Final Report, the committee noted that their proposal for recognition of high achievement “is much altered from the original proposal in the June 1988 Working Report.” Rather than identify and develop a closed stream of highly-enthusiastic students, the new proposal was “designed in part to appeal to very able students graduating from high school, and in part to provide more recognition to very able students in the Faculty at large.” The direct-admit students described under the previous proposal, with the addition of students who performed exceptionally well in their first year, would be named “Faculty Scholars” and, while remaining in the regular curriculum for the most part, would be given access to “special projects or seminars or courses at the 200+ level.”

Finally, the committee also recognized that a wide range of students – not just those at the highest level of achievement early in their academic careers – could benefit from additional opportunities for challenge and self-directed study. The committee hoped to encourage in its undergraduates some of the advanced academic skills that had once been part of the honours program: independent inquiry, synthesis, and research skills. As such, they proposed a number of recommendations that would incorporate challenging and enriching opportunities in the upper years for all students. The committee explored several options, including a reduced course load in the optional fourth year, believing that “some students find they have insufficient time to think in their senior year about issues raised in five separate advanced courses.” This proposal would have required only four courses or, in one proposal, a single course in the fourth year, but ultimately the committee realized that “this recommendation would not command enough support” and instead sought other ways of enriching the most advanced levels of study. They required more study at an advanced level, proposing that each Major program require “at least two 300+ courses” and each Specialist program at least four, one of which must be a 400-level course. They also recommended “that Departments or College Programs be allowed to attach a Research course or half-course to some or all of their 400-series offerings, and thus provide enriched courses for senior students.”

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585 New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
586 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, Report to the Dean, 16.
587 Ibid, 16.
588 Ibid, 16.
589 Ibid, 8.
590 Ibid, 8.
In its attempts to build in additional opportunities for challenge and enrichment for both a select group of students and its general undergraduate population, the committee was attempting to provide an elite education for at least some students within a large and resource-constrained institution – much as the U of T had once done through the honours program.

All told, the Cook Committee’s recommendations further reinforced the structures implemented by the Kelly Committee, and helped students and faculty understand the degree as a set of connected, modular, and linear choices. These structures helped the curriculum itself to serve as a learning tool, guiding students through the degree and making more transparent the goals of the curriculum.

Some relatively significant changes were made to the recommendations of the Cook Committee as their work moved towards implementation – primarily to the proposed process of admission to area. The number of admissions categories was reduced from five (including commerce) to three, eliminating the distinction between the life and physical and mathematical sciences and between the humanities and the social sciences, requiring students in the arts and sciences simply to elect either science or the humanities and social sciences (comer comprising the third option). This change somewhat limited the ability of the curriculum to fulfill the counseling roles that the committee had imagined, and none of the curricular “trees” that it had designed were included in the 1992-93 calendar.592

While students were admitted only to either humanities and social sciences or the sciences, however, for the purposes of the breadth requirement students would be divided into finer-grained categories, each with their own breadth requirements: language and literatures other than English; other humanities; sciences (which was further subdivided into mathematical, life, and physical sciences); and social sciences. The breadth requirements for these groups closely resembled the committee’s proposals, with the primary addition of the “languages and literatures other than English” category:

592 University of Toronto, *Faculty of Arts & Science Calendar 1992-93: St. George Campus* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1992).
### Table 6. Breadth Requirements in 1992-93 Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary field of study</th>
<th>Breadth requirements</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Language and literatures other than English | - One course from the sciences  
- Two additional courses from other humanities, sciences, or social sciences  
- One course must be at the 200-level or higher |
| Other humanities                       | - One course from the sciences  
- Two additional courses from languages and literatures other than English, sciences, or social sciences  
- One course must be at the 200-level or higher |
| Sciences                               | Mathematical sciences  
- One course from languages and literatures other than English or other humanities  
- No more than two courses from languages  
- Two additional courses from languages and literatures other than English, other humanities, life sciences, or social sciences |
| Life and physical sciences             | - One course from languages and literatures other than English or Other humanities  
- No more than two courses from languages  
- Two additional courses from languages and literatures other than English, other humanities, or social sciences |
| Social sciences                        | - One course from the sciences  
- One course from languages and literatures other than English or Other humanities  
- A third course from the sciences or from languages and literatures other than English or other humanities |

The most significant change in implementation, however, was the decision to reintroduce the honours designation, an option that does not appear to have been considered by the Cook Committee. While they had advocated “That the diploma as well as the transcript indicate ‘High Distinction,’ as well as ‘Distinction,’ for those who qualify at present,” the only mention of an honours designation is a note in the committee’s Final Report, stating that “After considerable discussion, the committee could not agree on whether to call the 20-course degree an honours degree. Some are accustomed to this usage, from other universities inside and outside Ontario. Others prefer to keep the term for high standing. We agreed to record our disagreement.”

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593 Ibid, 34-35.  
594 Ibid, 16.  
595 Ibid, 8.
Beginning in 1992-93, however, all four-year degrees would lead to either the honours B.A. or honours B.Sc., with the three-year degrees remaining unembellished.

The reintroduction of the honours degree in the Faculty of Arts & Science would have represented to some a final success for an initiative that had been supported by at least a portion of every curricular committee since the honours designation had been eliminated with the New Programme. In the decision to designate four-year degrees as honours degree, the honours designation was connected primarily to length of study. This decision reflected a connection between depth of study and honours that is traced back to the Old Programme; as Harris, Rouillard and Goudge wrote of the honours designation in 1963, “Each honour course is designed to provide within the limits of the four undergraduate years mastery of one subject (or of two closely-allied subjects).” Each successive curriculum committee that debated reintroducing the honours degree similarly made this connection; none of the committees who proposed reviving the term aimed to award it to graduates of the three-year degree, who, by completing only a single major were not understood to have obtained the type of education that the U of T community felt honours implied.

While previous curriculum committees had, at least in part, advocated for the reintroduction of honours, the implementation of this practice was halted because of concerns that the term still too much reflected the inequities of the Old Programme. Presumably, by 1992, enough generations of students and faculty had moved through the university since the Old Programme that this old wound was no longer a significant concern.

The reintroduction of the honours term in the early-1990s, however, was almost certainly connected to the U of T’s perceived need to compete for students within an increasingly strained provincial system. As members of the Kelly Committee had observed during their discussions, nearly every other Canadian institution had some form of honours designation, whether that represented academic achievement or the completion of a separate, normally highly specialized, program. As the pressure to compete for students intensified in the last decades of the twentieth century, the inability of the U of T to be able to provide this record of achievement for its students must have been perceived as an increasingly significant liability.

596 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1979-0042/002.
597 The committee reviewed a brief report outlining degree structures across Canada, including the use of the honours designation. The report notes that “All [institutions surveyed] use the word ‘honour’ somehow or other including McGill which has no four-year programme but excluding Saskatchewan where it is called ‘advanced level.’” UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/002.
Therefore, while the U of T may have been compelled to reintroduce honours at that particular time because of its increasingly competitive relationship with other provincial institutions, the return of honours nonetheless reflected what was for many a welcome reinstitution of tradition (now that this tradition no longer brought with it significant negative memories of an unequal curriculum). The connection, furthermore, between honours and specialization reflected the particular value assigned to deep study that the U of T still clearly retained.

Indeed, overall, the Cook Committee’s work reflects in several ways the constrained financial resources of the university in the late 1980s. After over a decade of financial retrenchment, the university desperately needed to ensure that its programs were efficient and streamlined. Efforts by the committee to ensure that programs built on the same foundation of courses at each level would also serve the priority of helping the Faculty reign in its course offerings, along with the contributions of this curricular model to student support. Similarly, the recommendations that supported elite opportunities not only provided enhanced research and learning options for many students, but also improved the university’s ability to attract top students in an increasingly competitive provincial environment. Interestingly, while the competitive element was new, the structures the committee proposed to support this aim very much reflected curricular structures from Toronto’s past. Much like the Kelly Committee, therefore, the curriculum proposed by the Cook Committee substantially reflected the U of T’s contemporary environment while continuing to draw on the U of T’s traditional curricular structures for inspiration and reform.

5.3 THE 1999 CURRICULUM REVIEW COMMITTEE: THE ELIMINATION OF THE THREE-YEAR DEGREE

Between the conclusions of the Cook Committee and the end of the century, the Faculty of Arts & Science made two additional major changes to the undergraduate program of study: the elimination of the three-year degree and of the three-minor option in the four-year degree. Information on these changes is limited; relevant documents are not yet available in the archives. Unlike other parts of this history, therefore, I have primarily relied on available public documents, including in particular minutes from the deliberations of governing bodies and calendars.

The elimination of the three-year degree had been a topic of discussion and, for many, a goal since the introduction of the New Programme. Like the recently-revived honours designation, the three-year degree had its origin in the Old Programme, where the specialized study and higher
expectations of the honours degree were assumed to require an additional year of study above the three years required of the broad general degree. As a result of the association in the Old Programme between the three-year degree and the perceived lower academic standards of the general program, the three-year degree had retained, through the New Programme and the changes that had since occurred, some stigma as a less academically rigorous course of study. Many of the curricular committees since the elimination of the Old Programme had reinforced this assumption. In eliminating the separate general and honours streams, the Macpherson Committee recommended keeping the three-year degree as an outlet point for the less academically able, noting that:

Our recommendation that specialist students should be able to take an Ordinary degree at the end of three years is largely based on other reasons. In the first place, the quality of fourth-year work would be improved by screening out at the end of third year those who were not likely to make very good use of a fourth year . . . They are not screened out now because it is considered, quite rightly, unfair to send them away after three years of at least satisfactory work.  

Both the Kelly and Cook Committees discussed whether the three year degree was pedagogically sound enough to continue to justify its continued offering. The Cook Committee in particular had advocated eliminating the degree, but had decided to allow the university community more broadly to accept that the degree had outlived its usefulness, which they imagined would happen in the relatively near future. By the 1990s, few other Canadian jurisdictions outside of Ontario – one exception is Manitoba – offered substantial numbers of three year degrees, and the degrees did not easily translate to graduate study or equivalency with undergraduate degrees in other jurisdictions, including the United States. Dean Amrhein argued that “the 15-credit baccalaureate was anomalous.”

Despite these assumptions of its diminished worth, many others saw remaining value in the three-year degree. At the U of T, a large proportion of part-time students pursued the three-year degree.

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598 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 77.
599 Terry Boak, 15-Credit B.A and BSc Degrees and 20-Credit B.A and BSc Degrees (St. Catharines: Brock University, 2009), Appendix 1 p. 6-7. English universities in Quebec also continued to offer a three-year degree. This, however, reflects the different secondary and postsecondary system, which includes two year college programs following Grade 11 that are completed before students enter university.
600 Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, Report Number 78 of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, February 23, 2000 (Toronto: University of Toronto Governing Council, 2000), 8.
degree because it required fewer credits and was therefore faster and less expensive to complete; student groups argued that it was a particularly appealing option for low-income students and student parents.\footnote{Academic Board, \textit{Report Number 99 of the Academic Board, March 9, 2000} (Toronto: University of Toronto Governing Council, 2000), 5.}

It was this aspect of its role that led many to protest the elimination of the three-year degree. Unfortunately, records of the origins of this debate are limited at this point. However, records of the discussions as they passed through various levels of governance, including the boards and committees of the Governing Council, provide some insight on the aims and concerns surrounding this curricular initiative.

The recommendation to eliminate the three-year degree emerged as the primary recommendation of the 1999 Curriculum Review Committee; the white paper initiating the 2006 curricular review notes that “The most recent curriculum review was initiated by Dean Carl Amrhein in 1999. It made a number of recommendations, the most significant being the elimination of the three year bachelor’s degree.”\footnote{Faculty of Arts & Science, \textit{The Faculty of Arts & Science Undergraduate Curriculum Review and Renewal: A White Paper} (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2006), 6.} This review appears to have otherwise been quite minor; the same white paper notes that “The Faculty last revised its undergraduate curriculum and degree requirements in a comprehensive manner in the late 1980s and early 1990s,”\footnote{Ibid, 2.} referring to the work of the Cook Committee. As a major change to degree offerings, this proposal required the approval of the Governing Council, and spent most of the 1999-2000 academic year progressing through the levels of institutional governance, reviewed in both the Academic Policy and Programs Committee and the Planning and Budget Committee before moving to Academic Board and, finally, Governing Council. At each stage the proposal encountered vigorous debate but ultimate approval, and the three-year degree was no longer offered as an option for incoming students beginning in the 2001-02 academic year.\footnote{University of Toronto, \textit{Faculty of Arts & Science Calendar 2000-01: St. George Campus} (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000), p. 32.}

Since the elimination, with the introduction of the New Programme, of the distinction between the broad three-year general degree and the specialized four-year honours degree, curriculum committees had generally found themselves at a loss to identify a pedagogical justification for the three-year degree. When the Macpherson Committee had been forced to justify
its retention of both the three- and four-year degrees after the elimination of the structural distinction between honours and general programs, it assumed the value of a fourth year, noting that, for example, “Since we believe that the educational value of a general program is as great as that of a specialist program we see no reason for limiting the former to three years. The provision of a fourth general year would make it evident that the University valued general studies as highly as specialized study.” It found little comparable justification for the three-year degree except that it provided, as noted above, an opportunity for students to discontinue their studies after three years if they (or if their instructors) did not believe themselves capable of benefiting from a fourth year of study. The Cook and Kelly Committees, in identifying structures and options for specialization, similarly advocated for the four-year degree as the default program structure with the three-year degree as a potential early-exit point. Throughout the last three decades of the twentieth century, therefore, the three-year degree appeared primarily to be a historical vestige whose presence hurt few and whose elimination might have been met with opposition, and was therefore simply allowed to continue to exist.

The 1999 Curriculum Review Committee, however, determined that “it [had become] increasingly apparent that the Faculty’s curricular vision could only be encompassed within a 20-course degree. This would allow the Faculty to deliver all the components of the renewed curriculum for an undergraduate degree which would continue to be internationally recognized for its excellence.” They noted that “Students demanded and deserved a degree that would open doors, not only in Canada but around the world, to whatever future choices they might pursue.” An undergraduate degree should provide “disciplinary concentration, competencies and skill sets in the contemporary ‘literacies’ of critical thinking, scientific reasoning, analytical and computational ability and effective writing; and experiential modes such as off-campus learning, in an international context if possible and relevant.” The committee concluded that these goals could only be met if students had four years, rather than three, in which to complete their studies. The curriculum committee, therefore, insisted that myriad pedagogical justifications argued in favour of the elimination of three-year degrees. Dean Michael Marrus of the School of Graduate Studies agreed

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605 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science, 77.
606 Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, Report Number 78, 7.
607 Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, Report Number 78, 7.
608 Committee on Academic Policy and Programs, Report Number 78, 7.
with this assessment, noting that “The 15-credit degree was not a high quality program” and that, for example, “The sheer volume of science to be covered in a quality undergraduate [science] degree could not be mastered in 15 credits.”

Another issue was the planned reduction in years of high school in Ontario from five to four. In an interview with the Annex Gleaner (a neighbourhood newspaper for the district immediately surrounding the St. George campus), Dean Amrhein concurred, noting that “We no longer have (Grade 13) and so our only option, to be consistent with the North American standard, is to move to a 20 credit (four-year) baccalaureate degree.” However, the committee argued that this was not a reason for their recommendation of the elimination of the three-year degree, maintaining that their justifications were purely pedagogical and that “It was irrelevant and distracting to make reference to the issue of the elimination of the fifth year of secondary school. Although that factor had been involved in the earliest discussions, it formed no part of the rationale for the proposal now before the Committee. It had not been the basis of discussions in the General Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Science or in the Governing Council’s Committee on Academic Policy and Programs.”

The pedagogical argument of the curriculum review committee’s proposal seemed to be met with general agreement; no objections to the change were argued on pedagogical grounds. Instead, the proposal encountered opposition on the basis that the elimination of the degree was elitist, would compromise the U of T’s competitiveness with other Ontario institutions, and would endanger its provincial funding.

