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THE SENSE OF THE UNIT  
A Fourth-Year Analysis of the Unit One Experiment

Charles Meyerson

LAS 210

Paul Hoover

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#### I. Introduction

This project grew out of my interest in seeing the Unit One program continue despite threatened budget-cuts. In attempting to get credit for undertaking this work, I came up against the bureaucracy which has driven many students to characterize the University of Illinois as an impersonal place which grudgingly gives out credit for sincere and genuine learning projects. Nevertheless, I petitioned and interviewed the dean of my college office, and finally managed to convince him to let me undertake LAS 210 for credit.

At this point, rumor has it that the project called Unit One will survive in good financial health beyond this spring. That pleases me, but, in a selfish way, I regret that this report will as a consequence play no large role in justifying the Unit's continuance.

I hope, instead, that it will serve two other purposes in the months to come: (1) serve as a cornerstone (or at least a road-marker) for the full-scale evaluation next semester of the Unit, and (2) provide a "state of the Unit" message for future inhabitants of the Unit, if any exist.

Working as I am with a time-handicap (one of my own

making, I admit) and a lack of assistance (I hadn't really anticipated all the potential for analysis involved in a one-page questionnaire) as well as equipment (a computer would have been nice), this report can aspire to be no more than a "sense of the Unit" essay, based on a reasonably representative sample. In synthesizing that sense, I've been fighting a continual battle with my own prejudices. ("Is it legitimate," I remember asking my roommate, "for one to include his own responses in a survey?" I concluded not, and can guarantee that none of the itemized answers is mine.)

The responses to the questionnaire, however, seem to vindicate my conclusions-of-experience that the Unit is a place alive with thought, that the atmosphere is more friendly, open and stimulating than most dormitories and that it means a lot to its inhabitants. This, I hope, is not an indictment of my method but a commendation of my perceptivity.

## II. The Data

The questionnaire which was the primary vehicle for this inquiry is attached to this paper. It was distributed around the middle of November, and it was collected through a process of continual harassment, public notices and door-to-door knocking (thanks, Ken Westphal) which ended only yesterday. The result was 106 responses (out of a potential 338) which reasonably reflect the actual

makeup of the Unit with respect to class- and college-proportions. The only problem is this: those 106 persons are, by nature, the very persons most likely to be favorable to the Unit: Because they are the sorts of persons who take the time to fill out questionnaires, they are also the sorts of persons who may have gone out of their ways to investigate Unit One activities. This could, I fear, prove to be a sample more biased than its taker; that, however, is an issue which cannot be resolved until someone devises a way of getting all the Unit One members to fill out a questionnaire and return it promptly.

The form in question was formulated so that certain questions (#s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 17 and 18) could be answered briefly and in an easily-tabulatable form, to provide concrete numbers on what Unit students are thinking about the program. In addition, question #19 also turned out to be a yes-or-no matter--and it appears on the next pages along with all the rest of the brief-answer questions.

In keeping with my philosophy that some phenomena are best described anecdotally (and I thank graduate student in education Daryl Caulley for reinforcement on that point), questions 11-16 were designed to provide some more subjective views of the Unit. They did, and ~~it~~<sup>thus</sup> presents<sup>ed</sup> another problem of handling: To accurately excerpt from them all

THIS IS ONE IN WHAT WILL PROBABLY BE A SERIES OF QUESTIONNAIRES you'll be receiving in the coming weeks. Their purpose is to document the achievements and shortcomings of Unit One. Your help in gathering the information requested below is essential in determining the future of the Unit, and your time is appreciated.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Please, PLEASE! return this form before you leave for Thanksgiving break to either the Unit One office or Charlie Meyerson (room 37), whose LAS 210 grade hinges on the project's success.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Feel free to use the back of this sheet and other paper for your answers. Please type or write neatly.

