

Curriculum 'suggestions'

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ARLINGTON

Earlier this month, the William and Mary Board of Visitors approved the new curriculum that Provost Michael Halleran presented.

ESSAY Halleran asserts that all students will be required to take courses in three domains: arts and humanities, social sciences, and natural science. Professor Paul Davies asserts that the new curriculum does not have a requirement for social sciences and has a loophole that allows a graduate to bypass natural science as well, if desired.

They cannot both be right. After reviewing the curriculum as presented to the faculty Dec. 10, 2013, I have concluded that Professor Davies is correct and Provost Halleran is not.

With the new domain "Culture, Societies and the Individual" (CSI) collapsing together W&M's previous social science and history requirements, a student can take two history courses and never take any social science — and vice versa.

A student could graduate from this liberal arts university never having taken a course in economics, American history, or government.

No American history re-

quirement at the second oldest college in the country is a travesty and spits on the biggest claim to fame W&M has.

No economics or government requirement produces a graduate unable to understand the complexities of American politics and the economy and thus unfit to cast an informed vote.

Natural science can indeed be skipped in favor of some kind of "quantitative reasoning" course.

And "content" is nonexistent.

No one — not the provost, not the professor, no one — knows what courses are included in the CSI domain because the powers that be haven't decided yet. So much is left up in the air in this curriculum, it is a wonder the entire faculty isn't in an uproar over the uncertainties it presents.

If two or more courses outside history and social sciences are approved to fulfill CSI (and they could very well be), then a student could graduate without history or social science of any kind.

This would make Halleran's "requirements" mere "suggestions" for graduation. We are to just trust that he and his committee will do the right thing down the road. Pass it now; we'll find out what's in it later.

It makes the curriculum a

Curriculum

Halleran's report is available online at wm.edu/about/administration/provost/documents/bov-curriculum-report-2014.pdf.

The new curriculum as it stands today can be read at kkbruno.com/CurriculumStatement2014.pdf.

hollow core, with as much substance and nutrition as cotton candy.

The provost, then, is either grossly uninformed or has willfully misrepresented the facts to the local papers and to the Board of Visitors.

The board, now aware of the inaccuracies presented as truth by the provost, should consider rescinding its approval of the new curriculum and insist on a product that is clear, easy to understand and describes the content for all required course work.

Facts are stubborn things. The mess that Halleran created more than three years ago can be cleaned up, but it will take a board with a strong constitution to do so.

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