One major concern voiced in particular by the multiple student unions was the potential effect of the elimination of the three-year degree on part-time students. The Graduate Student Union argued against its elimination, calling the three-year degree “a significant component of academic diversity, equity and accessibility at the University.” Part-time students, according to the Students’ Administrative Council, constituted the majority of those pursuing three-year degrees; certainly, the majority of part-time students – indeed, two thirds – were pursuing three-year

609 Academic Board, Report Number 99 of the Academic Board, 7.
611 Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59 of the Planning and Budget Committee, March 7, 2000 (Toronto: University of Toronto Governing Council, 2000), 19.
612 Governing Council, Minutes of the Governing Council Meeting, 7.
613 Ibid, 6.
degrees.\textsuperscript{614} Part-time students, according to the Association of Part-time Undergraduate Students, could not easily manage the transition to four years of courses. They argued at Governing Council that “many part-time students did not have the time nor the resources to complete 20-credit degrees.”\textsuperscript{615} Ultimately, the Association of Part-time University Students concluded that “While it may be desirable for students to earn a four-year degree, the fact was that many students simply could not afford to do so.”\textsuperscript{616}

Those in favour of the proposal, however, noted that part-time enrolment was declining across Canada and that the elimination of three-year degrees in other jurisdictions had not led to reductions in part-time enrolment. Compellingly, however, they also argued that to continue to offer, instead of eliminating, the three-year degree would be the inequitable option. Three-year degrees, they suggested, marginalized the future opportunities of students who completed them. The three-year degree could limit mobility and opportunities for future study; they argued therefore that “It would be unfair to offer a bachelor’s degree to students that would not be recognized outside of Ontario.”\textsuperscript{617} Instead, they argued that “It was the University’s duty to use its resources to make available an excellent academic degree to all students – not only full-time students.”\textsuperscript{618} This line of rhetoric was captured by a member of Council, once a part-time student himself, who “recalled that”:

when he had first come to the University many decades ago, part-time students had been treated very badly. In fact, they had been prevented by statute from obtaining 20-credit degrees and had only be able to enroll in 15-credit degree programs with the creation of Woodsworth College. The member believed that part-time students had now been fully integrated into the University and that it was essential that they not be ghettoized, even if it meant the completion of an additional five credits.\textsuperscript{619}

Members also noted that the proposed plan to increase the number of courses available in the summer semester\textsuperscript{620} would increase opportunities for part-time students to complete the degree efficiently although the proposal included no concrete commitment to this end.\textsuperscript{621}

\textsuperscript{614} Ibid, 10.
\textsuperscript{615} Governing Council, Minutes of the Governing Council Meeting, 6.
\textsuperscript{616} Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59, 15.
\textsuperscript{617} Ibid, 18.
\textsuperscript{618} Ibid, 18.
\textsuperscript{619} Governing Council, Minutes of the Governing Council Meeting, 11.
\textsuperscript{620} Ibid, 11.
Objection to the elimination of three-year degrees, however, also emerged on the basis that it would compromise the U of T’s ability to attract new students. The concern was that “a significant number of students come to this University for a 15-credit degree. If they still wished to work for a 15-credit degree, would they go elsewhere?” Concern also extended to alumni who had already earned a three-year degree, and may face increased confusion or doubt over its worth: a member asked whether “the value of their degree [would] be called into question by the University’s ceasing to offer it?”

Some argued, however, that the increased competition and role differentiation between those universities that continued to offer the three-year degree and the U of T would actually be a positive step and in line with the university’s long-term planning. One member noted that “It was entirely appropriate to expect that students seeking 15-credit degrees could seek them elsewhere. There were seventeen universities in Ontario, including three in the Toronto area . . . Two of the three Toronto universities, as well as others in Ontario, would continue to offer a good 15-credit degree.” Indeed, the sense at the U of T was that it should focus on intensive and specialized programs; that “The University of Toronto should also provide programs in its areas of strength by offering 20-credit programs which included high-level courses.” Another member added that his understanding of “one of the rationales for the proposal was that the University was trying to establish its own ‘niche’ by offering only 20-credit degrees.”

While the arguments in favour of the elimination of the three-year degree were argued on pedagogical ground, and the arguments against on cost to and access for individual students, lurking in the background of arguments on both sides was the potential effect of the proposal on provincial funding. The province, in anticipation of the incoming double cohort resulting from the elimination of Grade 13 and the consequent simultaneous graduation of one class of Grade 12 students and one of Grade 13, was urging universities to plan for increased enrolment. Enrolment planners on the St.

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621 Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59, 15.
622 Academic Board, Report Number 99, 4.
623 Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59, 15.
624 Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59, 19.
625 Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59, 19.
626 Governing Council, Minutes of the Governing Council Meeting, 12. A related concern was the resulting effect on the Mississauga and Scarborough campuses, who each enrolled proportionately larger numbers of students in three-year degree programs, and who felt that the three-year degree remained central to their mission. Ultimately, each negotiated the ability to determine their own timeline for the elimination of the degree. Governing Council, Minutes of the Governing Council Meeting, 6.
George campus, however, were already concerned with the relatively high proportion of undergraduates in comparison to graduate enrolment and were reluctant to further expand undergraduate numbers, preferring instead to focus any expansion at the graduate level. Shifting three-year degree students into a four-year program would have the effect of increasing overall effective enrolment by adding one year onto current students’ studies. Each student would therefore over the course of their degree, count as a total of four full-time equivalents (FTEs) rather than either three or four without forcing the university to accept additional students. At the Planning & Budget Committee meeting in which the proposal was discussed, “Professor McCammond and Dean Amrhein said that the University’s plan to maintain the current intake level on the St. George Campus was based on the expectation that additional government funding would enable the expansion of fourth-year enrolment resulting from the elimination of the 15-credit degrees.”

Specifically, as was noted at Academic Board, “the phasing out of the 15-credit degree program would contribute 2,650 FTEs to the enrolment expansion.” In this way, the University could meet expanded enrolment targets without dramatically expanding the annual number of incoming students.

Some at the University, however, were doubtful that the province would fund this strategy for expanded enrolment. In response to these concerns, the university, though its governance processes, issued a veiled threat to the province: “If the Government did not provide increased funding, the outcome would be an increase in fourth-year enrolment along with a compensatory reduction in first-year intake in order to maintain the same overall enrolment.” In other words, Ontario students might be left with fewer overall university spaces if the U of T was not allowed to employ this strategy.

It was perhaps because of this underlying economic motivation that the pedagogical justifications were received by some with skepticism, in large part because of a perceived absence of a coherent and consistent message from the Faculty regarding these justifications. A member at Governing Council noted that “the rationale for the proposal remained unclear”; another agreed that “the University’s rationale . . . did not offer a good explanation for the elimination of the three—

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627 Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59, 15.
628 Academic Board, Report Number 99, 14
629 Planning and Budget Committee, Report Number 59, 15.
630 Governing Council, Minutes of the Governing Council Meeting, 8.
One member accused the University of putting finances ahead of education, arguing that “the proposal . . . was predicated on limited resources rather than curriculum reform.” A reasonable assumption might be that, as in the recommendations of the Kelly and Cook Committees, the recommended curricular structures were indeed influenced both by pedagogical motivations and by the university’s challenging financial context.

Beginning in the 2000-01 academic year, students in the Faculty of Arts & Science could also no longer meet the requirements of a four-year honours degree by completing three minor programs (students retained the option of completing one specialist or two major programs to meet the program of study requirements). The three-minor program had been introduced by the Cook Committee (who themselves drew on the Kelly Committee’s “many-minor” proposal), who had proposed the completion of three minors in a single academic area (for example, the humanities or the social sciences) as acting as their version of a general program. In recommending that the option be eliminated, Wendy Rolph, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Science, argued that since “the 3-minor option had been introduced in 1992[, t]his option was not chosen by many students.” Furthermore, “A 3-minor program allowed a student to study three different disciplines but none at a very intensive level. The Faculty, therefore, proposed that it be discontinued.” Unlike the debate over the elimination of the three-year degree, this proposal encountered very little opposition. Indeed, the only comments on the proposal at the meeting of the Academic Board where it was approved was a comment “in favour of the motion” as “it was cumbersome to satisfy the requirements for a three-minor program and that it was important to have more focus in a program of study than was possible with three minors.”

Though it attracted little attention compared to the simultaneous heated debate over the three-year degree, the elimination of the three-minor program reflects some of the same curricular aims and influences. It likewise represents a move towards a degree characterized by, to draw on the arguments in favour of the elimination of the three-year degree, programs that included “high-level courses” and which provided sufficient opportunity for concentration in a single field to provide...
“mastery” of a subject. As such, the elimination of the three-minor program, like the elimination of the three-year degree, represented an assertion of a particular approach to undergraduate education in a move towards “the University . . . trying to establish its own ‘niche’” in undergraduate education in Toronto and Ontario.

5.4 AFTER THE NEW PROGRAMME – DISCUSSION

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, there were no changes to the curriculum nearly as dramatic as those experienced with the inception of the New Programme. The curriculum at the U of T, like higher education throughout Ontario, entered a period of “structural stability,” marked by changes made within those very new structures established in the 1960s. The most significant changes and successes of the New Programme – those that had improved equality of access to the educational resources of the Faculty – remained important priorities. No one very much wanted to return to the separate honours and general programs of the Old Programme, for example. The basic framework of the New Programme, therefore, would be preserved. The curricular committees that followed the New Programme consequently sought ways to work within this basic framework to better meet the educational needs and priorities of the Faculty. Though less dramatic than the changes of the New Programme, the changes of the last two decades were nonetheless substantial, and by the end of the century the curriculum at the U of T looked very different than it did after the implementation of the recommendations emerging from the Berlyne Report.

In some cases, the curricular changes of the final two decades of the twentieth century introduced novel requirements or curricular elements – for example, the Cook Committee introduced a structured, common breadth requirement for the first time in the U of T’s history. The elimination of the three-year degree also ended a long and important Toronto tradition. At the same, many of the changes reintroduced curricular requirements or structures that echoed the curricular priorities of the Old Programme. Through this combination of conservative and progressive influences, the U of T settled into a curricular structure that reflected its contemporary environment, shaped by the fundamentally altered landscape of post-expansion higher education and the ongoing

638 Governing Council, Minutes of the Governing Council Meeting, 12.
financial retrenchment and relative cynicism about the role of the university, while accommodating underlying curricular priorities that were very much the same as those expressed three and four decades prior.

The most dramatic work of the curricular committees of this period was the reintroduction of structure and specialization as a degree requirement in response to the dissatisfaction with the exceptional flexibility of the New Programme. The requirement that each student complete a program of specialization re-emphasized the university’s historical esteem, stretching back to the honours programs of the late nineteenth century, in the value of providing undergraduates with a structured and specialized course of study.

Indeed, in recognition of the negative effects of what was in many ways the absence of a curriculum in the New Programme, the curriculum committees of the last two decades of the twentieth century assigned expanded importance and expanded roles to the curriculum. Student support was one issue that had been compromised by the New Programme. Where programs had once advised their students, programs during the years of the New Programme often did not know who their students were to counsel them, and colleges, while meant to serve as an academic home, were not equipped to advise students on courses; briefs to the Kelly Committee commented that “counseling has become more difficult – teaching staff of colleges are Humanities-oriented” and therefore could not offer appropriate counseling to all students, “and departments cannot identify specialists.” As a result, Drummond argued that while the New Programme “seems to offer the student a most attractive freedom of choice, we suspect that this freedom often proves illusory in that the student is given so little guidance about the choice of paths along which experience has suggested that movement is generally fruitful.”

The Kelly Committee approached this problem essentially from the perspective of the Old Programme, where counseling had been provided by programs: if students were required to register in a program of specialization, the committee argued, they would therefore necessarily have a home in this program for academic support. In this way, curriculum served as a means to identify sources of academic support. The Cook Committee, however, clearly felt that this was an inadequate solution, and much more drastically conceived of the curriculum as the means of academic support itself. Through admission to academic area and the understanding of the degree as a tree of choices,

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640 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
641 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
the curriculum would provide some of the basic guidance that the U of T, with its strained resources, could not.

Despite this focus on structure and specialization, however, the committee also retained the strong focus, seen too in the general program reviews, of advocating for multiple options within this structure. In particular, the provision of multiple levels, combinations, and types of specialization, as well as, until the very end of this period, the provision of both three- and four-year degrees, recalls the connection made by the general program review committees between the ability of the university to meet the educational needs of the province and its students, and a range of curricular options and levels of specialization. Drummond, however, in his statement describing his perception of the U of T’s approach to the curriculum, also noted that a multiplicity of both aims and outcomes was inevitable in a large and diverse university that was committed to scholarly exploration. The curriculum, Drummond argued, should provide a framework that is flexible enough to meet these multiple aims. While the curricular committees of these decades clearly prioritized specialization, they did not do so to the exclusion of alternative arrangements, and as such affirmed the value of producing graduates with a range of backgrounds and types of training, both specialized and broad.

Indeed, as much as these curricular committees prioritized specialization, they also, for the first time, introduced a formal breadth requirement. While not dramatic, effectively mandating only two courses in areas outside the student’s area of primary focus, the introduction of this requirement nonetheless indicates a stronger commitment to providing students with some balance of breadth and depth (rather than simply one or the other). Indeed, the importance of maintaining this balance was provided as one of the reasons for eliminating the three-year degree.

Throughout this period, however, curricular decisions were accompanied, and indeed at times reinforced, by the substantial financial challenges faced during these decades. The Faculty of Arts & Science reacted to these challenges by implementing its curricular priorities and changes through reforms that could result in fiscal economies. One concern, for example, was that students were faced with a bewildering array of courses; streamlining departmental course offerings and program requirements both limited further expansion of instruction and, the curricular committees argued, helped students navigate through the degree. Similarly, the elimination of the three-year degree was necessary, the 1999 Curriculum Committee argued, in order for the Faculty to achieve its desired educational outcomes, but also resulted in improved funding opportunities for the Faculty. There is every indication that these decisions were made primarily on academic, rather than financial,
grounds, but the financial situation was nonetheless a constant presence and certainly informed the curricular priorities and structures of these decades.

The financial constraints of the period, however, also seem to have shifted the university’s understanding of its role, among the other institutions in the province, in providing higher education to Ontario students. During the expansion of the 1960s, the U of T internalized the necessity to accept its proportional share of students and shaped its curriculum at least in part around this need. Conversely, as the financial situation of the 1970s and 1980s turned into what came increasingly came to look like permanently reduced funding for the universities compared to the relatively flush years of expansion, the U of T revisited this understanding of its role within the province. Its conclusions were reflected in the curricula of this period, and particularly in the work of the Cook Committee, the reintroduction of the honours designation, and the elimination of the three-year degree. Namely, within the context of its curriculum, the U of T ceased to see itself as in cooperation with other provincial institutions, and started to see itself in competition with them.

Jones confirms the connection between the financial environment and competition between institutions, noting in 1997 that “As the government decreases operating support and increases or deregulates tuition, market forces and competition between institutions may come to play a much larger role in the future development of higher education in Ontario.” In particular, this competition would undermine the tradition of loosely-organized and co-operative system-level planning in the province; Jones writes that “many of the factors and assumptions that have underscored the sectoral approach to decision making, especially the assumption of institutional equity and sectoral consultation processes, will probably be abandoned.”

During this period, the undergraduate curriculum demonstrated this growing institutional competition. Indeed, the Cook Committee expressed an explicit desire to compete with other Ontario universities for the province’s best students, and proposed special opportunities for these students at admission and through their degree; the reintroduction of the honours degree appears to be an extension of this desire. One reason given for eliminating the three-year degree in the last year of the century was the desire to establish a particular role for the U of T within the province’s institutions as one particularly focused on intensive and specialized education. These curricular decisions demonstrate a significant change in the university’s understanding of its own role as a provincial institution and perhaps indicate the beginning of a move away from the university’s approach, otherwise demonstrated throughout second half of the twentieth century, of

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643 Ibid, 154.
providing as wide a range of program options as it could manage, which it had connected with its ability to best fulfill this provincial role.

For the most part, however, the last two decades of the twentieth century represented a period of curriculum change that saw the U of T revisit and reinstate many curricular structures reminiscent of the Old Programme, but adapted for an environment that had not only changed dramatically since the expansion of higher education in the 1960s, but that was facing a new reality of what promised to be, especially with the reforms implemented by the provincial Harris government in the mid-1990s, a period of permanently scarce public funding. Despite these dramatic changes in its environment, however, the curriculum committees of this period, in responding to these changes, made choices and recommendations that were nonetheless very much in line with institutional history and tradition.
CHAPTER 6
THE TORONTO SCHEME: IDENTIFYING THE U OF T APPROACH TO UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century (as has been discussed in the previous three chapters), the undergraduate curriculum in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the University of Toronto underwent significant changes. The most dramatic of these occurred during the period of “structural revolution” in the years of expansion of the 1960s and early 1970s that resulted in substantial changes to the undergraduate program of study, to the University of Toronto, and to the university system in Ontario more generally. These curricular changes substantially altered two curricular structures that had been fundamental to the undergraduate program at the University of Toronto since the 1890s: first, the presence of separate honours and general streams; and, second, the understanding of the academic year (as opposed to the degree or the course) as the unit of instruction. As the Old Programme transformed into the New, both of these structures were, through the iterative process that characterized curricular change during the period, completely eliminated.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the elimination of the honours program in particular had significant symbolic influence for members of the Faculty of Arts & Science. On the one hand, the elimination of the barriers between honours and general courses and students was, many believed, an essential step towards broadening educational opportunities for more students. On the other hand, the honours degree for many at the U of T was a central component of the Faculty of Arts & Science’s educational identity. The honours degree, in other words, represented much about the U of T’s core values for undergraduate education. The abandonment of the year system also, many believed, had substantial implications for the type of education that would be offered at the U of T. Many members of the Arts & Science community felt that the shift to the course, rather than the year, as the unit of instruction would fragment students’ education and reduce the process of undergraduate education to nothing more than an accumulation of credits. All told, the elimination of these elements of the curricular structure signified fundamental shifts in undergraduate education at the U of T. The abrupt and dramatic nature of this transition is captured by the exclamation of a

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U of T student who, as Jasen relates, upon hearing of the abolition of the honours program shouted “The University of Toronto is dead . . . Long live the University of Toronto!”

However, while these shifts were indeed fundamental in nature, their significance at the time – without the benefit of historical hindsight – was somewhat misinterpreted. This is because these shifts eliminated structures that many associated strongly with the substantial early influence of Oxford and Cambridge curricular structures on undergraduate education at the U of T and replaced them with a curricular structure that was strongly associated with undergraduate education in the United States: namely, the credit system. As a consequence (and likely drawing on broader contemporary concerns about the Americanization of Canadian universities and indeed of broader elements of Canadian culture), many understood the changes of the New Programme as the adoption of an American approach to undergraduate education.

Indeed, this transition of undergraduate education at the U of T from Oxford and Cambridge models to American structures was the narrative offered by Bissell, president at the time of these massive changes, who argued that the earliest Canadian universities “had been launched as important protagonists in the programme of counter-revolution that was to insulate British North America from the new republic to the south” by training Canadian students according to British standards and values and within British structures. “What has happened to the nineteenth century tradition,” Bissell continues, “is that it has disappeared. In the process the clear differences between Canadian and American universities have also disappeared.”