- 
1. Your status: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Grad
  2. Your college and your major: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Circle the Unit-related courses you're currently taking:  
LAS 110    LAS 210    MUSIC 199    Independent-study course arranged by  
the Unit and being taken under a  
department-course designation  
not taking a Unit-related course
  4. If you're not taking a Unit course this semester, is it because of (a) lack of time? (b) lack of interest? (c) other? \_\_\_\_\_
- 
5. On a scale of 1=total waste to 5=positively enchanting, rate separately each course you cited in question 3: \_\_\_\_\_
- 
6. If you're not taking a Unit course now, rate your most recent Unit One course-for-credit, and name it, too: \_\_\_\_\_
  7. How much time do you spend on Unit One courses, in relation to your "normal classes? much more more the same less much less
  8. What's the major factor in determining how much time you spend on your Unit One projects? \_\_\_\_\_
- 
9. How much have you participated in noncredit Unit One activities (e.g., Monday at Eight, the Artists-in-Residence program, visiting speakers)? (a) Never attend. (b) Have attended \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (c) Have worked with (name(s)) \_\_\_\_\_
  10. Have you used the darkroom or ceramics lab even though not enrolled in the photo or ceramics classes?                      Yes    No
- \*\*\*\*\*LONGER ANSWERS: Please type or clearly write your answers on the back of this sheet and any additional pages you'd like...STAPLE THEM ALL TOGETHER, OK?
11. Why did you come to the Unit? (Friends' recommendations? The Unit "brochure"? Looked as good as a smaller, liberal-arts college?)
  12. What benefits have you gotten from the Unit?
  13. What problems " " " " " " ? (No time for usual classes? Scorn from non-members of the Unit? College won't give you credit for LAS/experimental courses?)
  14. In a few words, describe each of your credit and noncredit activities with the Unit, and rate each on that 1-to-5 scale in question 5. (Include LAS courses, Music 199, Monday at Eight, etc.)
  15. If you've lived in (or visited extensively) other dorms (on any campus), list them and compare them with Allen Hall. (Food, people, staff, physical facilities, atmosphere, etc....)
  16. If budget cuts have to be made in the program, what would you cut and how (much) would you cut it? (List in the order of your priorities: must-cut to "will if I have to")
  17. It's been suggested that a \$30/semester fee be charged to help pay for the special opportunities and programs Unit students can get.  
Would you be  
(a) financially able to pay the fee?                      Yes    No  
(b) willing to pay it?                                      Yes    No
  18. If you could not pay the fee, would you accept a \$30/semester scholarship to the Unit?                                      Yes    No
  19. Should the Unit be expanded gradually to include all of Allen Hall? Why?
  20. Comments, complaints, suggestions, questions?

\*\*\*THE END. Thanks a lot for your time, have a nice vacation--and remember to return this to Room 70 (Unit One office) or Room 37 (Cheerful Charlie Meyerson) before you leave.

## SOME RAW DATA

TOTAL RESPONSE: 106 returned questionnaires

Question #1--response by class

Freshmen:	57	(54%)
Sophomores:	47	(44%)
Juniors:	2	(2%)

Note that this reasonably represents the proportionate makeup of the 1974 Unit, which has 195 frosh (58%) and 143 sophs (42%).

Question #2--response by college

LAS:	76	(72%)
ENG:	9	(8%)
AGR:	6	(6%)
FAA:	5	(5%)
EDU:	3	(3%)
PE:	2	(2%)
COM:	2	(2%)
BUS:	1	(1%)
no answer:	1	(1%)

Note that this, too, almost duplicates the actual makeup of the Unit, which currently contains 72% LAS students. (cf. Hoover, Paul, and Treichler, Paula, Report on Unit One; November 1974, p.?, Table 1.)

Question #3--Unit-related courses being taken by the response-group

LAS 110:	52
LAS 210:	30
MUS 199:	11
independent study:	1
none of the above:	21

Note that the total exceeds 106, because in many cases respondents indicated that they were taking as many as three of these courses this semester.

Question #4--reasons for not taking Unit One courses (out of 21)

no time:	16
no interest:	5
other:	6

Note that the total is more than 21, because some respondents noted two or more reasons.)

Question #5--approval of courses cited in question #3

1=poor:	0
2=below satisfactory:	5
3=satisfactory:	15
4=good:	43
5=excellent:	40

Question #6--same-scale rating, for those who are not currently taking a Unit course, of their most recent experience in such a class

1:	0
2:	0
3:	3
4:	9
5:	5

Combining the results of questions #5&6 to obtain a composite evaluation of course-satisfaction past and present:

1: 0  
2: 5  
3: 18  
4: 52  
5: 45

Question #7--comparison of amount of time spent on Unit courses with "regular" courses

much more: 8  
more: 24  
same: 27  
less: 32  
much less: 6  
no response: 9

Question #9--participation in non-credit Unit activities

never attend: 45  
have attended: 57  
worked with guests: 30

Note: This question was ambiguously stated, and so were the answers; instead of a listing of activities, it generated a multiple-choice sort of reply.

Question #10--use of darkroom/ceramics facilities without course-credit encouragement

yes: 25  
no: 80  
no response: 1

Question #17--\$30/semester fee for Unit students?

able to pay: 78  
unable to pay: 17  
willing to pay: 80  
unwilling to pay: 18

Question #18--scholarship?

would accept: 72  
would not accept: 8

Note the ambiguity of #18, which the author didn't intend. Some respondents did not answer it if they answered 17(a) affirmatively; others took the hypothetical stance and answered anyway.

