

# The Iris

Vol. 9, No. 5

May 8, 1974



*The Disciplines  
bestow  
gifts upon  
the  
Commons Course*

# Editorials

## Time To Make Responsibility Pay Off

For some time it has been obvious that certain positions held by students on this campus carry with them much work and responsibility but little reward. Three people on this campus are particularly affected by this situation: L.C.'s SGA president, L. C. II's Community Manager, and the editor of the Ibis.

On campuses across the nation, student body heads and newspaper editors are paid. This is done for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways. Certainly these positions entail as much time and energy as any job a student might hold. The present non-paying status thus dis-

criminate against students with financial problems, making it difficult or impossible for them to serve in these areas.

Surely the three organizations involved — the women's student government, the men's student government and the Ibis could budget an extra \$200 to apply toward the tuition costs of these students. Of necessity it must be a mandatory and non-

excludable part of each budget, lest it be "cut" at the slightest financial setback.

It seems a small price to pay if Lindenwood is to have the best of all its students in these positions.

*... to produce a newspaper responsive and responsible to the actions and needs of the Lindenwood College Community. ... to assemble a record, both verbal and pictorial, of the year's events for that community. ... in so doing, to create a publication embodying journalistic and photographic excellence worthy of the respect of the community.*

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

The pictures printed for the article "Jocking at Lindenwood" seem to be contradictory to both the article and the editorial of the April 19th issue of the IBIS. The photos of Butler gymnasium and Butler pool suggest the adequate if not considerable size of these facilities. We agree with your expoundment on the existent limitations of these structures. However, the angle that the pictures were taken from is such that the pool and gym appear to be greater in size than they actually are.

Thank you,  
Sue Good  
Kay Ferneding

## The Ibis

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## Dr. Hood Led First Common

by Chris Coleman

Dr. Hood was the first director of the Lindenwood Common Course, and he has seen many changes in the course. "The Commons has changed a great deal," said Dr. Hood. "In the beginning there were nine instructors, three from each division. During my two years as director, selecting Commons faculty was done by the director and the Dean." The themes for the first two years of commons were "Change," "The way institutions change," "War and Peace," and "Race Relations."

In instructing students in literature and composition, Dr. Hood feels the Common was successful. But the majority of the students of the Common of that time had a good understanding of English. This is a much different situation from that of the more recent Common's students. Many of these students do not have good basic writing skills. The present Common staff feels that there is a strong need for a new emphasis on writing and will structure the Common next year with that thought in mind.

Dr. Hood discussed the importance of Commons. "Prob-

lems in our society cannot be solved by single disciplines; you need a variety. This is something the Common offers. Also, it is helpful in a mechanical way; it's one class that every freshman is involved in, which creates a better relationship between the students. If we are not going to have a lot of general education courses, the Common is necessary." But as with many good things there are negative aspects. "The Common Course has the same problem any required course would have—some people do not take to the idea that they are required to do anything. The Common has not been badly received after the students had already experienced it."

In response to a question regarding what things can be done to improve the Common Dr. Hood said, "First the need is for more money; but then, all of the courses taught could use more money. When the Common first started we had a larger budget than they have now. Also, the Common needs dedicated faculty, instructors who are willing and would like to teach in a team, in a multiple disciplinary system such as the Common."

## Dr. Wier Heads Present Course

by Chris Coleman

"The selection of faculty as usual, remains the same as last year," said Dr. Wier, director of the Common. "It requires a great deal of bargaining with the faculty and the only qualification for selection is availability within reason." The Common this year was set up as in previous years, and the theme was "Values and Human Interaction. The Embodiment of Values in Social Institutions and the Nature of Change."

"Has the Common been successful?" says Dr. Wier. "It definitely has been. In the lower third of the class, there has been a noticeable im-

provement in composition." The Common has given each student a wide variety of literature to increase his scope.

Most of the faculty for next year will remain the same with two possible exceptions, Mr. Perrone, and Mrs. Heusemann. Dr. Soda and one other faculty member not yet selected are to take their places.

There will be some very noticeable changes in the coming Common term of 1974-1975. The second term workshop will be dropped, but the independent study will be retained. The Common's staff is now in the process of developing new themes for next term and the structure for the first half.