The changes of the New Programme did indeed introduce substantial superficial similarities between undergraduate education in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the U of T and undergraduate education in the United States at every stage of a student’s undergraduate experience. After the introduction of the New Programme, students enrolled into the division, rather than into a specific program, as in the United States; the terminology of “major” and “minor” programs echoed American program names; and students could construct their own programs of study from a range of courses treated as equivalent for the purposes of fulfilling degree requirements as students in the United States had done since the establishment of the elective system in the late nineteenth century.

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647 Ibid, 8.
instead of completing a mostly set program composed of courses of different lengths and contact hours as they had in honours courses or, to a lesser degree, in the general arts and general science course. It is not surprising, therefore, that some responded to these changes by assuming that the U of T had essentially imported a new model for undergraduate education.

However, in the midst of these changes and in the curricular reviews that followed them, members of U of T curriculum committees found means to preserve what were evidently two core beliefs about undergraduate education: that specialization was the most effective means of providing a liberal education, and that students should be able to select from multiple pathways through the degree. These two beliefs remained prominent priorities in each curricular review of the second half of the twentieth century, and the curriculum committees that followed the implementation of the New Programme focused their work on identifying means to incorporate these beliefs, which had been inherent in the structures of the Old Programme, into that changed curricular context.

Their success in this endeavour makes it possible to draw a clear distinction between the adoption of some curricular structures characteristic of the American environment, and the deeper adoption of American assumptions about undergraduate education. Specifically, though the U of T adopted the modular and flexible curricular structures of the credit system and its accompanying influence on program structure, the assumptions about undergraduate education that it translated from the Old Programme into the changed context of the New meant that the U of T never developed or adopted the American curricular approach of general education. As described below, the structure and philosophy of programs of general education is the strongest force in shaping what could be characterized as an American approach to undergraduate education. Without adopting the beliefs underlying programs of general education, it is clear that the U of T did not fully adopt American curricular assumptions and structures, instead retaining its own through the end of the century.

The history of the curriculum, and its interaction with broader economic and demographic forces affecting the U of T explains why the U of T could adopt some curricular structures that were characteristic of the United States without this representing the adoption of an American paradigm for undergraduate education. Namely, the expansion of the university and the massification of the university system in Ontario (reflecting similar massification in jurisdictions across North America) forced the U of T to abandon curricular structures – most significantly, the honours program – characteristic of the Oxford and Cambridge origins of its nineteenth and early twentieth century
undergraduate programs. These historical structures were replaced with modular and flexible curricular structures, including the credit system, that are indeed characteristic of undergraduate programs in the U.S. but are also, as argued by Altbach and Trow, inherent to any mass higher education system. While, as Trow argues, the U.S. had these modular and flexible structures first, the presence of these structures is not exclusive to the U.S., and does not necessarily indicate that systems with these structures share the same fundamental assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education. Trow argues that “The modern system of higher education in the United States was already in place a century ago” and that, unlike other systems “The United States had the organisational and structural framework for a system of mass higher education long before it had mass enrolments . . . growth and development has not required changes in the basic structure of the system.” In other words, the adoption of the curricular structures of massification do not necessarily signal shifts in the core assumptions about undergraduate education in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the U of T as is understood to be the case in arguments like Bissell’s that connect the profound changes introduced by the New Programme with a shift in core goals and values for undergraduate education from British to American models. The curricular structures of the New Programme, though at the time strongly associated with American undergraduate education, represented not the Americanization of undergraduate education at the U of T but rather its adoption of the structures of massification.

THE EXPANSION OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE NEED FOR THE NEW PROGRAMME

Several times in the U of T’s history, enrolment pressures shaped curricular decisions. The sudden and substantial influx of veteran students after the Second World War, for example, put a temporary stop to major curricular changes and innovations within departments, as Drummond and Kaplan describe in their history of the Department of Political Economy. Many scholars argue, however, that the international expansion of university enrolment in the 1960s, felt first and most acutely in the U.S. and Canada, represented something different: the transformation of universities

650 Ibid, 314.
651 Ibid, 315.
652 Ian M. Drummond with William Kaplan, Political Economy at the University of Toronto: A History of the Department, 1888-1982 (Toronto: University of Toronto Faculty of Arts & Sciences, 1983), 89.
from elite to mass institutions. As Trow and Kerr outline, in the context of undergraduate education, a mass university was characterized (or caricatured) by large, impersonal classes; by bureaucratic and impersonal administrative processes; and by the prioritization of research over teaching. The mass university, in other words, was not a particularly good place to be an undergraduate student.

Indeed, the numbers during this time were daunting. The demographic pressures of the baby boom conspired with the transition of university education, as Bissell described, from a service for a few to one for the many: “from 1950 to 1965, we have seen the universities move from a position on the periphery of society where they were accorded polite respect . . . to the centre of society where they were accepted as essential to the good life.” These pressures meant huge increases in enrolment. At the U of T, with numbers that were reflective of events at institutions across Canada, enrolment quadrupled between 1955 and 1975. New colleges at the U of T, including Innis and New College on the St. George campus, and the new campuses of Scarborough and Erindale (later University of Toronto Mississauga), as well as new universities in Toronto and across Ontario, were established to accommodate the additional students. Graduate schools were expanded to produce new faculty for the influx of students. All this happened tremendously fast and on an enormous scale.

The New Programme at the U of T emerged in response to the pressures of massification, and represents the fundamental transition of the U of T from an elite to a mass university. With its principles in egalitarianism and student autonomy, and with its individualized, modular nature, the New Programme was equipped to respond to the expansion of the university. In the case of the U of T, this transition is characterized by two major curricular changes. The first of these changes was the elimination of the structural separation of general and honours admissions, courses, and students in response to concerns about equitable and expanded access to university.

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655 University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1979-0042/001.
As Trow notes, the expansion of higher education causes “the meaning of college attendance” to change: “first from being a privilege to being a right, and then, as is increasingly true in the United States, to being something close to an obligation.”657 This change in the meaning of university attendance made the inherent inequity of the parallel general and honours streams at the U of T untenable. The more necessary higher education became, both to prospects for individual and broader provincial economic success, the more important it likewise became to ensure that all students had the opportunity to pursue as much education as they wished and were capable of.

Trow describes the relationship between expansion and equity, noting how:

When the proportions of an age grade going into higher education were very small, the political issue of equality of educational opportunity was centered much more on higher primary and secondary education. But the higher the proportion of the age grade going on to higher education, the more the democratic and egalitarian concern for equality of opportunity came to center on the increasingly important sector of tertiary education.658

It is characteristic of the U of T and the Canadian higher education system that the U of T felt responsible for providing this access, rather than allowing the new institutions established during the 1960s alone to provide the expanded opportunities. Trow argues that institutional diversity increases with system size,659 but as Skolnik660 argues, policy supporting massification in Canada actually deliberately prioritized the relative homogeneity of universities as a means to preserve geographic access.661 That is, as Skolnik notes, “most universities serve as regional access points to a general, and not greatly differentiated, university system.”662 In other words, rather than the wide range of institutional types that constituted the U.S. university system, Skolnik finds that, in the period following expansion, “the Canadian university system is characterized by a relatively limited extent of external diversity,”663 that is, diversity between institutions. While the U.S., as Birnbaum

658 Ibid, 4-5.
659 Ibid, 10-11.
661 Furthermore, unlike in the U.S., massification in Ontario was also facilitated by the creation of a completely distinct college sector, which allowed for variation in mandate and focus across, but not within, institutions. Skolnik argues too that new universities in rural regions were deliberately modelled on the older universities in urban centres in order to mitigate “hinterland-metropole rivalries.” Michael L. Skolnik, “Diversity in Higher Education,” 29.
662 Ibid, 29.
663 Ibid, 28.
argues, built a mass higher education system while also preserving the elite system within it, as higher education in Ontario expanded, and as equitable access became increasingly essential, the U of T accepted as much responsibility to provide that access as did the new institutions of massification.

Indeed, the failure of the U of T’s first attempts to expand access affirm this mandate. Initially, the U of T’s impulse was to expand access to the general programs, while essentially maintaining the existing structures for the honours degree. When the new campuses of Scarborough and Erindale were established, therefore, they offered only the three-year general degree; the suggestion was even floated that St. George would, if current practice continued, inevitably become an exclusively “honours campus.” This idea, however, was quickly dismissed, and many expressed substantial discomfort at the general-only status of the new campuses, arguing that, restricted to offering the general programs, the new Erindale and Scarborough campuses were doomed to become “academic ghettos within the University of Toronto.”

Despite the protestations that the separate streams offered different but equally rigorous alternatives, the fact was that, on all three campuses, students in the different streams often had access to different levels of academic resources, faculty support, and post-university opportunities. At this time, many argued that this inequality was primarily caused by the system of initial enrolment into either the general program or a particular honours field, and the separation of general and honours courses and students throughout the degree. Concern over the inequity that this system introduced stretched back well before the egalitarian spirit of the 1960s took hold; Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, for example, argue in their 1947 report on the state of the humanities in Canada that:

The large numbers in honours at Toronto, their separation from the pass students, and the prestige which the honours courses enjoy within the Faculty of Arts, undoubtedly exercise a depressing effect on the pass course, leaving it with few students of better than mediocre

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665 During the deliberations of the Macpherson Committee, the Council of Erindale College predicted this outcome in a brief to the committee, writing that:

> At present slightly more than 50% of Arts and Science students are enrolled in honours courses. By 1975, assuming the present undergraduate structure and an unchanging pattern of enrolment, all student places on the St. George campus could be pre-empted by honours students . . . In the meantime the new campuses would have become the only home for students in the General Courses. UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/001.

666 University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/001.
ability and application, causing it to be regarded as a refuge for those who lack the gifts requisite for honours, and in subtle ways lowering its morale and effectiveness.\textsuperscript{667}

While, in an effort to redress to this perceived inequality, the general course committees of the 1940s and 1950s had attempted to raise the academic standards of and opportunities from of the general degree, the recommendations of the Macpherson Committee indicate that these earlier committees had not been successful enough at meeting this goal in the context of the emerging demands for wider access to university education.

The Macpherson Committee argued that the general degree had become a second-rate fallback option to the honours degree, and that the two programs were segregated to such an extent that this segregation had a negative influence on students’ academic options in both streams. They stated, for example, that in the honours program at the University of Toronto:

the student who enters any one Honour Course is locked in (unless he fails out, or settles for the General Course), and all the others are locked out. Our system provides a lot for those who know exactly what speciality they want to devote themselves to, and who have assessed correctly their capacity for it. It does not provide for those who guess wrong, or for those who are unwilling, perhaps wisely, to decide which one before they arrive.\textsuperscript{668}

They argue further that:

The student who does not choose to enter a specialized Honour Course from the beginning must resign himself to work of a lower standard in whatever combination of subjects he does choose. Specialism is equated with the high-standard work, generalism with watered-down work. The non-specialist cannot get the first-rate work in any subject; each department reserves that for its own specialist students. The generalist is a second-class citizen, not because he is necessarily less capable but because he will not commit himself to high specialization.\textsuperscript{669}

The Macpherson Committee first attempted to manage the inequality of a streamed system by proposing new requirements that would postpone students’ decisions about which of the two programs to pursue. Early in its deliberations, the committee agreed:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{667} Kirkconnell and Woodhouse, \textit{The Humanities in Canada}, 59-60.
  \item \textsuperscript{668} Ibid, 56.
  \item \textsuperscript{669} Ibid, 58.
\end{itemize}
that it must consider the whole system of honour courses and . . . examine very carefully the problem of whether or not a student should be compelled to begin an honour course in his first year at university. The normal North American system allows a student one year of a general programme before he begins his honour course.670

Ultimately, the Macpherson Committee recommended only the cessation of the system of direct enrolment into the honours or general program, but did not recommend the complete dismantling of the separate specialist and general streams. Its idea, rather, was that students could make a good decision, on equal footing, after first year, but not before.

With this recommendation, the Macpherson Committee, at least to its own satisfaction, felt it had identified a way to mitigate the inequalities of the current system while maintaining what it saw as its continued successes. But the continued administrative and organizational pressures of expansion meant that the changes proposed by the Macpherson Committee were insufficient. As it moved towards implementation, the New Programme that emerged went much further to accommodate the changing demands of mass higher education.

THE NEW PROGRAMME AS A CURRICULUM FOR MASS HIGHER EDUCATION

Those responsible for implementing the New Programme, for reasons explored in Chapter 4, felt that, rather than implementing an open, flexible, and exploratory first year as recommended by the Macpherson Committee, the educational needs of the population served by the U of T would best be met by a curriculum where this flexibility and equality extended throughout the curriculum. As a result, they eliminated all distinctions between the general and honours programs and indeed eliminated these degree designations altogether. They instead established optional programs of specialization while also allowing students to develop their own programs of interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary study. These deeper changes, already significant, themselves necessitated further changes to curricular structures. Namely, the flexibility proposed by the New Programme could only be supported by the introduction of the credit system.

As described in Chapter 2, one of the characteristics of the U of T’s undergraduate program that distinguished it both from its Oxford and Cambridge and its U.S. counterparts was the academic year – rather than, respectively, the degree or the course – was understood as the unit of

670 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/004.
learning. Through the 1960s, the U of T continued to affirm its commitment to the year system. The curriculum committees of the New Programme, however, soon found that the year system was fundamentally incompatible with the flexibility and goals of the New Programme. As Robin Ross writes, “the defense of the year system was complete and unyielding, and continued to be so until 1967 when the walls of the citadel crumbled and crashed.” With the New Programme, the year system at the U of T was replaced with the credit system: instead of each academic year being planned and assessed as a unit, each course was a self-contained and assessed unit that could be combined in almost infinite variations with other courses selected by the student.

While the New Programme did not adopt the credit system immediately, the flexible first year proposed by the Macpherson Committee, in which students were asked to select any five courses from among those offered, required standardization of courses to work. That is, each course needed to be roughly equivalent in expectations and demands if students could select which courses would comprise their first year. As such, the Macpherson Committee had issued an accompanying recommendation that “All first year courses . . . should have equal weight for the student’s first year standing.” The Allen Implementation Committee, extending this flexibility throughout all three or four years of study, further specified that each course – not just those in first year – “should be designed to be one-fifth of the total work-load of the student.” In this way, students could select any five courses and, at the end of the year, have received the same “amount” of education. This was not a significant change for the general program, which had operated under a similar premise for some time, but was a substantial change to the honours program, where courses varied in their relative demands. Harris, for example, describes the variation between courses in the English honours program, noting that “individual courses ranged from a half hour a week . . . to two and a half hours a week.” As a result of this variability, “an English Language and Literature student could take as many as seven English courses in a given year.”

The year system had also defined standing according to the year, rather than the course. Students, in other words, pass or failed years, not courses. One implication of this element of the year

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672 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, *Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 136.
673 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/002(10).
system was its explicit and inherent discouragement of part-time study. There were some part-time students, but in the 1960s they were still required to register not in the Faculty of Arts & Science but in the Division of Extension, and were not able to register in a college. Furthermore, they were permitted only to pursue the general course. The requirements tying standing to the year were somewhat relaxed with the initial implementation of the New Programme; students were allowed to retake failed courses individually, instead of retaking the year. However, full time students were required to take exactly five courses per year; additional courses were possible but would not be counted as progress towards the degree, and part-time study was still explicitly discouraged: if students completed fewer than five courses, they were required to relinquish full-time status and their membership in a college. In effect, the definition of “full time” replaced the older concept of “year.”

These limitations on part-time study were another element of the existing U of T curriculum that appeared increasingly incompatible with the demands of expanded higher education. As early as 1960, the U of T had been alerted that “the part-time student is very largely the student of tomorrow,” but even as the university adopted elements of the credit system in the first iteration of the New Programme, there were, as indicated, still few opportunities for students to dictate the pace of their study.

The Berlyne Committee, in its review of the New Programme, recognized the limitations of the current system and proposed a recommendation that allowed for dramatically-improved integration of part-time students into the Faculty of Arts & Science: that “every student be allowed to complete the requirements for a degree at his or her own pace.” To implement this recommendation, they removed the stipulation that full-time students complete exactly five courses. This change marked the full transition of the U of T from the year system to the credit system.

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676 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
677 As described in Chapter 4, because part-time students were members of the Division of Extension, not the Faculty of Arts & Science, they were therefore ineligible for membership in an Arts & Science college.
678 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1971-0011/036(1).
679 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee to Review the New Programme in Arts and Science, A1973-0047/001(2).
680 Despite the move to the credit system, the U of T was not yet prepared to move away from the norm of full-year courses. Drawing on the varied course lengths of the Old Programme, many departments offered both full- and half-year courses, though most courses were a full year in length. The Foley Committee, drawing on Faculty Council’s negative reaction to the Berlyne Committee’s proposal that single-semester courses become the norm, did not recommend the expansion of single-semester offerings.
Rather than completing either three or four years of study to meet the requirements for the degree, students instead completed a set number of courses.

The demolition of the barrier between honours and general students and the introduction of the credit system defined the major curricular changes of the New Programme. The new modular, flexible structures allowed the U of T to meet the needs of massification through the establishment of curricular structures that better accommodated the social and academic demands of mass higher education by eliminating what were understood as the elitist structures of the Old Programme, and by providing increased opportunities for part-time students.