Question #19--should the Unit be expanded?

yes: 59  
no: 26  
undecided: 21

Note that, with 66% affirmative and 21% negative, the sophomores more significantly favored this proposal than the freshmen, with only 49% to 28%.

would have required man-(and women-)hours that I did not plan on and that I did, in the end, not have. So I make no claim to have done justice to all the ideas which popped up in answer to the ~~ques~~ questions in question, and I hope that they can provide some stimulus to future evaluators of the Unit. I have tried to be representative in my selections of quotes, but I think that percentages would have been difficult to assign to views taken.

### III. The Results

Questions 5-10 were specifically intended to measure the respondents' degree of dedication to Unit events and pasttimes. The results are both encouraging and discouraging for the Unit. The combination of questions 5 and 6 to get a composite Unit-course evaluation reveals a curve very heavily weighted toward the more favorable end (4-5) of the scale, indicating a high degree of satisfaction with the LAS 110/210 program.

Despite the fact that this year the LAS 110 for freshmen requirement was not enforced, that course has proved more successful in attracting students than the LAS 210 course has. If one (safely) assumes that the 110s are being taken by freshmen and the 210s are being taken by sophomores, one obtains a ratio of about .91 courses per freshman, compared to about .67 courses per sophomore. Neither of the two juniors responding is taking an LAS course, and



the reason, apparently, is a diminishing amount of time and interest in the independent study of the LAS courses. Of the 13 sophomores, for instance, not taking an LAS course, 11 cited "no time" as the reason in their answer to question #4.

The abandoning of Unit-oriented courses as students grow older is apparently an outgrowth of an attitude that develops with the nongraded participation in LAS 110s. As one LAS freshman explained the amount of time he/she spent on her Unit course:

"I consider it desert and there's <sup>not</sup> always room for desert, although I'd like there to be. Sometimes I eat desert first." (Under the "problems with the Unit" question (#13), a couple of respondents suggested that a grade/no-grade option might be attached to the LAS 110 course, to provide a sort of legitimization of the course, and to make work on the projects more "rewarding.")

The major factor cited in determining the amount of work spent on Unit projects was interest in the project. ("I spend time until I am satisfied--that's a lot!" wrote one freshman in FAA.) Cited almost as often as a determining factor was the amount of work left in other (graded) courses, indicating that the S/U option may be a detriment to the amount of work put in by students. Now that the LAS 110/210 option has officially been <sup>EW</sup> opened to the rest

of the University, the college may now want to reevaluate this situation, ██████████ reflected in the answers to question #7, which shows a distinct tendency to spend less time on Unit classes than on other classes.

In terms of the other opportunities offered to those in the Unit, the sample group shows a sharp tendency to underuse some of the non-credit activities. Despite question #9's ambiguity, 45 respondents flatly denied having attended any visiting speakers' presentations, Monday at Eight, the visiting resident artists, etc.

Further, about 75% of the respondents to question #10 said they had not used either the darkroom or the ceramics lab unless enrolled in the appropriate course. (If budget cuts have to be made, then, perhaps students in these courses might be asked to pick up more of the expenses-- or more students could be interested, thus maximizing the efficiency of the facilities.)

Despite this lack of interest<sup>in</sup> (or at least use of) the two Unit facilities which provide the most tangible benefits, respondents almost overwhelmingly indicated that they would pay a \$30/semester fee to remain in the Unit, if such a move became financially necessary for the Unit's continuance. Unfortunately, questions #17&18 were two short-answer questions that perhaps should have been closer to the top of the page. Many students were "scared

off" by the forbidding block of print at the bottom of the page that meant more writing, and they skipped these questions in the process.

At any rate, more students indicated a willingness to pay the fee than indicated they had the money to spare, and the willingness to accept a Unit scholarship was near to unanimous.

~~Since~~ Most of the respondents noted LAS-course skills and opportunities as their biggest benefit from the Unit-- but since the LAS 110/210 program no longer works strictly for Unit students and has, in effect, been opened to the entire University, I propose that this loyalty to the Unit is in large part brought about by a more intangible facet of the Unit.

...And that facet became evident in the answers to the in-depth questions. In particular, the replies to questions #12 (what benefits has the Unit given you?) and #15 (compare Allen Hall/Unit One to other dorms) supplied interesting information.

While almost all the freshmen listed the talents they'd acquired or developed through LAS 110 as their Unit benefits, the sophomores and transfer students emphasized frequently the quite-different atmosphere of the Unit.