## Common Created To "Probe The Present"

by Beth Caples

"When the Lindenwood faculty approached the task of curriculum review in the spring of 1967, the discontinuity with the past was uppermost in their minds. The accepted types of historically oriented courses seemed inadequate to approach present realities. Some new way of probing the present was needed".

Dr. James Hood 1968  
Editorial in Lindenwood  
College Bulletin

The faculty's answer was the course known as Common, and Dr. Hood became its first director. The Common wiped away the up to 60 hours of required courses needed for graduation at most colleges. Instead, each freshman was only required to take two hours of Commons each Monday and Thursday. The faculty, feeling it was important for students to have a background in a variety of courses, sought 9 members of the faculty to teach the Common, taking economics instructors, chemists, history professors, etc. Every 7 weeks the class rotated a different professor in order to understand, for example, how a biologist's views on the question of technology in the future, differed from a historian.

Common thus became a "thinking class," a sort of philosophy class dealing with changes. As Dr. Hood said, "If we don't know when to spot changes in our society and understand them, then we become imprisoned by them."

### The first meeting was a picnic

The first meeting of the Common took the form of an all-day picnic held at Meramec State Park. Subsequent meetings that year were held in the same casual fashion. "We didn't want to go the route of teacher-behind-desk, students in-their-prospective-chairs atmosphere" explained Dr. Hood. "Due to the nature of the material discussed, such as futurism, the teacher was learning just as much as the student." Guest speakers were not uncommon. There were times that a professor, in walking down the street would meet someone with interesting ideas and invite them to be a guest speaker. At the same time there were other more famous speakers, for example, poet-novelist James Dickey. If no lecture group discussion, plenary session or guest speakers were charted for a class, which often was the case, the class session would be spent discussing ideas that the students brought in with them.

### It surprised students to see teachers disagree

"Sometimes they spent the whole two hours arguing about a book like *A Clockwork Orange*; other times they would talk about a subject ordinarily discussed only between two intimate friends in the privacy of a dorm room." Dr. Hood smiled, "One time," Dr. Hood's smile broadened in remembrance, "We were having a panel discussion and the faculty got into a shouting match. I think it somewhat surprised the students to see teachers disagree with each other."

Have the beginning goals of the Common been realized? "I really couldn't say," Dr. Hood candidly replies. "I don't know much about how the course is operating today, but from I hear, it sounds like the course is getting away from the philosophy aspect to concentrating more on how to write well. And I also know that a lot of students are dissatisfied with the course. But I've found out that students usually don't like the course while they're taking it, but after they're out and looking back, they say they rather enjoyed it. I think every student appreciates a college's effort to modernize their education, and besides anything's better than a host of required courses."

# Non-Common's Staff Express Opinions

by Mary Cox

The questionnaire sent by the Ibis to the Lindenwood faculty who have not taught the Common asked three questions: Why have you never taught the Common? What do you think are its major attributes? and what do you see as its largest flaws, what would you like to see changed?

Thirteen faculty members responded . . . . their general impression was that the major attribute of the Common was its multi-disciplinary approach, and that its flaw was in basic English composition practice. The majority of those responding said they hadn't taught the course because they hadn't been asked to teach it or they didn't have the time.

Nearly all those responding cited the interdisciplinary approach in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences as the best point of the Common Course. They also listed several other attributes.

Dr. Linda Nelson sees it as "an early exposure to the personal discipline required for independent study". Several professors pointed out the value of the encounter with different teaching styles and personalities. Dr. Esther Johnson said it stimulates creative thinking on contemporary issues. Another instructor

mentioned the worth of making students think about values.

Concerning flaws in the course and possible changes, the general response was that the teaching of English composition within the course was inadequate. Dr. Agnes Sibley called for more of an emphasis on the writing part of the course "so that our students might be able to write English when they graduate".

Several faculty members mentioned the need for more work in the humanities, as part of the course. As Dr. Greenlaw put it, "I would like to see more time given to the arts . . . not just avant-garde, but a large cross section of the arts in western civilization."

Dr. Soda sees the biggest flaw as "the fact that students seem to be put in the position of writing papers on subjects about which they have nothing (or very little) to say."

Several responses indicated a teaching problem. Tom Smith said, "Teachers that are qualified for such a course are few . . ." He also expressed concern that instructors for the Common course are "chosen because of their light work load rather than their ability."