The standardized and modularized nature of the curricular structures implemented with the New Programme are, as Trow notes, effectively endemic within a mass higher education system. Such structures facilitate expansion by allowing multiple courses to fulfill the same role within a students’ program. For example, rather than being required to take a particular course – an English course on Milton, for example – for which the material would be assessed in an integrated manner with the rest of a students’ courses that year, the fact that each course was designed and assessed as a closed system allowed multiple courses, whether on the same or varied topics, to fulfill a particular requirement. In some cases, it also allowed courses to be offered with more varied frequency. This system also provided instructors with greater autonomy over course content, assessment, and delivery (as discussed by the Macpherson Committee) which was not only embraced by faculty, but which minimized the administrative coordination that the collaborative assessment of the year system had required.

With the New Programme, therefore, the U of T by necessity adopted the structures of massification. These structures allowed for the easier management of the expanded number of students and of the demands for equitable distribution of education across students in the Faculty and indeed the province – and, by all indications, the New Programme was eminently successful in supporting these needs. The New Programme, however, also brought with it additional, in some cases unforeseen, changes to the nature of undergraduate education at the U of T. The challenge for future curricular committees, therefore, was to maintain those elements of the New Programme that supported flexibility, access, and equity – which most agreed were now essential elements of any undergraduate program – while finding ways to mitigate some of the unforeseen accompanying
changes. In other words, future curricular committees aimed to restore particular curricular elements that had unintentionally been lost in the move to the New Programme.

**POST-NEW PROGRAMME AND THE RECLAMATION OF INSTITUTIONAL TRADITIONS AND PRIORITIES**

By the time the Berlyne Committee’s recommendations were implemented, therefore, the U of T had acclimatized to the new environment of mass higher education, developing curricular structures that allowed it to both accommodate the increased numbers of students and to do so in a relatively equitable manner. After its implementation, however, the New Programme, as detailed in Chapter 5, began to show its flaws. Despite the serious concerns with the New Programme, however, few members of the U of T community wished to return to the structures of the Old Programme.

Instead, they sought means to incorporate those elements of the Old Programme that they felt were essential to undergraduate education into the substantially different curricular context of the New Programme. These efforts, apparent in the curricular reviews of the 1980s and 1990s, highlight two sustained priorities in the U of T’s approach to undergraduate education: the belief in the liberal education value of specialization, and the belief that students should have access to multiple pathways through the degree. Each of these beliefs, as they bridged the Old Programme and the curricular structures that emerged from the New Programme, is detailed below.

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, curricular planners and faculty at the U of T maintained that specialized learning could indeed contribute to the broad intellectual goals of liberal education. The result was that, by the end of the twentieth century, the U of T not only offered its students substantially greater opportunities for specialization than its American counterparts, but had developed a distinct and consistent educational philosophy that rested on the ability for specialized education to provide liberal education.

Despite the attempts of many scholars to define the term – some offering trajectories that link education in ancient Greece with contemporary postsecondary curricula, others drawing on one of the multiple potential definitions of the term “liberal” – there is simply no single authoritative consensus on the definition and content of “liberal education.”

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offered; Kimball traces two primary ways in which the term has been understood, distinguishing between a thread linked to oratorical and rhetorical skills, and a thread linked to the transmission of values from one generation to another through texts representing what their teachers claim to be “the best that has been thought and said.” Others connect it to the ideal outcomes (as opposed to content) of higher education, associating it with positive change in a students’ life or community, defining liberal education by its ability to provide liberation, emancipation, and self-actualization (see, for example, Gamson, who draws on Freire). Similarly, the Association of American Colleges & Universities defines liberal education as “a philosophy of education that empowers individuals with broad knowledge and transferable skills, and a strong sense of value, ethics, and civic engagement.” For the purposes of this study, the identification of a precise and stable definition of liberal education is less necessary than an understanding one core element of liberal education that remains consistent across all definitions of the term, and the evidence that both U of T and American curricular planners saw themselves as planning an undergraduate program of study that fulfilled these aims.

At their essence, every definition of liberal education places it in opposition to vocational education. If vocational education provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for a career, whether those knowledge and skills are specific or transferable, liberal education provides “something more” than does purely vocational education. It is the nature of this “something more” that forms the multiple branches of liberal education. Various curricular scholars have argued

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682 Kimball, Orators & Philosophers.
683 To quote Matthew Arnold, one proponent of this version of liberal education. Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy, ed. Jane Garnett (1883; reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
686 Kimball uses the phrase “something more” to describe the aim of liberal education in opposition to vocational education in a discussion of the “strict dichotomy between useful and liberal” in contemporary writings on liberal education. He cites the classical connection between “the root meaning of liberales and eleutherios,” meaning “a free person . . . a person with leisure,” and the absence of vocational pressures. However, Kimball argues that the issue is not the potential usefulness of study — he writes that “until the eighteenth century, the usefulness — indeed, the necessity — of knowing classical languages and writings for studying the professions was so self-evident as not to require extended comment. It was therefore assumed that the liberal arts were useful while it was also agreed that they provided something more” — but that “it all depends on the intentions involved”: that the goal of study must be “to transcend one’s ordinary ends-in-view and contemplate unseen ends” as opposed to studies that “are pursued out of coercion” (which would include any studies pursued not out of interest but as requirements of a course of study with vocational ends. He goes on to argue that “the burden on modern advocates for vocational/ practical/ experiential studies is not to show that liberal studies have been useful; centuries of tradition attest to this. Rather, they must demonstrate that the vocational/ practical/ experiential studies accomplish the ‘something more’ that liberal education accomplishes.” Kimball, Orators & Philosophers, 230-2.
for a particular version of this “something more.” As described above, for some, it has been a coherence or unity of knowledge, based for some on religious perspectives, for others on natural philosophy. For others, the “something more” has indicated a particular outwardly-directed conviction, whether towards supporting democracy or for demonstrating leadership. For others, this “something more” was directed inward, indicating the development of identity and self-awareness. But always, as noted, this “something more” was intended to provide something more than vocational training, enriching students’ inner and interpersonal lives and potentially incorporating such enrichment into the exercise of professional knowledge and skills and into civic engagement.

While the capacity to provide this “something more” is not exclusive to the liberal arts, the connection between the liberal arts and liberal education has clear historical precedent and is often assumed.687

Even though the necessary structures by which liberal education could be provided were understood quite differently at the U of T than by many American educators – as will be described below – both groups understood what they were promoting as, explicitly, liberal education. Both used the term to describe the type of education they hoped to provide. And both groups were linked – internally and to each other – by the same belief that the education they were promoting provided a kind of learning that enriched students’ lives beyond simply enriching their professional opportunities.

The belief that specialization could contribute to liberal learning was, of course, a fundamental principle of the U of T pre-Macpherson honours program. Woodhouse traces this tradition to Hutton, arguing that it was his influence, as an early University College professor, that first “demonstrate[d] in Canada the grand aim of the honour system, general education by means of judicious specialization.”688 In the 1969-70 President’s Report, Bissell wrote of the honours program that it “was thought to be . . . liberal, in the sense that it produced graduates of intellectual power and versatility who moved easily and effectively into a variety of areas.”689 In a matriculation address

687 Axelrod notes that the objectives of liberal education are “usually associated with teaching and research in the humanities and social sciences (generally deemed the ‘liberal arts’)” and, throughout his book, cites many examples of this presumed connection. However, Axelrod ultimately argues that liberal education should not be understood as exclusively the domain of the liberal arts. Paul Axelrod, Values in Conflict: The University, the Marketplace, and the Trials of Liberal Education (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002), 35.


to new undergraduates, Bissell further advocated dedicated, focused devotion to a single field, telling undergraduates:

During your university days you should emphasize concentration and intensity; you should not be in the least afraid of being angular or lop-sided. If you are possessed of an idea, it will in a sense create the pattern of your whole living, and enable you to move with conviction and authority amid the complexities of your university life. Even in curricular matters I distrust the principle of distribution, the idea that every university student should be exposed to the whole spectrum of knowledge, in what seems to me the naïve belief that a university degree is the end and not the beginning of a genuine intellectual pilgrimage. If you have intensity of purpose and concentration, you will develop the confidence and sureness of touch that come from really mastering a subject, and you will be driven by your own intellectual curiosity into areas adjacent to your own.690

Bissell derided the alternative, arguing that “Toronto never succumbed to the tendency to make the liberal arts popular and easy, and its liberal-arts education had been firmly founded on a series of carefully constructed honours courses, where intensive work in one or two subjects was thought of as the best way of giving the mind depth and flexibility.”691

When offered, the honours degree was strongly and consistently supported as an avenue for the development of the higher order thinking skills associated with liberal education and was explicitly disassociated from the vocationalism with which specialization, as discussed below, was connected in the U.S. Dean Bladen argued in 1966 that “I recommend more concern with ‘education’ and less with ‘generality.’ The real danger, I suggest, is ‘professionalization’ rather than ‘specialization.’ I have always argued the ‘general education’ value of the specialized honour course.”692 Writing in the University of Toronto Quarterly, he praises “the importance and value of the specialized honour courses which are the glory of the University of Toronto, as of many other Canadian universities. The value of these courses is that they provide the environment for growth, not that they make specialists; the honour course in Classics, it is argued, is not just for the man who

690 Claude T. Bissell, The Strength of the University (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 25.
691 Ibid, 82.
692 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1971-0013/001.
wants to teach in later life, but equally for the man who may want to be a banker or an industrial relations manager.**693

The commitment to specialization was, however, not limited to the honours program. As the General Course Committee worked to raise the academic standards of the general degree in the late 1940s, they too argued for the inclusion of moderate specialization into the new program. This, they believed, would “provide those elements which were most conspicuously lacking in the old Pass course: a coherent pattern and a genuine intellectual discipline [and] the personal direction that is so necessary in any scheme of liberal education.”*694 The General Course Committee’s final report argued that the new degree, with this specialization, would provide “an intellectual discipline which will produce adequately trained minds.”*695

As the U of T transitioned from the Old Programme to the New Programme, it acknowledged, as described above, the problems associated with demanding immediate specialization, especially in the context of mass higher education. However, as the New Programme evolved, members of curriculum committees were careful to preserve opportunities for the same level of specialization that had previously been available under the honours programs in the belief that strong, well-prepared students were best served by the opportunity to specialize early and deeply. For example, Harris, a strong advocate for eliminating the distinction between general and honours programs and students in the first year, argued that “The problem of choice requires options and a wide range of choice in the first year, but if the student has made his choice, he should have the opportunity to specialize immediately.”*696 Therefore, while the New Programme introduced the opportunity for additional exploration and flexibility, especially in the early stages of a program, the opportunities for a level of specialization comparable to that provided in the honours program remained intact.

Throughout the deliberations of the Berlyne and Kelly Committees, however, the broad, intellectual benefits attributed to specialization were again frequently reiterated, and educators reflecting on the priorities of undergraduate education at the U of T recognized specialization as a fundamental element of its programs. In “Our Approach to the Curriculum,” Drummond offered as

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693 Vincent W. Bladen, “The Role of the University,” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 26 (1956-57): 484.
694 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1973-0029/010(11).
695 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/048(10).
696 UTA, University of Toronto, Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, A1968-0011/004.
a consensus the fact that “We believe that in a university people should be studying things seriously and in depth.” This assumption reflected the belief earlier argued by Milner, who writes in an article on undergraduate education at the U of T that:

As we have seen [the Toronto system] differs toto eaelo from the . . . type of education prevailing in the United States, where knowledge spreads out her wares in random profusion. In essence it makes a simple but great affirmation. Immerse a student, when once the years of reflection begin, in a great and worthy subject of his choice. Let him follow it as it ramified, adding what subsidiary studies he finds necessary, studies which are meaningless when pursued in isolation. He will slowly gather judgment, an energy of continuous inquiry, concentration, a sense of the unity of knowledge; and in the end you may hope for a serious reflecting man, generously critical, with power and outlook.

Agreeing with these assessments, both the Berlyne and Kelly Committees argued that the value of an undergraduate education grew along with the level of specialization in that education, and that specialization offered not training for a particular career, but the expansion of mind associated with liberal education. This assertion emerged in decisions to make specialization a required element of undergraduate programs. During the deliberations of the Berlyne Committee, the committee debated whether the U of T ought to allow students to choose whether or not they wished to pursue specialization, or whether they ought to require that students pursue some structured program. While the option for students to graduate without completing one of the four types of certified programs was currently “a ‘fifth norm,’” committee members agreed to recommend that certification be required because a lack of certification “would not necessarily be considered ‘desirable.’” Their survey of students and faculty confirmed that this belief in the value of specialization was not limited to the committee members; students who pursued a program of specialization responded that their most important reason for doing so was “because it contributes to . . . intellectual growth” – more than because of its contribution to professional success.

Shortly thereafter, the Foley Committee, responding to the Berlyne Committee’s request that it determine the “appropriate academic standards” that would merit an honours designation, came to

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697 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
698 UTA, University of Toronto, University Historian, A1983-0036/004.
699 As detailed in Chapter 4, these included specialist programs, majors, joint majors, and themes.
700 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
701 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1977-0026/023.
a similar conclusion: that honours should only be offered “when it is clear that the programme followed has presented a real intellectual challenge,” which they defined as a program that “demand[s] both depth and intensity of work.” 702

While the recommendation that certification be required proposed by the Berlyne Committee was ultimately not passed by Faculty Council, 703 it resurfaced several years later in the deliberations of the Kelly Committee, who argued similarly that the completion of a program of disciplinary or interdisciplinary specialization should be required. 704 The Kelly Committee also came to the telling conclusion that even breadth ought to maintain a degree of specialization for it to be most useful. Their proposals for mini-minors – sequences of three or four courses in a single field or addressing a particular theme – as the means by which students would add breadth to their programs derived from the belief that “these mini-minors would only be successful if the area of study was investigated in some depth.” 705

The commitment to specialization continued with the work of the Cook Committee, who, while establishing structures for breadth in the undergraduate program, nonetheless saw this breadth as contributing to the education provided by specialization, arguing that “Patterns of thinking from outside the discipline can be invaluable for the imaginative and innovative specialist.” 706 This was in the context of a committee who saw “the Faculty’s mandate” as “the general education of undergraduates” 707 – they did not, in other words, see any conflict between support for specialized education and general education. The Cook Committee, in keeping with the definition of liberal education as “something more” than vocational training, argued that the goal of undergraduate education in the Faculty of Arts & Science is to “do more than give the student particular professional expertise.” 708 Ultimately, in other words, they connected curricular structures that would produce an “imaginative and innovative specialist” 709 with liberal education.

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702 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
703 Unfortunately, I was unable to identify about details about this decision beyond the fact that this requirement was simply not implemented.
704 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
705 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
706 Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee (Cook Committee), Report to the Dean (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1989), 4.
707 Ibid, 4.
708 Ibid, 4.
709 Ibid, 4.
The commitment to specialization, however, was not just rhetorical, but structural. Once the requirement that students pursue a program of specialization was introduced by the Kelly Committee, undergraduate students in the Faculty of Arts & Science were required to pursue two-and-a-half to three years of a four-year program in either a specialist program or two majors. By contrast, Storm and Storm point to a range of sources, including their own 1996 survey, that indicate that American specialization requirements normally require the equivalent of one and a half years of full-time study.\(^7\) In other words, the U of T required approximately twice as much specialization of its undergraduates.

All told, the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T demonstrated a substantial and sustained commitment to specialization as a means to acquire a liberal education throughout the period under investigation here.

The second curricular element that members of U of T curriculum committees sought to preserve after the implementation of the New Programme was the opportunity for students to select from among multiple, very different pathways through the same degree, each designed to meet a particular set of aptitudes, interests, and goals. While the most evident example of this phenomenon is the almost completely segregated honours and general programs that lasted through the late 1960s, this approach to undergraduate education continued to surface in curricular structures through the end of the century, including the ability for students to select from multiple levels of specialization and the retention of different degree lengths. In the view of members of U of T curriculum committees, these multiple pathways through the degree both served pedagogical ends and allowed the university to fulfill what it had internalized as its responsibility to provide education for its proportion of the province’s students.

Even at mid-century, when the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T in many ways reflected its British origins, it already varied from these origins in important ways. Namely, at the U of T, but unlike the Oxford and Cambridge models from which it drew an early influence, the general program was intended to serve as more than an afterthought or a second-rate credential for students unsuccessful in the honours program (though it proved difficult to put this principle into practice successfully). Indeed, the distinction between and mutual presence of two degree programs was a fundamental aspect of undergraduate education at the U of T.

As Chapter 3 details, the revised general program aimed to serve two important purposes. One was to make sure that students who did not have the necessary academic preparation for the honours degree or were not ready to make the choice to pursue the high level of specialization it required would have another an option for university education. While admittedly “access” was not a term in as frequent use in the 1940s as it is today, those involved in curricular development did voice concern over the ability for students from particular backgrounds – in this case, students from rural communities, who often had more limited secondary school options and opportunities than their urban peers – to enrol in university. The General Course Review Committee in the late 1940s was reluctant to raise, and was ultimately successful in avoiding raising, entrance standards or pre-requisite requirements so high that they might exclude students from rural areas.

A second aim of the general program was, as declared by the General Course Review Committee, to “provide a bridge between the specialists and non-specialists in society.” Although the committee sought ways to raise academic standards within the general program, they did not at any point contemplate merging honours and general instruction or students. Instead, they reiterated throughout their discussions that the new general course must not too closely approach the honours in any way. Multiple pathways to the degree, this line of reasoning argued, would create a stronger knowledge base in the province than would either specialists or generalists alone.