Dr. Linda Nelson says "Any team teaching arrangement needs a fantastic amount of time

and commitment on the part of the faculty to reach the level of adequate instruction . . . But multi-disciplinary approaches requires a team effort. Thus faculty scheduling should acknowledge this reality." Dr. Nelson suggested more student input in planning topics for the course and senior majors as tutors for independent research projects.

One faculty member felt that "The grading system based on attendance is undesirable."

Dr. Elwood Miller pointed out that the Common has a poor catalog description and that transfer institutions have trouble determining what kind of credit to give for it.

Dr. Howard Barnett, Dean of the faculty, felt that the Ibis question about the flaws in the Common Course was "inappropriate". He stated: "The Common is continuously subject to review and has changed every year. The environment in which any course is offered is important to its success. To subject a course to yearly review and to an expose of faults puts a severe strain on the environment. Circumstances and people change; adaptation must be made in the program accordingly. Is it a flaw in a course which subjects it to change?"

## Faculty Teaching Course Respond to Questionnaire

by Joyce Meier

To answer certain questions that the Common-Course has raised the Ibis staff undertook a survey of the faculty, placing questionnaires in the boxes of 11 professors. Of the professors who had taught or were presently teaching the Common, eight responded to the questionnaire.

The first question of the survey asked what were strong points of the course. This drew a variety of answers. However, nearly all seven listed the interdisciplinary nature of the course for both students and instructors as one positive factor. One professor wrote that the Common course added an "element of uniqueness" to the Lindenwood curriculum. Other points mentioned were the interaction between students and faculty as well with as other students, the exposure to good speakers, and the avoidance of the monotony often found in freshmen English courses at other colleges. Another professor wrote that often the course was "very challenging", and that besides giving professors an opportunity to meet new students, it gave students a chance to meet

faculty and other students, from both on and off campus.

Some professors also cited the learning value of the Common, the value of student research at a serious level in freshman year (the 30-page Commons paper), and of writing papers on current topics. One professor felt the Common to be a good base for further study.

The second question of the survey concerned negative factors of the Common. Among these were complaints about the techniques used to evaluate students. One professor wrote that the course was too structured and systemized. Other professors cited the heavy work load involved for the instructor (forced to teach outside of his or her own discipline) and that the course tried to cover too much material. Another professor felt the course enabled students to get out of work, that students did minimal reading and wrote their papers the night before handing them in, thus doing little serious research. More than one professor mentioned the lack of support they received from fellow faculty members. It is interesting

to note that while one professor felt there was an overemphasis on writing in the course, another felt there wasn't enough. One professor felt that the faculty could use more outside help, for example the English Department, for students with writing problems.

Is the Common course succeeding in its goals of helping the students learn communication skills? One professor felt that the faculty could use training in discussion techniques. As for writing skills, during the past three years SAT verbal scores have declined 18% nation-wide. Students now entering Lindenwood College reflect this decline. Their composition problems are far more severe. In addition, Missouri high schools now require only one composition course so we can expect severe problems in the future. To meet these problems, the first 6 weeks of the Common will be an intensive composition course.

To the question concerning the improvements the Common course has undergone, these were mentioned: the number of

cont. on pg. 6

# Students Review Common Course

by Linda Swartzenberg

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In an effort to find out how effective students believe the Common to be, the IBIS sent a brief questionnaire to all full time students.

A total of 103 questionnaires were returned, breaking down into 40 students currently taking the Common, 27 students from the 1972-73 session, 14 students from 1971-72, 15 students from 1970-71, and 5 students who took the course in 1969-70. Two students who took the Common for two years also replied; their answers were not used for these figures.

Better than half those responding had taken an English composition course, either at another college or as high-school seniors, prior to taking the Common.

Year took Common	#responding	#had Eng. Comp.
1969-70	5	4
1970-71	15	6
1971-72	14	10
1972-73	27	11
1973-74	40	23

Students who took such a course were asked to compare the effectiveness of the Common in teaching writing skills to that of the composition course they took. Overall four said the Common was more effective, sixteen felt it was about as effective as the other course they had taken and better than half—thirty-three—felt the Common was less effective in this area. One student abstained saying there was "no comparison".

Year took Common	#responding	Effectiveness		
		More	Same	Less
1969-70	4	2	1	1
1970-71	6	1	2	3
1971-72	10	0	3	7
1972-73	11	0	5	6
1973-74	22	1	5	16

All students were then asked to "agree" or "disagree" with five statements about the Common. The first and third statements dealt with the Common as an effective instrument for teaching writing skills and with the Common's workshop's effectiveness in aiding students with writing problems. Students who

took the Common in 1969-70 were excluded from this question as the workshop did not exist then. Those who had previously taken an English composition course said 42 to 17 that the Common was not effective in teaching writing skills. The same students narrowly decided 26 to 20 that they did not feel the Common's workshop effectively help students with writing difficulties.

Students who had not taken English Composition prior to the Common also felt 34 to 12 that the Common was ineffective in teaching writing skills. By a margin of 25 to 17 they felt the workshop was effective.

Students were also asked to agree or disagree with three other statements. There was overwhelming agreement, 77 to 21, with the statement "The subjects discussed in the Common were relevant to the world today".

## RESPONSES TO STATEMENT 2

Year took Common	#responding	Agreed	Disagreed
1969-70	5	5	0
1970-71	14	12	2
1971-72	13	10	3
1972-73	27	21	6
1973-74	39	29	10

Statement four, "The Common was effective in exposing me to the different approaches the various disciplines might take toward a topic," showed those responding to be evenly divided in their opinion. The "disagreed" by a narrow margin of 52 to 48.

## RESPONSES TO STATEMENT 4

Year took Common	#responding	Agreed	Disagreed
1969-70	5	4	1
1970-71	15	6	9
1971-72	14	7	7
1972-73	27	13	14
1973-74	39	18	21

The final statement also found that overall students were evenly divided. Forty-four students agreed and fifty-five disagreed with the statement "I gained a further insight or a new perspective into the issues of the world today through reading the literature which was incorporated into the Common's curriculum." There was a division of opinion in 1970-71 and 1971-72 with students "disagreeing" by better than two to one.

## RESPONSES TO STATEMENT 5

Year took Common	#responding	Agreed	Disagreed
1969-70	5	4	1
1970-71	15	5	10
1971-72	14	4	10
1972-73	26	12	14
1973-74	39	19	20

## Lindenwood Holds Honors Day

Lindenwood's Annual Honor's Day program was held today at 1:30 in the Jelkyl Center for the Performing Arts. The program opened with choral selections by the choir under the direction of Dr. Kenneth Greenlaw.

Following the greeting by Dr. McCluer, Dr. Ester Johnson, Professor of Religion and Philosophy, gave the first of her three speeches, beginning with "Faithfulness and Creativity: Performance".

Art and writing were honored, starting with Mr. John Wehmer, who recognized several students for their achievements in art this year. Then Tommy Buell and Jan Richmond presented the Griffin Awards to Louise Beauchamp for drama; Tommy Buell for poetry; Joan Lambert for song; Conrad Miller for photography; and David Walsh for art. Dr. Howard Barnett then presented checks to Rosemary Sewell winner of the Spahmer Creative Writing Award and also to runners up Maelou Baxter and Stan Seidel, and Miss Jean Fields presented Ibis staff members with certificates and pins honoring their award winning entries in the MCNA's newspaper competition.

Mrs. Fern Bittner noted the accomplishments of equestrians during the past year.

Dr. Johnson then gave the second of her speeches, entitled "Creative leadership which enables persons and groups to achieve their highest potential: all college affairs".

After Dr. Johnson's speech Betsy Bomberger and other members of Linden Scroll presented those students who have been selected for next year's Scroll.

Deans Doris Crozier and Patrick Delaney then presented students selected for Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities with certificates honoring their achievement.

Mrs. Jeanne Huesemann then discussed

Alpha Lambda Delta, the freshman women's honorary society and named those students who have been inducted this year.

Dr. Patrick Delaney, dean of L.C. II, followed, with the presentation of the Lindenwood College II Outstanding Senior Award to John Dooley.

Dr. James Hood explained Alpha Sigma Tau, the senior women's honorary society, and announced the names of those chosen for the society this year.

Dr. Johnson then presented her final speech, "The search for facts, meanings, and values: individual and departmental studies". Following her speech she presented the C. Eugene Conover Awards Religious Studies to four students: Richard Ford, Lisa Forstmann, Mary Kister, and Christina Steffen.

The Chemical Rubber Co. Freshman Chemistry Award was presented to Kim Fisher by Dr. John Bornmann of the chemistry department.