Many within the university valued the distinction between different pathways and reaffirmed or reinforced the separate honours and general streams, arguing that the general degree should be a distinct program serving distinct ends, not merely a fall-back for those who could not succeed in the honours program. In a letter in response to a parent whose child had failed his first year in an honours program and hoped to re-enrol the following year in the second year of the general program, Dean Woodside argued that he could not permit this because while “It is true that the requirements for admission to this course are not as high as the requirements for admission to some of the honour courses,” the general course was not simply a less rigorous alternative to the honours course; Woodside stated that he “regard[ed] the General Course as a course and not as a collection of credits in three separate years.” Woodside wrote that this student’s “background would be quite different from that of the student who had successfully completed the first year of

711 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
712 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/108(16).
713 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/108(16).
714 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/108(16).
the General Course” and that the requested transfer would therefore be impossible.⁷¹⁵ A 1966 “General Handbook” for U of T students outlined the different courses available – at that time, the general course, the General Course in Science, and the honours courses – and articulated why each might appeal, for different reasons, to a student planning his or her academic future. The general course, for example “introduces the student to the main fields of knowledge at the university level” and was suitable for “those whose formal education will end with graduation and who are interested in a relatively wide range of subjects [and for] those who will go on after graduation to various professional schools and to such fields as teaching, law, theology, or social work, and who wish to secure a foundation for later specialization.” The general science course provides “an excellent background for positions in industry or for professional courses such as medicine and dentistry. Graduates are also well prepared for the teaching of science and mathematics in high schools.” Finally, the honours courses attract “a high proportion of the best students” and “demand not only extended and disciplined reading in a student’s own field of concentration and in cognate fields, but detailed and independent research, particularly in the final year.”⁷¹⁶

While the New Programme eliminated the structural separation of the honours and general programs, the evident belief in the value of different courses and programs for different students nonetheless remained apparent in other elements of the curriculum. Most notably, this included the ability for students to elect the length of their degree and the level of specialization they pursued.

While, as previously described, members of the Faculty of Arts & Science firmly believed in the educational benefits of substantial specialization, they nonetheless also believed that a broader course of study should be available to students who wished to pursue that option. Even though the Faculty had eliminated the honours and general programs, it continued to propose curricular structures that would effectively recreate the option for students to select either a highly specialized program or a coherent and structured generalized program.

A means of providing a coherent and broad program to complement the specialist and combined major programs first surfaced as the proposed Liberal Arts option under the Berlyne recommendations (described in Chapter 4), which would serve as one of four potential means of achieving certification. Later, a brief to the Kelly Committee from the Principal of New College

⁷¹⁵ UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/108(16).
wrote of the committee’s proposed regulations for mandatory certification that, should the committee decide to require a program of certification, “then at that point the Faculty should begin anew to consider the provision of a coherent and broad undergraduate programme.”\textsuperscript{717} In other words, students should have access to an option for certification that could provide an equivalent option to the previous general program. Indeed, the Kelly Committee proposed a “many minor” program, which would allow students to fulfill their degree requirements by completing two minors in a three-year degree or three minors in a four-year degree.\textsuperscript{718} Though the Kelly Committee’s proposals regarding certification were ultimately not implemented, the Cook Committee raised a similar concern, arguing that “The student who decides not to specialize, for whatever reason, is all too often the neglected student” and that, on behalf of these students, “the Committee was also concerned about the lack of a well-designed, demanding, more general programme in various areas.”\textsuperscript{719} The Cook Committee’s response drew on the “many minor” program, establishing the option for students to fulfill degree requirements by completing three minors “in one of the Academic Areas [which] would constitute a General Program.”\textsuperscript{720} These committees all argued not that the program of all students should be substantially broadened, but that for students for whom breadth was a priority, the availability of a coherent, well-structured general program would serve a need alongside those needs met by specialist programs.

The opportunity for students to select from among multiple pathways leading to the degree was also made possible by the provision of different degree lengths, which, like the dedicated general programs, were also intended to serve different educational goals. Under both the Old and New Programmes, the three-year degree was intended to provide a foundation for further professional study, and, later, served the pragmatic end of a faster, less expensive degree for part-time students; the four-year degree served, among others, those who wished to pursue graduate study.

In the New Programme and after, students therefore had a range of options from broad studies over 15 courses to highly concentrated studies in 20. Students could select either substantial concentration in a single field, half that amount across two areas, or study in three related fields;

\textsuperscript{717} New College Records, Cook Committee Files.
\textsuperscript{718} UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
\textsuperscript{719} Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, \textit{Working Report}, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988), 1.
\textsuperscript{720} Faculty of Arts and Science Curriculum Renewal Committee, \textit{Report to the Dean} (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1989), 14.
within these patterns, students also chose between a three- and four-year degree. Even after the elimination of the three-year degree and the three-minor program, students were still able to select between intense specialization in a single subject, or study in two areas.

While the U of T’s most preferred mode of undergraduate education may have been what was referred to as “judicious specialization,” best represented in the honours program and in the specialist programs that followed it, members of U of T curriculum committees were careful, through all curricular iterations, to sustain alternative options for those who wished instead to dedicate themselves to broad study. These arrangements reflected the U of T’s understanding of its responsibility to serve its proportion of the province’s students. This expectation was quite clear in the immediate post-war period, when the U of T was often referred to as the provincial university and when, as McKillop notes, it was simply expected by policy makers and institutional administrators alike that the U of T would bear the brunt of this early wave of expansion. As new universities were established in the province in the 1960s, the U of T continued to share the responsibility of education in the province, not just as an elite institution but as a mass university. In each case, the U of T fulfilled these responsibilities by offering multiple pathways to the degree.

Multiple pathways, however, not only allowed the university to meet the varied demands of undergraduate education in the province; many members of curriculum committees also believed that the province and the public at large would benefit from the production of graduates with a range of academic skills. At the U of T, each pathway towards the degree produced a discrete set of academic abilities and perspectives that not only, it was hoped, met the goals of the individual students who selected that pathway, but, in educating both specialists and those who could “provide a bridge between the specialists and non-specialists in society” also, members of U of T curriculum committees believed, developed in graduates a complementary community of expertise in which the knowledge translated from the university to the broader community was greater than the sum of its parts.

While elements of the undergraduate programs at the U of T changed dramatically over this period, these two sustained characteristics of undergraduate education remained consistent from the Old Programme through the transition to the New and through the curricular reviews of the last

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723 UTA, University of Toronto, Office of the President, A1968-0007/032(4).
two decades of the twentieth century. The belief that specialization leads to liberal education, and
the consequent provision of opportunities for high levels of specialization, coupled with the belief in
the value of multiple pathways towards the degree, represent key and sustained beliefs about the
goals of undergraduate education and about the structures that best support these goals. These two
curricular priorities are therefore the defining characteristics of what I will call, echoing Kirkconnell
and Woodhouse, the “Toronto Scheme.”

The nature of these sustained assumptions, however, not only defines the particular
curricular priorities in place at the U of T throughout the second half of the twentieth century, but
also demonstrates important distinctions from the priorities defining curricular structures in the
United States during the same period of time. Namely, these two defining elements of the Toronto
Scheme suggest very different beliefs about undergraduate education than those expressed in the
ubiquitous American curricular structure of general education. Furthermore, the significance of
general education to the undergraduate enterprise in the United States, as described below, indicates
that without the adoption of general education and, instead, the sustained support of the curricular
elements that define the Toronto Scheme, the U of T clearly maintained its own distinct set of
curricular assumptions and structures.

THE BELIEFS AND STRUCTURES OF GENERAL EDUCATION

A number of works provide a comprehensive overview of the historical development and
core elements of general education. As these authors demonstrate, general education is a curricular
structure that demonstrates both national patterns and indeed is itself a national project. As such,
general education is best understood in the context of this national project rather than in terms of a
program at any particular institution.

For a country with institutions of higher education – and indeed regions, cultures and
communities – as diverse as the United States, there is striking homogeneity within many aspects of

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its undergraduate curricula in four-year programs in the arts and sciences. This is especially apparent with programs of general education. Bowen writes that “Essentially every contemporary American college and university requires that undergraduate students complete a common ‘general education’ curriculum, regardless of the student’s major or areas of specialization.” Welhburg notes that “Student learning outcomes for general education are now required by all regional accreditors in the United States.” Stevens describes how “Today, most American undergraduates are required to take some amount of general education – a combination of training in basic proficiency in writing, mathematics, and foreign language and a sampling of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences in either a set of distribution requirements or in prescribed survey courses. To these are added the requirements of a major field of concentration plus electives.”

A survey conducted in 2000 by Ratcliff, Johnson, La Nasa, and Gaff report the details of these structures at a national level. Their survey was distributed to 567 four-year institutions, of which 279 responded; each of these institutions reported a program of general education. Their survey portrays general education as a combination of requirements in particular fields of study, in particular academic skills, and in particular kinds of instructional settings. Institutions reported the following requirements, each in place at nearly or more than half of the institutions responding (with some requirements present at 90 percent of institutions); the authors divide these requirements into area requirements and skill requirements. Nearly or more than 50 percent of institutions required courses in the natural sciences, mathematics or quantitative reasoning, the social sciences, the humanities, fine arts, literature, history, philosophy or ethics, foreign languages, the life sciences, and the physical sciences. Additionally, nearly or more than 50 percent of institutions required courses in reading and writing, critical thinking, speaking and listening, computing, cultural diversity, global studies, physical education, and interdisciplinary fields. Finally, over half of institutions reported requirements for freshman seminars and common learning experiences (such as core courses), with somewhat fewer institutions reporting requirements for senior papers, linked courses, service learning, and internships. These requirements comprise a “median [of] 40 percent of a 120-hour
baccalaureate requirement.” Programs of general education are therefore defined by this combination of requirements in multiple academic fields, in transdisciplinary academic skills, and in particular educational experiences or pedagogical approaches, as well as by the significant proportion of students’ degrees devoted to fulfilling these requirements.

General education, however, is relatively homogenous across the country not just in its structure, but also in its goals. These requirements for particular academic content and supporting the development of particular skills, as well as exposure to particular educational experiences, aim to provide students with a common context and provide what is referred to as “coherence” in the educational experience. General education, the authors noted above have argued, initially emerged in response to what had become a chaotic undergraduate experience. As these scholars detail, in the late 1860s, in a desire to incorporate additional fields of study into the undergraduate curriculum, President Charles Eliot of Harvard introduced the elective system. The elective system allowed students to select course from among several options, and replaced the previous set classical curriculum. This elective system, as it quickly spread across the country, was welcomed by faculty and students, who were able to focus their academic efforts in particular areas of interest, but caused concern to many who believed that the dispersal of student interests across multiple fields and into specific areas such that each student might pursue a unique course of study ran counter to what they believed to be the primary aims of undergraduate education. For the developers of the general education programs of the 1920s through the 1950s, general education— which, at this time, often included some mandated courses, often focused on what were understood to be the great works of Western culture – was intended to provide students with a common intellectual foundation that was intended to inculcate in students a set of shared values that would preserve and transmit what were understood to be central cultural values, and which students could use as a foundation upon which to build their future personal, professional and, importantly, civic lives. By mid-century, therefore, general education, as captured by the Harvard report General Education in a Free Society (a report which, as Stevens argues, was a “conduit through which . . . ideas [about general education] flowed”731) argued that general education was “education in a common heritage and toward a common citizenship.”732

730 Ibid, 12 (emphasis original).
732 Ibid, 184.
In the postwar period, many perceived coherence in students’ academic experience to be threatened not just by the heterogeneity of students’ courses of study, but also by the heterogeneity of student academic preparation. As higher education expanded and students with increasingly diverse academic backgrounds moved into the university, many educators felt that the ability for students to develop this shared perspective was compromised by disparities in academic skills. At the same time, the emergence of a postmodern epistemological paradigm meant that many educators were reluctant to promote any particular shared set of aesthetic or cultural values. As a consequence, the focus on providing coherence through general education shifted from providing common content to emphasizing the ability for students to discover coherence through the development of shared academic skills. As Newton describes this approach to general education, which he calls the Scholarly Disciplines Model, “The source of integration is not a blending of the substance of the different disciplines but the students themselves who, with a solid grounding in the fundamental concepts and scholarly methods of the individual disciplines, can reflectively make their own connections.” Though the balance of the focus in general education therefore shifted from content to skills, the purpose was the same: providing students with a coherent academic experience that spanned multiple fields and which provided students with the ability to think and work together, regardless of their field of specialization. Despite the focus on common skills, however, common content was not entirely abandoned; while general education programs in the final decades of the twentieth century provided students with multiple options to acquire knowledge in particular areas, they nonetheless identified, as described above, the range of fields in which every student should have some basic knowledge. Through both common content and skills, general education continued, as Gaff explained, to “intentionally cultivat[e] the essential qualities of an educated person.”

The aims and structures of general education programs, therefore, suggest that “the knowledge, skills, and attitudes [which] are most important for students to acquire and . . . [the] curricular and instructional practices [which] are most likely to cultivate them” are shaped by two concurrent and equally important interpretations of the “general” in general education: the first is general as in broad, the second general as in common. General education programs aim to provide

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734 Gaff, “What is a Generally Educated Person?” 7.
735 Ibid, 4.
students with a broad but coherent set of educational experiences that will result in shared skills and values and the resultant ability “to prepare leaders, train employees, provide the creative base for scientific and artistic discovery, transmit past culture, create new knowledge, redress the legacies of discrimination, and ensure continuation of democratic principles.”

This relative national homogeneity in general education structures and aims, however, emerges both from the national infrastructure that has emerged for the study and promotion of particular focuses in undergraduate education and from the nature of general education itself as a national project. Programs of general education, from their earliest iterations, were inherently national in scope because of the nature of their goals; Stevens describes how “The notion of an education in the classics and of knowledge for its own sake was part of the nineteenth-century ideal of a gentlemanly education . . . When this kind of education is then provided to working-class students, it becomes part of a democratic philosophy.” As such, general education needed to be accessible to all students, regardless of the institution they attended. This democratic element of general education remains relevant today: Greater Expectations, a report produced by the Association of American Colleges & Universities, argues that as the United States approaches universal access, it must work to ensure that high quality educational opportunities are equally available across its diverse institutions, arguing that:

> It is society's responsibility to ensure all students powerful learning that prepares not only for a job, but for career advancement and a fulfilling life as well. . . If colleges hold low expectations for many of their students and shunt them into narrow or shallow tracks, they could be recreating at the collegiate level the severe, discriminatory problems of the twentieth-century high school experiment. As college education now becomes commonplace, all students must have the opportunity to achieve the most empowering forms of learning.”

This report further argues that general education must be understood as a national endeavour if it is to meet its goals; that “Enterprise-wide problems require comprehensive solutions, even as the implementation details vary from one locale to another. At the collegiate level, student mobility within the educational landscape makes each institution, de facto, part of a larger national endeavor”

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738 AAC&U, Greater Expectations, 3.
and therefore that “each college, university, and high school [must commit] to functioning as part of a larger system to improve the level and quality of student learning.”

Boyer and Levine likewise explain the national focus of general education: because the ultimate goal of general education is to create a shared set of knowledge and indeed values and a shared ability to communicate, as a structure it necessarily spans the diversity of American institutions and, in the eyes of its creators, the diversity of the American experience. Boyer and Levine trace the history of general education reform to demonstrate how:

The movements were the products of times when war destroyed community, when political participation declined, when government efforts to set a common social agenda weakened, when international isolation was on the rise, and when individual altruism decreased. And a careful look suggests that, despite apparent conflicts and contradictions, general education activity from 1914 to the present reveals a significant, recurrent theme. Each general education revival moved in the direction of community and away from social fragmentation. The focus consistently has been on shared values, shared responsibilities, shared governance, a shared heritage, and a shared world vision.

This inherent national scope of many of the discussions of general education has an iterative relationship with the development of a national infrastructure supporting the further study and discussion of general education; that is, a national focus produces a national infrastructure, which in turn produces additional work with a national focus. The authors of General Education in the Year 2000 note that “Because of its centrality, general education has been studied extensively.” Welburg concurs, noting that “There are conferences, journals, and books, all focused on general education.” Gamson describes how a national infrastructure for the study and discussion of general education “is now well in place,” represented by journals and other outlets for publication, foundations and funding for the study of undergraduate education, and importantly, “perhaps 100 education specialists, foundation executives, association officers, faculty members, and

739 AAC&U, Greater Expectations, 45.
administrators who consistently appear on the programs of national conferences.”744 This national infrastructure supports discussions about general education that are national in scope; many of the major reports and publications about general education deliberately aim to speak to a national audience. Stevens describes how, in promoting a general education program at the University of Chicago in the 1930s, “Hutchins and his circle saw themselves as shaping undergraduate education in this country and self-consciously promoted their achievement.”745 Boyer and Levine argue that the Harvard report General Education in a Free Society “became the national symbol of renewal,”746 as it “set a general education agenda for the nation's secondary schools, higher education establishment, and the larger community.”747 More recently, publications from organizations like the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) have supported studies and produced reports that are likewise deliberately national in scope. In some cases, the reports produced under the auspices of these organizations are informed by committees with members that are drawn from multiple geographical locations and institutional types in a deliberate and explicit attempt to capture the national landscape and to make recommendations and observations that will apply across the diverse institutions of American higher education. For example, two AAC&U reports were authored by a “National Leadership Council”748 and a “National Panel.” 749

This national infrastructure also means that new studies can build on the existing foundation of material now available; the authors of General Education in the Year 2000 notes how it follows in the footsteps of “a series of . . . national surveys during recent decades . . . track[ing] major trends in general education.”750 Gaff advocates that institutions review “studies of national curriculum trends and of what other institutions are doing”751 when undertaking their own curriculum review. All told, this national infrastructure has resulted in a shared vocabulary and set of assumptions that further facilitates national study and conversation; in discussing whether “general education” is the best descriptive name for this curricular phenomenon, Bowen acknowledges that it is so widely in use

744 Ibid, 440.
749 AAC&U, Greater Expectations.
750 Ratcliff, Johnson, LaNasa and Gaff, The Status of General Education in the Year 2000, 5.
that it has become a shorthand for “the variety of curricula intended to play similar roles at American colleges and universities.”