Music awards were presented by Dr. Kenneth Greenlaw and Miss Allegra Swingen, with Dr. Greenlaw announcing Terry Eddington as the winner of the Presser Music Foundation Scholarship and Miss Swingen presenting the Mu Phi Epsilon Professional Senior Achievement Award to Gwen Stone.

Mrs. Hueseman then spoke briefly about Pi Mu Epsilon.

Following the recognition of the faculty by Dr. Howard Barnett, dean of the faculty, Dr. McCluer closed the program with the announcement of the following retirements: Miss Mary Ambler, librarian; Miss Lula Clayton Beale, registrar; Mrs. Helen Davies, head resident of McCluer Hall; Dr. Luis Galvez, professor of Spanish; Dr. Agnes Sibley, professor of English; and Dr. Hazel Toliver, professor of Classics.

# Delaney Upgrades Sports

by Mitch Rubens

During the period of time in which Dr. Patrick F. Delaney Jr. has been Dean of Lindenwood College II the interscholastic athletic program, under his direct supervision, has undergone tremendous growth. If someone had suggested in 1971 that by 1974 Lindenwood College II would be able to compete athletically with an institution of the size and stature of St. Louis University, he surely would have been accused of delusions of grandeur. These "delusions" became reality however on April 26 when the Lindenwood College II Tennis Team defeated St. Louis University 5-4.

Dean Delaney, an excellent golfer as well as a rugged competitor on the basketball court, thinks that athletics are important in the total scheme of things. "I myself enjoy going out and competing, be it on the golf course or in a pickup basketball game. Besides the obvious reason of keeping physically fit, athletics affords the individual the opportunity to express himself in a manner that, for instance, may not be possible in the classroom. In short, athletics is wonderful for the body as well as the mind."

Since Dr. Delaney assumed the duties as Dean of Lindenwood College II, he has established baseball and tennis teams as well as upgrading the coaching staff by hiring professional coaches Larry Volo, Pat Lacey and Bo Sylvia. He states, "The hiring of these men was a step to upgrade the athletic program. I feel that in any endeavor quality is the key. That (quality) is what we are striving for, but we must keep all of this in perspective. We will never be a 'jock' school." There has been much talk of late concerning athletic scholarships at Lindenwood.

Partially in response to this, the Lindenwood College II Board of Trustees requested that an advisory committee be established for the purpose of making recommendations concerning the sports program at Lindenwood College II. The members of this committee were chosen from the administration, faculty, student body, and alumni. The Committee is composed of chairman Dean Delaney, and members Dean Doris Crozier and Dr. Richard Berg of the administration; Dr. Edward Balog, co-coach of the Lindenwood College II tennis team; Ms. Joy Ebest, who heads the Physical Education Department; Mr. Arthur Kanak and Dr. James Hood of the faculty; Brian Hare, Ed Lovinguth, and Glen Cerny from the student body and alumni Richard Slaughter, Tom Klinghammer, and Bob Peters.

Some of the questions the advisory Committee is considering are (1) Should part-time students be allowed to participate on athletic teams? (2) Should we have scholarships based on just athletic ability? (3) Should we have scholarships for student-athletes, that is, students with fairly good grades who have ability in sports? (4) What standards must our athletes maintain (academic and disciplinary)? (5) How should our athletic facilities be improved? What new facilities do we need? (6) What opponents should we play and what type of league should we enter? and (7) What can be done to generate interest and support for our sports program?

When these questions are resolved Lindenwood College II will have a definitive framework from which the athletic program can function.

# Faculty Response to Survey (cont.)

hours for meeting had decreased, and students are now tested on the material covered. Ways mentioned in which the course had declined were the increase of student-faculty ratio and the lack of support from other faculty members.

It is interesting to note that of all the professors who had taught the course, none had very negative comments to make about it. On the whole, the remarks were positive. In fact, one professor wrote about freshmen students tending to criticize the Common simply because they were forced to take it. Speaking of the "Common Complaint," this professor felt that often students were biased against the course before they even took it, and that the longer they were here, the better they liked it. Perhaps the mood of those who responded to the questionnaire who had been involved in the Common is best summarized by this comment written by one professor: "It is a valuable course, and with some minor modifications could provide an excellent beginning point for a sound liberal education."

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