As such, general education describes not only the structure of programs at particular institutions, but a coherent national movement expressing a particular set of assumptions about, as Gaff writes, “which knowledge, skills, and attitudes are most important for students to acquire and about which curricular and instructional practices are most likely to cultivate them.”

The national context and focus of general education has made it an extremely powerful force in shaping the structure and philosophy of undergraduate education in the United States, not only by occupying approximately half a student’s degree requirements, but by shaping both the understanding of the purpose of those general education requirements as well as the purpose of other elements of the degree, including students’ specialization requirements. General education becomes both a focus and a shorthand for discussions over the aims and structures of undergraduate education in its entirety. The authors of General Education in the Year 2000 note this centrality, arguing that “Many of the criticisms and calls for reform of higher education tend, at least implicitly, to be targeted at general education.” These implicit calls are evident in many studies; as discussed in Chapter 2, Tierney argues that:

The recent critics [of undergraduate education] have not only dominated the discussion about the nature and purpose of higher education, they have also set the terms around which curricular solutions have been proposed. For example, curricular coherence has been advocated for what we conceive to be an educated person reared in Western society who must confront the technological imperatives of the twenty-first century.

Johnson and Ratcliff similarly note that in 20 reports on undergraduate education released in the 1980s and 1990s, “Collectively, they claimed that the baccalaureate degree had lost meaning, advocated that the curriculum should resonate more clearly with the broader collegiate experience, and called for general and liberal learning to be regarded as ‘the most important course of study during the undergraduate years.’

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752 Bowen, “What’s in a Name?” 31.
753 Gaff, “What is a Generally Educated Person?” 4.
754 Ratcliff, Johnson, LaNasa and Gaff, The Status of General Education in the Year 2000, 5.
755 Tierney, Curricular Landscapes, Democratic Vistas, 15.
In other words, as noted in *General Education in the Year 2000*, much of the discussion at the national level explicitly or implicitly discusses general education, almost to the exclusion of other elements of the undergraduate curriculum. The degree requirements associated with general education and the philosophy of education that it represents almost completely shapes the approach to undergraduate education in the United States as it is represented in these public discussions and publications, both in terms of the structure of curriculum and as a set of assumptions about the best means by which the goals for undergraduate education are best met.

**General Education and the Toronto Scheme**

The assumptions that define general education – namely, as described above, that the essential goals of undergraduate education are achieved through curricular structures that provide both broad and common education – are central to undergraduate education in the United States. The curricular beliefs and structures characterizing general education, however, differ dramatically from the curricular beliefs and structures that define the Toronto Scheme. General education, above all else, prioritizes the acquisition of common content, skills, and values; the Toronto scheme argued that different students could benefit from different types of education and indeed that these variations in curricular structures would produce graduates who, collaboratively, would offer a stronger knowledge base than would a series of students all educated according to the same priorities and within the same curricular structures. General education saw exposure to multiple fields as the means to acquire this common content, skills, and values and therefore that the core goals of undergraduate education were met through broad study; the Toronto Scheme argued instead that the core goals of undergraduate education were best met through deep immersion in a single field. These two fundamental incompatibilities demonstrate that even as the U of T adopted some curricular structures closely associated with undergraduate education in the United States during its transition from the Old Programme to the New, it retained its distinct approach to undergraduate education.

The contrast between U.S. and Toronto perspectives of the role of specialization in undergraduate education, in particular, demonstrates the degree to which these educational philosophies differed. Indeed, the assumption underlying programs of general education that the core goals of undergraduate education must necessarily be provided through exposure to multiple fields led to a strong assumed connection between general education and liberal education, and a
consequent suspicion of the liberal educative value of specialization. By contrast, at the U of T, specialization was understood as perhaps the most effective means to achieve liberal education.

In much of the literature on undergraduate education in the United States, the terms “general education” and “liberal education” are used interchangeably. General Education in the 21st Century argues that general education is the curricular structure through which liberal education – “a historic ideal to which a whole collegiate education should aspire” – is provided. In this connection, the alternative to general education also therefore becomes the alternative to liberal education: as described above, this alternative to liberal education is vocational training. Because of the strong association between the aims of general education and the aims of liberal education, specialization and vocationalism likewise were understood interchangeably. As explained in General Education in a Free Society, “General education . . . is used to indicate that part of a student’s whole education which looks first of all to his life as a responsible human being and citizen,” while specialization was defined as “that part which looks to the student’s competence in some occupation.”

Specialization was seen to be inherently unable to provide the content, skills and values associated with liberal education. Kimball describes how, spurred by a 1977 Carnegie Report that argued that general education in the U.S. was a “disaster area,” a huge proportion of institutions underwent significant curricular reviews focusing specifically on general education. In an article exploring the statements reiterated in these diverse reports, Kimball argues that they expressed consistent messages that reflect the priorities of general education programs, since their inception, to provide both common and broad knowledge and skill sets to undergraduates: that students needed to improve their writing and speaking skills; that undergraduate education should “inculcate a sense of ‘values’ in their graduates” which was consistently positioned in opposition to vocationalism; and that undergraduate education should train students for citizenship, which includes community engagement. As Kimball explains it, however, each of these first three needs is dependent on a


759 Quoted in Rudolph, Curriculum, 258.


fourth priority: he writes that “the discussion about the values, citizenship, and community of the faculty usually pertains to a fourth major point in the reports: the call for general education, that is, a coherent and unifying purpose and structure for a curriculum that will serve all students throughout their lives.” Importantly, “The great barrier to faculty cohesiveness, and therefore to ‘curricular coherence,’ is said to be specialization and departmentalization, about which none of the reports has anything good to say.”

Specialization was also seen as a threat to the common education to which general education aimed; the pursuit of disciplinary skills led to perceived limits on students’ ability to communicate across or learn from other fields and consequently impeded the acquisition of common knowledge. Specialization therefore came to be understood as a necessary evil: it offered direct return on educational investments for both individuals and for the public more broadly by providing advanced training in a particular field, but did not contribute to the fundamental goals of education in the arts and sciences.

Lattuca and Stark demonstrate that this distinction has been maintained through the final decades of the twentieth century; writing about the reports on general education from the 1980s, they note that “Nearly all critics have decried ‘narrow specialization,’ meaning both early career preparation and professional specialization within the liberal arts and sciences.” Similarly, reflecting on the trajectory of the second half of the twentieth century, Clark Kerr bemoaned what he perceived as the move towards greater specialization, writing that “Liberal learning, once almost the totality of the curriculum in American higher education, has been giving way for over a century to the increasing concentration on majors in many academic and professional fields. Thus [liberal learning] has been playing less and less of a central role compared to majors and, beginning in the 1960s, to electives in undergraduate education.”

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762 Ibid, 297.
763 Ibid, 297. These priorities remained consistent at least through the end of the century; in 2000, Ratcliff, Johnson, LaNasa and Gaff reviewed curricular changes through the 1990s and concluded that three quarters of institutions had made revisions to their general education programs during that decade. They found that general education at the end of the century worked to bind students together and provide them with a common and equal preparation for the academic, personal, and professional tasks each of them would face. Ratcliff, Johnson, LaNasa and Gaff, *The Status of General Education in the Year 2000*.
Indeed, the incompatibility of the aims of general education and specialized study was seen as so dramatic that general education was understood as a different type of education than that provided by the student’s program of specialization. Indeed, early programs of general education proposed a distinct and structural separation between general education and specialized study; Hutchins, for example, famously proposed separate junior and upper-level colleges at the University of Chicago, arguing that general education and the upper levels of university education offered fundamentally different types of education whose goals could be more easily fulfilled if the differences between the two modes of study were emphasized. His junior college “was designed to provide a haven in which this general education could operate without interference from vocationalism.” Similar proposals were advocated at Columbia University, where the Contemporary Civilization program took hold in the 1920s. This program required all students in Columbia College, the undergraduate arts and science division, to complete a two year sequence of courses that began with a focus on classical, European, and American philosophy and literature and gradually expanded to include courses in art, music, writing, and science, and foreign languages. Miller argues that “the division of the undergraduate college into an upper part and a lower part made it possible for faculty to develop to a greater degree two entirely separate approaches to the curriculum that involved two entirely different approaches to the student.” The assumption that general education and specialized study were fundamentally distinct became so ubiquitous that, in 1972, Marchese wrote that:

By far the most prevalent curricular structure in American undergraduate education today involves a two-step studies sequence, designated respectively as lower-division and upper-division studies. In the lower division, freshman and sophomore students enroll in required courses or divisional studies, shop for a major in various “Introduction to” and “Principles of” courses, and, perhaps, fit in an elective or two. The upper division is reserved for studies in the major and gives somewhat greater opportunities for taking electives.

The distinctions between the assumptions underlying general education and those informing the Toronto Scheme, therefore, are substantial, and have several implications. First, these varied assumptions lead to very different curricular structures, such as the relative proportion of the degree

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767 Ibid, 39.  
devoted to either specialized study or common requirements, or the presence or absence of multiple pathways through the degree. Second, these assumptions also shape the understanding of the type of education supported by particular curricular structures; general education programs and the U of T each provide for both breadth and depth in undergraduate programs of study, but the purposes and outcomes of these requirements are understood differently as shaped by these assumptions. Third, these assumptions control the value or quality attributed to particular curricular structures. The presence of general education requirements in regional accreditation guidelines in the U.S., for example, suggests that general education is a necessary component of high-quality undergraduate study. As such, these fundamental assumptions have wide-ranging implications for the way undergraduate education is organized and interpreted in either context.

The significance of these distinctions also demonstrates that the program of undergraduate education in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the U of T deserves consideration as a distinct approach to undergraduate education. In 2000, while the structures of undergraduate education at the University of Toronto varied substantially from its original British influences, and few would have argued, as they did as late as the mid-1960s, that the U of T most resembled the British system, these fundamental differences between core sustained assumptions at the U of T and those that form the foundation of the ubiquitous American curricular structure of general education suggest no less of a discrepancy with the curricular structures of the United States.

**The Continued Importance of Historical Differences**

The historical perspective demonstrating these sustained distinct assumptions is especially useful because of the indication that, as the century drew to a close, these two paradigms were once again entering a period where particular pressures drew some elements of their degree structures closer together. On the one hand, programs of general education in the 1990s began abandoning the strict distinction between general and specialized study;[769] the integration of the content, skills and values that have traditionally been housed in programs of general education with students’ pursuit of specialization is an increasingly prominent theme in the curricular literature. Those who support this notion argue that the organization of academic life does not parallel the comprehensive and synthetic focus of general education and that, consequently, “nobody owns it enough to take

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responsibility for it.” The calls for “coherence” and “unity” in the face of increasing specialization ask faculty to divorce their approach to teaching and curriculum development from the reward system of the contemporary university and from the training they have received in their PhD. Students, too, often perceive greater value and reward from study in their area of specialization; Ratcliff, Johnson, LaNasa, and Gaff note that many administrators believe that “Students do not want to take required courses outside their predetermined interests” and that “The cost of a college education makes students ask why they have to take courses unrelated to what they consider their majors.” Some scholars therefore argue that some way to align the goals of general education and specialized study must be identified; the assumption of the mutual incompatibility of liberal education and specialization may therefore be challenged.

At the same time, in part in response to financial and policy pressures, curricular planners at the end of the century at the U of T, as discussed in Chapter 5, eliminated some program options, such as the three-year degree and the three-minor program, that most tied the curriculum to the historical practice of offering multiple pathways to the degree. At the same time, these curricular planners at the end of the century argued that academic competencies necessary for the twenty-first century, such as communication and ethical reasoning skills – competencies that look very much like the academic skills that form a significant component of programs of general education – needed to be a part of every student’s degree, and as a consequence argued in favour of a four-year degree that could accommodate both the development of these competencies and a high level of specialization. The way Toronto integrates these priorities into its degree requirements will no doubt be shaped by these historical assumptions and structures.

As is evident in Toronto’s own curricular history, a historical understanding of the origins of contemporary curricular structures is essential to avoiding a misinterpretation of such structures. As the twentieth century turned into the twenty-first, and the environmental pressures of permanently reduced university budgets and increasing pressure on universities to produce workers for the

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771 Boyer concurs, writing that “at the undergraduate level, and most especially in general education courses, research work often competes with classroom obligations, both in time and content. Faculty assigned to teach such courses frequently must take short cuts in their research or rely heavily on teaching assistants—an arrangement that is often less than satisfactory for both student and professor.” Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 55.

emerging knowledge economy led to curricular changes that once again demonstrate tentative steps towards the adoption of curricular structures that parallel those in place in the United States (and, conversely, the adoption of curricular structures in the U.S. that parallel those in place at the U of T), the historical origins of these structures – characterized by the Toronto Scheme – will once again be essential to interpreting the significance of and assumptions underlying these changes.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The seven curriculum reviews spanning a fifty-five year period that this research has reviewed have demonstrated, as discussed in Chapter 6, that undergraduate education in the arts and sciences at the University of Toronto is characterized by two assumptions: first, that the provision of liberal education is most effectively supported through specialized study, and, second, that offering students multiple pathways through the degree provides a strategy to support access and to meet public expectations for undergraduate education. Furthermore, as is also discussed in Chapter 6, these assumptions vary substantially from the assumptions that undergird public discussions and publications about undergraduate education in the United States.

This research has also demonstrated that there are three distinct periods in the history of undergraduate education in the arts and sciences at the U of T, and that these three periods parallel broader epochs in the history of postsecondary education in Ontario as these periods are identified in Jones’ history of higher education policy in the province.\(^{773}\)

The first such period represents approximately the two decades following the Second World War. The U of T entered the post-war period at a time when undergraduate education in the liberal arts, as represented particularly by the existing pass program, was relatively undervalued in comparison to education in professional fields and in the highly specialized and academically rigorous honours programs because of the significant role that research and the professions, and especially scientific research and the scientific professions, had played in the war effort. As such, the curricular focus of the initial post-war period was on improving the status of these programs. While the U of T had a strong tradition of supporting specialized undergraduate education, it also had a strong tradition of supporting these secondary and alternative broad programs. Curricular planners felt in particular that these programs were important to students who might not have access to, succeed in, or have interest in the more academically demanding and specialized honours programs.

While the General Course Review Committee had significant success in proposing a new and invigorated general program, as the post-war period progressed, demand for scientific education did not abate. In particular, the scientific professions and the secondary schools expressed a need for undergraduates educated broadly in a range of scientific fields. The next curricular committee

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therefore established a general science program, directly and explicitly designed to meet the increased demand for and status of science in post-war higher education.

Described in Chapter 3, these changes represented, as in the broader Ontario environment, a period of “evolutionary expansion.” In the curriculum at the U of T, this period was characterized by growth without substantial change to the underlying curricular structures, including most notably the strict separation of general and honours programs.

The post-war curriculum, developed in the mid-1940s and early 1950s, served the U of T adequately, it seemed, for nearly two decades, as the next significant curricular review did not take place until the 1967 Macpherson Committee, which ushered in the second curricular epoch described in Chapter 4. By the time this committee was established the university was, at least in the perception of its president Claude Bissell, nearing an eruption of student discontent, in large part due to the rigid division between courses and students in the honours and general programs. This division was increasingly understood to be untenably inequitable. Furthermore, the substantial expansion of university enrolment that had already been occurring since the mid-1950s and which was projected to accelerate through the mid-1970s was straining a curricular structure that had been established in a time when a much smaller proportion of the province’s youth were attending university. Therefore, the ultimate outcome of a series of curricular reviews that began with the work of the Macpherson Committee was the New Programme, which provided a much more flexible, individualized, and student-driven curriculum than had previously been available. Many understood this program as successfully addressing the inequities that had made the Old Programme so problematic in the context of mass higher education. As in the broader Ontario environment, therefore, this period was one of “structural revolution.”

Enthusiasm for the New Programme, however, quickly diminished as new and unforeseen problems with the more flexible and student-driven structures quickly began to emerge. Concerns were both pedagogical and organizational. For students, the New Programme was understood to lack the academic community that had been available to honours students in the Old Programme, and to lack a coherent and obvious program of study for those students who did not wish to pursue a program of specialization in the traditional departments. The New Programme had been intended to provide additional flexibility and encourage academic experimentation, including innovative

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774 Ibid, 138
775 Ibid, 141.
combinations of fields; instead, some students chose to pursue programs that were much more specialized than even the old honours programs, while others meandered from course to course, which rarely led, many felt, to the accumulation of insight that was more than the sum of the individual parts. Finally, while the first year in the New Programme was intended to allow for exploration, the significant pre-requisite demands that had sprung up in place of registration in a program meant that more and more students were crowding into a small number of courses that would provide them with the most flexibility in second year. All told, the New Programme did little to support the pedagogical goals upon which it had been founded, and left students alienated and isolated.

In addition to the pedagogical programs perceived by curriculum committees, the New Programme was also expensive. Under the more flexible program structures, courses proliferated and enrolment planning became much more difficult. As a result, some courses were over-subscribed, leading to student and faculty discontent, while others remained nearly empty. The nature of the New Programme made it difficult to administer instructional resources efficiently. These financial concerns came to a head during the late 1970s as the university found itself in what looked to be an extended period of financial retrenchment that had itself caused cynicism about the value of university education among policy-makers and the public. As such, curricular planners of the third curricular epoch, beginning with the Kelly Committee in the late 1970s and early 1980s and described in Chapter 5, focused on re-introducing program options and requirements that in many ways resembled parts of the Old Programme, while retaining those curricular structures of the New Programme that many believed promoted greater equity, flexibility, student autonomy, and innovative approaches to and combinations of study.

This work continued with the Cook Committee of the late 1980s, but with an added element: the financial challenges that had started in the late 1970s had proved to be sustained. This environment of limited resources had fundamentally altered the postsecondary environment in Ontario, shifting it from a system that was relatively homogenous and cooperative to one that encouraged competition between institutions. The U of T found itself in a position where it needed to ensure that its curriculum would be able to attract and retain students. As such, curricular committees from the late 1980s onward sought ways to attract the province’s top high school students by providing program options and special opportunities that would mitigate issues that had become liabilities for the U of T: overcrowding in certain courses and programs – a legacy of the
flexibility of the New Programme – and the lack of an honours designation, which some felt was unfair to talented graduates who did not receive a comparable credential to students from other Ontario institutions. The elimination of the three-year degree at the end of the century, further reflected the financial and enrolment pressures that faced the institution, but, along with the elimination of the three-minor program, was also intended to carve a curricular niche for the U of T among its most direct competitors, the other universities in and near Toronto, by demonstrating a commitment to rigorous and specialized education at the undergraduate level, which many believed could only be achieved through a focused, four-year degree.

This third period, stretching from the mid-1970s until the end of the century, is characterized by financial retrenchment, public skepticism of the value of universities, and increasing competition between universities in Ontario for students and for public funds. At the U of T, this translated into the reintroduction of curricular structures intended to provide improved academic development, support and guidance, and, near the end of this period, to support the U of T’s ability to attract top students in the province.

By the end of the twentieth century, therefore, the undergraduate curriculum in the Faculty of Arts & Science at the University of Toronto in many ways looked dramatically different than it had at mid-century. Students were admitted not to either a three-year pass program or a four-year honours program in a particular field, but instead applied to a four-year degree in one of five broad disciplinary areas. Once admitted, first-year students in 2000 had access to a wide range of introductory courses of which they could pursue any in which they were interested and for which they had the appropriate high school prerequisites; students in 1945 were restricted to either pass or honours courses and, if enrolled in an honours degree, had an almost entirely prescribed first year (along with, of course, the second through fourth years). Instead, in 2000, second-year students elected a program of study composed either of two majors or a program of specialization, the completion of which would dominate their next three years of study. While course options were limited in 1945 for both pass and honours students, the curriculum by the late twentieth century was so vast, varied and flexible that curricular planners argued that students required a visual map of their options to be able to navigate it effectively. The colleges had shifted from homes of humanities departments to homes for interdisciplinary programs and for academic support, community, and

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advising. These changes to curricular structures do not capture the proliferation of fields, courses, and programs, or the changes to the nature of teaching and of the instructional staff, which now included large numbers of contingent faculty and graduate students.

And yet, much was nonetheless recognizable. The honours designation had recently been revived; students still had much control over their level of specialization, and, for students pursuing a highly specialized path, that specialization comprised the majority of their degree. Both arts and sciences were taught in the same Faculty, and colleges, though changed, remained an important means of organizing academic and campus life. Most importantly, as discussed in Chapter 6, the underlying assumptions about the fundamental goals of undergraduate education and about the curricular structures that best support these goals remained virtually the same as in 1945.

These distinct curricular periods allow two important conclusions about the curriculum to be drawn. The first, as described in detail in Chapter 6, is the persistence of particular assumptions about the curriculum within the context of these changed contexts and curricular structures. These two assumptions, and the related curricular patterns, shape the curriculum within each of these periods, but the way in which these assumptions are manifested changes based on the broader trends within the Ontario environment at the time.

The second important conclusion is represented by the parallels between these three curricular periods and the broader epochs in the history of postsecondary education in Ontario. These parallels indicate the complex and iterative relationship between the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T and its institutional and provincial environment. This relationship ultimately suggests that not only can much be understood about curriculum by studying its context (as has been demonstrated throughout this thesis) but also that the goals and structures of the curriculum can likewise provide a key lens onto elements of this context. These parallels, in other words, point to the significance of this information about the curriculum as an interpretive tool and framework for the further study of the U of T’s institutional, provincial and international environments.

The approach to reading curricular documents used in this research has focused its treatment of events and influences in the broader context of the U of T on the way in which these influences shape curriculum. Throughout the previous chapters, these events serve as a lens onto curricular change. Using this information about events and influences in the U of T’s broader context, this research has provided, as outlined above, the essential dates and events that mark curricular change and that define the distinct periods in curriculum over time at the U of T; the influences, from a
broad perspective, on the undergraduate curriculum in the U of T context, much of which would also apply to other Ontario and Canadian universities; details about patterns of curricular requirements and academic policies as they changed and re-emerged over time; and details about foundational assumptions about the goals of undergraduate education and about the structures that best meet these goals as expressed by the curriculum review committees and as reflected in degree requirements and academic policies.

Having been identified through this research, these curricular assumptions and patterns now permit this information about curriculum to be used as a lens onto the broader postsecondary environment. As this research has indicated, curricular patterns both reflect and facilitate policy and structural change at the institutional and provincial levels, and similarly reflect and facilitate broader social, economic and epistemological changes. Because of this iterative relationship between the curriculum and its environment, this information about curriculum at the U of T can now be used as a framework for the interpretation of other elements of postsecondary education, institutions and systems more generally. In advocating the use of historical perspectives in the study of higher education, Eisenmann argues that a historical perspective “deepens or corrects contemporary understandings.” The “rediscovery of forgotten elements,” she argues, can “[reorient] our understanding.” Indeed, beyond identifying the Toronto approach to undergraduate education and the significance of these assumptions and priorities, the implications and contributions of this study affect our understanding of the history of the University of Toronto and of Canadian higher education, and offer a clearer understanding of the similarities and differences between higher education in Canada and the U.S.

Within the institution, the curriculum provides valuable insight into the role of, and the successes and challenges encountered by, the colleges. The relatively unique college structure at the U of T surfaced, as noted throughout, in curricular discussions, but the colleges were rarely central to curricular plans and structures. The review of the undergraduate curriculum over time can help to clarify the role of the colleges in undergraduate instruction, further illuminating the effect of this relatively unique institutional structure on the history of the U of T. On a broader scale, the relationship indicated by this history of the curriculum between the U of T and other institutions in Ontario and Canada illuminates relationships between these institutions more generally, and

consequently deepens our understanding of the nature of a Canadian system of or approach to higher education – or lack thereof – and the origins and significance of these patterns and differences. Finally, the significant differences between the Toronto Scheme and patterns of undergraduate education in the U.S. reinforce the suggestion, outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, that there are important distinctions between the systems of higher education in the two countries, and point to potential avenues for exploring and identifying these distinctions. These differences also illuminate ways in which the Toronto Scheme might highlight assumptions about undergraduate education in the U.S. currently so universal that they are rarely challenged or even articulated. As such, the identification of the Toronto Scheme points to many avenues for future research, and informs – and sometimes challenges – many assumptions currently held about Ontario, Canadian, and North American higher education.

**THE COLLEGES: CURRICULUM AS A SOURCE OF INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY**

The history of the role of the colleges in undergraduate instruction at the U of T demonstrates the ways in which curriculum both reflects and influences particular instructional structures. The ways in which U of T curriculum committees incorporated the relatively unique college structure into their curricular plans demonstrates the ways in which particular institutional structures and traditions shape curriculum. At the same time, the changing nature of the curriculum and of the broader institutional, social, and political environments that shaped the curriculum in turn shaped the role of and demands on the colleges.

The role of the colleges in students’ academic experiences was a topic of discussion, to at least some degree, for every curricular committee. While, as discussed in Chapter 2, the U of T took its initial curricular inspiration from Oxford and Cambridge, the U of T college system resembled those universities’ colleges if at all only by coincidence. Unlike other elements of its early curriculum, the U of T’s colleges were not developed to mimic those at Oxford and Cambridge; rather, they were the result of the historical circumstances of the U of T’s founding. The cash-strapped small denominational colleges of Ontario’s early history gave up their formal religious alliances and federated with the public and secular U of T in an arrangement that left them with instructional responsibility for particular “college subjects,” all in the humanities. This arrangement differed in important ways from the academic roles of the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, which were the sole providers of tutorial-based instruction. As such, the initial college structure adopted at the U of
T set the colleges and the rest of the undergraduate curriculum a separate trajectory. Namely, the U of T never adopted the tutorial system for which the Oxford and Cambridge colleges are perhaps best known, and through which the academic role of those colleges was clear and central to undergraduates’ academic experience. Instead, the U of T colleges taught courses in the college subjects, leaving the sciences, social sciences, and some humanities to the university. As a result, the role of the colleges in students’ academic experiences was uneven in scope and depth.

The U of T’s college system as it existed through the mid-1970s had at least as many drawbacks as advantages. Classes were small, and the colleges fostered an academic community to be sure. However, college faculty were underpaid relative to their university peers and the range of offerings in the college subjects was often limited because the university needed to host four separate departments in each field. Over the course of the early and mid-twentieth century, relative enrolment in the college subjects declined as student interest and employment opportunities in the sciences and social sciences, all university subjects, expanded.

By the beginning of the period under investigation here, therefore, there was officially a “college problem” to which each curriculum committee sought a solution. This commitment to finding a strong role for the colleges in students’ academic experience was testimony to the “widespread agreement” noted by the Macpherson Committee that “that [the colleges] are, potentially at least, an extremely valuable asset in this University.” As enrollments in college subjects declined, the challenges facing the colleges were acknowledged by the general course and general science course review committees, but it was the curricular committees of the New Programme and the period of expansion who first actively sought alternative arrangements and roles for the colleges.

These potential roles responded to broader curriculum changes, but the college system itself, and the limits and potentials in terms of its instructional possibilities, also had an influence on the curriculum. Furthermore, like the curriculum more broadly, the colleges absorbed and expressed

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778 University of Toronto Archives (UTA), University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001. Of the origin of the “college problem,” Drummond writes:

We are sometimes told that the New Programme created the “college problem”, by allowing students to avoid the things the colleges teach . . . If we are to judge the evidence that the Macpherson Committee assembled, things were not so simple. There had been a “college problem” for a long time. For decades students had been drifting away from the things the colleges taught; at least since the Woodside Memorandum of 1959 people had been trying to revivify the college system. Ibid.

779 Presidential Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Instruction in the Faculty of Arts and Science, Undergraduate Instruction in Arts and Science (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 83.
anxieties, constraints and trends of their broader environment. And, also like the curriculum itself, the capacity for these roles to be realized was limited by institutional and financial constraints.

For curriculum committees in the period of enrolment expansion, the colleges were seen as a potential source of academic community within an institution where such community was understood to be increasingly in jeopardy. The Macpherson Committee noted that:

> With this set of eight colleges, Toronto appears to be in a very favourable position to counteract the dangers of the monolith and the anonymous mass, dangers to which the size of the University, and even of the Faculty of Arts and Science, otherwise expose it. The ability of the colleges to serve their students in this way, to be smaller academic communities within the great university, is frequently cited as ample justification for any inefficiencies or apparently wasteful allocation of intellectual resources that may be though inherent in a federal system or that have developed in this particular federal system.\(^{780}\)

During this period of rapid expansion, a series of proposals therefore outlined multiple means by which instruction in the colleges could play a larger role in students’ undergraduate programs as a smaller and more personal academic home within a large diverse university.

A popular proposal, emerging before the New Programme and numerous times after its establishment, was the suggestion to hold first-year instruction and tutorials in the colleges. The Macpherson Report summarizes the efforts to this end that preceded its own recommendations. The Woodside Memorandum in 1959, for example, proposed that “The most desirable principle is that as much as possible of the first year lecturing and tutorial work should be done in the College. The classes are largest in the first year and division of them into four would be most advantageous.”\(^{781}\) Seven years later, the Presidential Advisory Committee on College Instruction offered a tempered version of the same proposal, advocating “in favor of a system of college-based ‘tutorials, groups or sections in as many as possible of the courses taught by university departments.”\(^{782}\) The Macpherson Report repeated the recommendation to place as much early instruction in the colleges as possible, proposing that “each college should attempt to provide most of the first year tutorials in most subjects, and first year lectures in most of those subjects which are

\(^{780}\) Ibid, 84.
\(^{781}\) Ibid, 89 (emphasis original).
\(^{782}\) Ibid, 93.
so populous that they have to be sectioned in any case.” These proposals, however, never got very far. A major impediment to college sections or tutorials was the division between college and university subjects and the consequent fact that college faculty were only available in college subjects. It seemed, therefore, that current structures – the division between college and university subjects established at federation – was both causing the “college problem” and standing in the way of its resolution.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, however, the role of the colleges – both within the institution and in the imaginations of members of curriculum committees – changed. During this era, the colleges came to be perceived less as potential sources of academic unity and more as a potential source of academic diversity. But though the nature of the academic experience they were imagined to be able to offer shifted, the commitment to and challenge of integrating them more deeply in students’ academic experience remained.

In large part, this shift in role was due to the 1974 Memorandum of Understanding between the colleges and the University. Despite the multitude of recommendations in the preceding 15 years that had advocated a rethinking of the division between college and university subjects, action to this end had been slow. The college departments had, after all, been established at the time of federation, and the administrative arrangements that supported college departments had financial and organizational strands that reached deep into the university. However, by 1974, as the financial situation of many of the colleges became precarious, associated with declining funds within the university more generally (as discussed in Chapter 5), the colleges and the university negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding that established many of the previously-proposed structures. It dissolved the college departments, but provided colleges the authority to cross-appoint faculty from any department.

Ibid, 96.

Proposals for college tutorials, for example, were necessarily also often accompanied by recommendations for the redistribution of faculty appointments across the university so that this instruction could occur in all fields. For the most part, these proposals recommended combining college departments into single university departments, and then cross appointing faculty from university departments (which would then be all subjects) to the colleges. The result would be faculty with ties both to a central department and to the broader educational enterprise of a college. The Macpherson Report echoed elements of the Woodside Memorandum and the intervening reports on college instruction, arguing that:

We see no other way of meeting what we regard as the major problem than by converting all the college departments, except possibly religion, into fully university departments in the Faculty of Arts and Science . . . and encouraging the colleges to re-acquire a teaching staff by cross-appointing some but not all of their previous members in what had been the college subjects, and many new members in other subjects. Ibid, 97.
One outcome of the Memorandum of Understanding, therefore, was the opportunity for increased diversity in college roles and college offerings. This potential matched well with the broader goals of contemporaneous curriculum committees. As a member of the Kelly Committee, Drummond argued that, much as a curriculum committee should seek varied means to satisfy the diverse aims and desires of the university population, the colleges might provide distinct homes for these varied aims and preferences. He noted that “Some of us think that through the college system the University may be able to provide for diversity in unity. That is to say, the colleges might be able to develop their own views about some aspects of the University experience.” With the ability to cross-appoint faculty from any department, and, through a later Memorandum of Agreement, to appoint their own faculty, the colleges could therefore develop unique curricular identities through the establishment and provision of interdisciplinary programs that would give colleges another role in diversifying the academic experience of students, and give students another opportunity to study in their college.

One proposal to this end, while not ultimately adopted, was the Kelly Committee’s “mini-minors,” described in Chapter 5. These minors, as proposed, were short programs of study comprised of three to four courses, which the committee argued should be offered through the colleges; as the Kelly Committee imagined it, each college would develop their own mini-minors, and “students may pick their college based on particular sequences of college courses.”

As the fate of this proposal demonstrates, however, while curricular committees had high hopes for the colleges, the actual role of the colleges remained constrained throughout the period, primarily because of the ongoing financial challenges facing the university and the province. Friedland describes how the financial constraints of the mid-1970s prevented colleges from developing college programs or college instruction to the extent that they might have, noting that “the University’s finances did not permit the hiring of new staff to develop the college programs.” Friedland also argues that these financial constraints and enrolment pressures also prevented the redistribution of re-organization of office spaces that might have better fostered academic

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785 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
786 UTA, University of Toronto, Faculty of Arts and Science, A1981-0039/001.
community among the college faculty appointed under the new system.\textsuperscript{788} As in the rest of the university, the financial realities shaped the curricular possibilities of this period.

The colleges’ influence on students’ academic experience over the course of this period was therefore more limited than what might be expected given the significance of the college system to the U of T’s initial curricular structures (as described in Chapter 2) and to its initial institutional structures. However, much like curriculum strongly reflects the influences and trends of its broader environment, the U of T’s colleges similarly reflect broader curricular and institutional priorities and constraints. As such, the conclusions that can be drawn from the shifting role of the colleges in undergraduate instruction reflect, not surprisingly, the conclusions drawn about the U of T’s undergraduate curriculum more broadly. Their early development showed a clear and distinct curricular approach and trajectory from the institutions on which the U of T’s earliest programs were based. During mid-century, the declining perceived value of and interest in the arts simultaneously compromised both the general program, with its relative focus on the humanities, and the colleges. The expansion of the university system beginning in the 1960s forced a dramatic structural change in role and scope, and its ambitions in the final decades of the century were curtailed by financial challenges. The colleges, therefore, provide a sort of parallel history of undergraduate education at the U of T – a more in-depth version of which could inform and enrich further studies of undergraduate education at the U of T and of the institution’s history more broadly. The colleges therefore provide one example of the way in which curriculum informs and reflects other elements of institutional history.

\textbf{THE CURRICULUM AS AN INDICATOR OF INSTITUTIONAL ROLE}

The conclusions that can be drawn from the U of T’s curricular history, however, also extend far beyond the institution and its component parts. This study offers a new perspective and a deeper understanding of the role of the U of T within Ontario and Canadian higher education, and, more generally, of the relationship between institutions in the province and across the country. It does this by clarifying the U of T’s role in undergraduate education in cooperation or in competition with other institutions in the province and by illuminating the ways in which provincial postsecondary policy influenced this role.

\textsuperscript{788} Ibid, 569.
Unlike, for example, California, Ontario’s postsecondary system has historically been subject to relatively little direct system coordination.\textsuperscript{789} Ontario’s universities, in particular, retain substantial autonomy from provincial control. It is, in other words, up to individual institutions to determine the role they might play in the broader project of provincial postsecondary education.\textsuperscript{790} The undergraduate curriculum at the U of T very clearly helps to identify how the U of T conceptualized and operationalized this role, and how this role varied throughout this period of history.

At the beginning of this period, the U of T was referred to as the “provincial university.” As described in Chapter 1, it was particularly influential in Ontario and Canadian higher education, both because it educated a significant proportion of those who pursued a degree, and because it offered a much broader range and depth of study in many fields than other institutions. The U of T’s curricular decisions during this period very clearly illustrate that members of the curricular review committees associated with this role as the provincial institution a significant responsibility for higher education within the province. The decision to support the general degree even though many within the U of T felt that education was more effectively proffered through the specialized, four-year honours degree, for example, demonstrates the impact of this sense of responsibility on the curriculum. This assumption of responsibility preceded, as becomes evident through Jones’ history of provincial postsecondary policy,\textsuperscript{791} any actual substantial coordination among postsecondary institutions in the province. In other words, this role primarily emerged from the U of T itself and its status as the province’s oldest, largest, and richest (relatively speaking) institution, rather than as the result of deliberate provincial policy like those in, for example, Manitoba or other Western Canadian provinces, which maintained only a single provincial institution during this time.

During the massive expansion of the 1960s, curricular decisions made at the U of T indicate that it still retained a sense of responsibility to provide a proportional amount of the higher education within the province, but that its relationship with other institutions shifted from patriarchal to partnership. Indeed, it is this assumption that drove curricular planners to accept without question the need for their institution to expand in proportional alignment with other institutions in the province and to do so in a way – ultimately, through the elimination of the separate honours and general programs – that would not only allow for expansion but that would,

\textsuperscript{789} Jones, “Higher Education in Ontario,” 155.
\textsuperscript{791} Jones notes that “Until 1951, Ontario did not have a single office or agency with responsibility for higher education.” Jones, “Higher Education in Ontario,” 140.
they hoped, allow all these new students to have access to the full range of educational opportunities offered at the institution. Provincial policy during this period echoed this assumption, prioritizing relatively homogenous institutional roles for the new universities established during this period. Furthermore, the establishment of a parallel college sector to provide technical and vocational training reduced the need for universities to fill these roles and allowed each institution to focus on the arts and sciences and professional education. While some within the U of T briefly entertained an attempt to forge an elite status within the expanding Ontario university sector by proposing that the St. George campus become honours-only (while the new Scarborough and Erindale campuses would provide general degrees), this proposal was quickly dismissed by those within the U of T, and the belief among curricular planners that the U of T was equally responsible for the education of the province’s youth as were other provincial institutions shaped its curricular decisions during this time.

However, the U of T’s understanding of its role in undergraduate education in the province changed dramatically during the years of financial retrenchment that closed out the century. By the end of the 1990s, as evidenced in particular by the curricular decisions of the Cook Committee which offered special provisions intended to attract top high school students to the U of T and brought back the honours designation, the U of T saw itself not in cooperation but in competition with other institutions in the province when it came to undergraduate education. This change reflects a broader change in the policy approach to universities in the province. Jones calls this approach “managerialism at the margins,” whereby provincial policy dictates the roles and responsibilities of each institution through indirect influence on institutional decision-making; while institutions retained nominal autonomy, provincial policies developed a series of competitive funding practices that encouraged institutions to pursue particular provincial priorities. This approach was explored in many other jurisdictions across the world; indeed, the U of T’s competitive stance relative to other provincial institutions during this period reflects a broader shift

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793 See Jones, “Higher Education in Ontario,” 144.
794 Jones, “Higher Education in Ontario,” 147.
in universities’ relationships with public funding and policy that many have argued has encouraged market-like behaviour by institutions.\(^{795}\)

In other words, the history of curriculum in the second half of the twentieth century both reflects and further informs the U of T’s role within the province as a provider of undergraduate education and illuminates the ways in which Ontario and Canadian universities cooperate and compete. The provincial policies and goals for undergraduate education that these behaviours reflect in turn have shaped other elements of institutional roles. A current debate across Canada, for example, asks whether the five most research-focused institutions in the country – a group that includes the U of T – ought to be subject to different sets of policies and have access to additional public funds.\(^{796}\) As the U of T’s understanding of its role within the province shifted from paternalistic to proportional to competitive, the curricular changes at the U of T therefore help to trace these broader parallel transitions in the respective roles of individual Ontario and Canadian institutions and provide a detailed portrait of some of the motivations and assumptions that have marked various stages of this shift, particularly in terms of its influence on undergraduate education.

Another area this study informs is the degree to which English Canadian institutions share curricular goals and assumptions. Simply put, to what extent is the Toronto Scheme reflected in other undergraduate programs across English Canada? As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, a national perspective on higher education in Canada is relatively rare compared with studies about individual institutions or provinces.\(^{797}\) However, others who have written about undergraduate education in Canada have found it possible to make some tentative national generalizations. Harris,\(^{798}\) for example, is able to identify curricular patterns across all English Canadian institutions through the early 1960s. Storm and Storm note few “significant differences”\(^{799}\) between institutions across Canada, but, as discussed in Chapter 2, see these similarities extending also to the U.S., suggesting


that their investigation reviewed a relatively limited set of institutional and curricular characteristics. Finally, Axelrod\textsuperscript{800} identifies trends in the focus of undergraduate education and the relative perceived value of specific fields across the country. The presence of these generalizations, though limited, suggests that there is to at least some degree a Canadian – or English Canadian – approach to undergraduate education, which might potentially be explained or illuminated by the Toronto Scheme. Parallel studies at other institutions could determine whether the curricular priorities and assumptions characteristic of the undergraduate program at the University of Toronto are present or common in other Canadian institutions. Such a study would benefit from looking in particular at those institutions’ understanding of the concept of liberal education and of the structures that best support the broader social and economic needs of the province, as these have been the elements of the Toronto Scheme that most distinguish it from its peers.

A related study, from a different perspective, would be an assessment of the degree to which the American model of general education is present in Canadian universities. There is some evidence that this model was particularly appealing to educators and curricular planners at a number of institutions. A key example is York, whose founders explicitly connected their first curriculum to the general education project as it was understood in the United States.\textsuperscript{801} Such a study could review the degree to which these structures are present and any unique elements about the way in which they manifest in a Canadian context.

The answers to these questions would again deepen the understanding of the degree to which, if at all, there can be said to be a “Canadian” approach to undergraduate education given the extremely decentralized nature of higher education funding and governance and the very high levels of institutional autonomy enjoyed by many Canadian institutions.\textsuperscript{802} Variations, too, however, could contribute to an understanding of the Canadian system more broadly. Studies attempting to define or identify national-level characteristics or whether there can be said to be a Canadian “system” of higher education often investigate elements of federal control and involvement that provide a common influence across provincial jurisdictions\textsuperscript{803} or review common elements of Canadian higher

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\textsuperscript{800} Paul Axelrod, \textit{Values in Conflict}.
\textsuperscript{801} Murray G. Ross, \textit{The New University} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 33.
\textsuperscript{802} Jones, “Research on Higher Education in a Decentralized Academic System,” 190-191
education that seem to have emerged organically but similarly across jurisdictions. For example, Jones, Shanahan and Goyan point to prevalent modes of institutional and provincial governance and Jones to Canada’s dispersed by urban population as common influences across many Canadian jurisdictions. Skolnik notes a similar approach to inter-institutional and sectoral-level diversity across many Canadian jurisdictions, while Axelrod highlights the influence of particular religious groups and their historical role in shaping higher education across Canada as well as the influence of Canadian economic policy on the expansion of higher education. Axelrod argues that in both cases, these factors had a similar influence on higher education across English Canada that was very different from the influence exerted by the same forces, as they manifested differently, in the United States. Most importantly, however, scholars have identified a series of characteristics unique to higher education in Canada, at least in combination. Jones argues that Canada has its “own idea of what a university is and should be.” According to Jones, the Canadian university is public and autonomous, secular, and has exclusive authority over the granting of degrees. The nature of undergraduate education across Canada, while it has not yet, could similarly serve as both a marker of and an influence on the understanding of the similarities and differences across Canadian jurisdictions, as has been the case in the United States.

Indeed, as noted in Chapter 6, while the United States has a very diverse higher education system, this system also shows striking elements of homogeneity in the curriculum. Furthermore, U.S. histories of the curriculum make it clear that this homogeneity derives from a distinct top-down pattern in curricular development: throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a very small number of very elite institutions directed much curricular innovation, which was then deliberately and explicitly copied across the U.S. As the U.S. system expanded from elite to mass, however, these elite institutions retained their positions as curricular pioneers and planners. A striking example of the tendency for U.S. schools to deliberately import and emulate particular curricular approaches

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808 Ibid, 69-80. Though, it should be noted, some institutions in the Ontario college sector have recently begun to offer applied degrees.
from the top institutions is that found in the case of the mid-century Harvard curriculum report *General Education in a Free Society*, where many other institutions were, in fact, much more successful than Harvard in implementing the recommendations of that report.\(^{809}\) This tendency itself reflects the fact that as the higher education system in the United States expanded in the post-war period, the U.S. retained its elite institutions within a mass (and later universal) system. While Trow’s descriptions of elite, mass and university higher education describe system-level participation, Marginson\(^{810}\) and Kerr\(^{811}\) both describe higher education in the U.S. as a series of three sectors, each defined by their mission and by different levels of selectivity, and each representing the characteristics of one of Trow’s systems. These three sectors co-exist (sometimes even within a single institution).\(^{812}\) One result of this co-existence of multiple types of institutions and systems is a clear (though informal) hierarchical pathway for ideas and innovations as institutions outside of the elite sector work to transform themselves into elite institutions.\(^{813}\)

By contrast, however, the limited information available about the undergraduate curriculum across Canada and Ontario suggests, as noted in Chapter 1, that the undergraduate curriculum at the U of T remained relatively unique among its Canadian peers despite the U of T’s status, during this period in particular, as a leading institution in the province and the country. At the beginning of this period, the U of T had a greater proportion of students in its honours programs, and a much more dramatic separation between its honours and general students than other Canadian institutions. As the period progressed, there are also indications that some other institutions did not share – at least not as enthusiastically – the U of T’s confidence in the ability of specialization to provide a liberal education. When new institutions were established in the 1960s, they in particular seemed not to share some of the beliefs about student learning and the goals of undergraduate education that deeply influenced curriculum at the U of T. In some cases – again, most notably York University –


\(^{812}\) In fact, Kerr argues that they may even have a symbiotic relationship, noting that:

mass and universal access higher education can help identify new talent for transfer into the elite sector; they can make it possible for the elite sector to become more elite - both Harvard and the University of California are more elite today than when they, in fact, carried on more of the less selective functions in the absence of a mass sector. Kerr, “Higher Education: Paradise Lost?” 266.

the U of T approach to undergraduate education was explicitly rejected\(^{814}\) in favour of the broad and common education provided by the American model of general education.\(^{815}\) A broader investigation of curriculum across Canada would demonstrate the extent and potential roots of these differences. If curriculum looked very different in different institutions and jurisdictions across Canada, a hypothesis to explore would be the question of whether the policy decision to retain relative homogeneity in institutional type during the expansion of the 1960s led to, counter-intuitively, the development of (at least) two distinct curricular traditions. The older universities, established in the nineteenth century, drew on what they perceived as successful contemporary curricular models as they developed their undergraduate programs. In the case of the U of T and other institutions established in early- and mid-nineteenth century, the most dominant models were Oxford and Cambridge.\(^{816}\) The institutions of the mid-twentieth century presumably did likewise, drawing at least in part on the dominant general education model from the U.S. Within a relatively homogenous system,\(^{817}\) rather than a hierarchical and differentiated one like the U.S., there was no clear trajectory for inter-institutional curricular trends. This may have allowed for the development of multiple curricular paradigms. Alternatively, if structures ultimately look relatively common across Canada, that would suggest that Canadian institutions ultimately migrated towards common assumptions and structures despite their different foundational historical influences. In this case, what forces were behind this ultimate homogenization? Either finding would substantially contribute to understanding the degree to which undergraduate education, and indeed universities more broadly, in Ontario or Canada can be understood – or not – as a coherent system or model.

**THE CURRICULUM AS A SOURCE FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON**

Much as the significance of the curriculum extends beyond the institution, it also extends across jurisdictions as a very valuable point of comparison. The substantial differences in curricular philosophy and approach between the U of T and the U.S. respond to the call, noted in Chapter 2, for a deeper understanding of other elements of distinction between higher education in Canada and

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\(^{814}\) Ross argued that in order for York to “avoid mediocrity, or duplication of the accepted form of an encrusted university, it was necessary to discover more refined and subtle needs, which required fresh thinking about university aims, organization and development.” Ross, *The New University*, 3-4.

\(^{815}\) Ross, *The New University*, 33-41.

\(^{816}\) A third possible model might emerge from Western Canadian institutions, which were, according to Jones, influenced by the “American state university model.” Jones, “Canada,” 627. Harris argues that the Western Canadian universities were influenced by the University of London Model. Harris, *A History of Higher Education in Canada*, 114.

\(^{817}\) As discussed in Chapter 6; see also Skolnik, “Diversity in Higher Education: The Canadian Case.”
the U.S. One area of further research to which this study points is an investigation of the influence of the Toronto Scheme on other aspects of the undergraduate experience, including in particular academic advising and co- and extra-curricular activities. In other words, how did the understanding of the curriculum influence or reflect the student experience more broadly? There are some substantial indications of these influences in the challenges that emerged as a result of the implementation of the New Programme; the sense that much academic community was lost when the formal honours programs were dissolved indicates that much of the academic support and advising took place within departments. This would be another important distinction from undergraduate education in the U.S., where, Cook notes, that the professionalization of academic advising and its consequent move out of departments to a service provided at the divisional level was clearly established by the 1920s. Other aspects of student life, such as co-curricular opportunities and student clubs may follow a similarly decentralized and program-centred pattern in contrast to the divisional-level, professionalized student services and support offered in the United States. The relatively substantial existing research on student life at the U of T may be reviewed with this question in mind. Of course, the presence of the colleges and the variations in their roles over the course of the second half of the twentieth century also has a strong influence on these issues.

In addition to informing our understanding of Canadian higher education in its distinctions from its neighbour, however, this study also has the potential to inform the study of undergraduate education in the American context. As noted in Chapter 6, and as Tierney argues, many of the assumptions about undergraduate education in the United States are so deeply taken for granted that they are rarely articulated – but this further means that they are rarely challenged or assessed. It is for this reason that Squires argues for the value of understanding as much as possible about as many different systems of undergraduate education as possible. He writes: “The undergraduate curriculum

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could be otherwise. There may be good reasons for it being as it is, but it could be different, and is different in other countries. Even the fact that it could be different, let alone any evidence that it might be capable of improvement, justifies study of it.”

Alternative models provide an opportunity to reflect on native structures and a new lens through which to identify unspoken assumptions that are not taken for granted in other jurisdictions. Skolnik and Jones note that this can be particularly useful when the two sectors in question share substantial similarities, writing that:

it is because of the apparent similarities between the United States and Canada in so many realms that comparative educational studies between the two may be particularly instructive. The limited variation in institutional and cultural factors between these two countries – in contrast to comparison of either North American country with other nations – may enable the researcher to isolate the influence of particular educational variables more successfully.

As such, this study may identify new ways of studying the curriculum in other jurisdictions, and particularly in the United States, providing new questions to ask, lineages to trace, and structures to compare.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CURRICULUM TO THE HISTORY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The curriculum until now has remained a relatively unexplored field in Canadian higher education. This study has demonstrated its potential significance to understanding a range of issues in higher education in Canada. The Toronto Scheme represents a coherent approach to undergraduate education that is distinct from existing well-studied models. This approach, furthermore, indicates avenues for further investigation and analysis that expands across a wide swath of Canadian higher education, including the significance of the relatively homogenous approach to massification and the ongoing transition to a more differentiated system. This study should inform other aspects of the U of T’s history, as the case of the colleges and of the relationship between the curriculum and this institutional structure indicates. It also helps us understand the degree to which Canada can be understood to have a national approach to higher education and, if not, may indicate some of the causes and patterns of this difference. Finally, it provides essential pathways for the investigation of differences between Canadian and American

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undergraduate education that until now may have been significantly underestimated, to the potential detriment of scholarship in the field in both contexts. The Toronto Scheme, in other words, tells us much more about higher education at the U of T, in Ontario, Canada, and indeed globally, than an initial glance at academic calendars might suggest.
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