An LAS sophomore characterizes Unit One students as "a super group of a few students who are sane and respon-

sible in an insane environment. These students are truly humane!"

Another sophomore, also in LAS, again cites the "environment in which I could 'explore' things that in a normal dorm and/or curriculum I couldn't otherwise have accomplished. I found people whom I love, too." And a freshman in LAS comments on "a kind of unity and familiarity with the people involved, even though I don't know them all." Yet another LAS sophomore echoes that "I've been exposed to a much warmer and freer atmosphere, which in my opinion is a motivational prerequisite for learning."

This atmosphere can, at times, feel exclusive ~~sometimes~~ not only to "non-Unit Oners" but to Unit students themselves, as became evident in the responses to question #13 (what problems have arisen as a result of your Unit membership?):

One disgruntled freshman in LAS had these harsh words:

I think the biggest problem is with the sophomores. They all know each other and make no attempt to get to know the frosh. I went to a couple of Unit One meetings at the beginning of this year and felt like a stranger. It was like everyone there was laughing at a joke I wasn't ket in on. As you can see, I've been completely disillusioned with Unit One.

(Speaking from personal experience, I can remember when similar sentiments were popular with the Unit class of '73; in contrast to what I think the results would have been then, only one student in this survey had criticism for the sophomores' cliquishness.)

An LAS sophomore noted that at least one non-Unit-member

to whom she had spoken characterized the Unit as a "hyped-up fraternity," using the phrase to indicate the (mythical or real?) elitism that Greek houses are noted for. Dean of LAS Robert W. Rogers, with whom I spoke early in the semester, told me that, since its formation early in the 1970s by the CRUEL (Committee to Reform Undergraduate Living and Education) group, the Unit has been charged <sup>with</sup> as being an elite group. He cited a number of Daily Illini articles from 1971-72 as examples, but he agreed that this sentiment has apparently "dropped off" in the intervening years.

A number of respondents said that perhaps the best way to eliminate this "clique" feeling about the Unit is to engage in some massive publicity. "People who aren't in the Unit," wrote another LAS sophomore,

seem to think all we have to do is snap our fingers, saying "I'm from Unit One" and the world is ours. People have told me that being in the Unit gets us into classes that are closed to others, allows us to enroll in any college more easily, etc.

Since the time of this survey's initial distribution, however, steps in that direction of public-relations have been taken--most notably with the second "Unit One Exposed" open house to which most of the University of Illinois hierarchy was invited (but to which few came) and which was publicized in all the dormitories.

Suggesting that what some call elitism might be merely "unity," a sophomore in Engineering elaborates: "You just get a feeling that this place is somehow more human than

other dorms. Maybe," he concludes, "elitists tend to stick together."

This concept of "unity" (an appropriate adjective for the atmosphere of the unit, hm?) won commendation overwhelmingly in the responses to question #15, asking students to compare Allen with other dorms they've visited. A freshman in LAS describes the Allen Unit-members as "a warm, friendly, happy family surrounded by a lot of interesting opportunities and resources." And the words "warm," "friendly," "family," "open" and "relaxed" occurred again and again to describe the dorm-atmosphere of Allen. Even more often, the words "cold" and "impersonal" were applied to other dorms (most of them on campus), including PAR, which one respondent charged was like a "giant Holiday Inn."

An LAS sophomore said that Allen has the distinction of being "easily the loosest, friendliest group-living area at the University." He contrasted Allen Hall with FAR, Bromley and Illini Tower, asserting that "these three places have a very dating-oriented and 'high-schoolish' outlook on life; i.e., pick up girls."

Of the 67% of the sophomores who answered #15, none had negative words about the spiritual "atmosphere" of the Unit. Some excused the food as "typical dorm food," although almost all the respondents who mentioned it said that Allen's food-service is "terrible," "rotten" and one of the main ~~reasons~~ <sup>inducements</sup> for moving out. The few(er) freshmen who replied agreed, for the most part.

Other criticisms about the dorm-situation noted that Allen is physically inferior to many other dorms on campus. It is dingy, some said, and the upstairs (main) lounge is unusable for anything besides watching television when the tube is on and running. Among the feasible suggestions made for improvement:

\*Set aside a separate room for television watching. (This problem may be solved when the lounge is remodeled as promised.)

\*Set aside a reasonable amount of space for a true recreation room. (Personal note: I have seen plenty of harried students c. finals week who could make good use of a punching bag.)

\*Investigate the possibility of setting up a dorm-complex store (as at PAR/FAR). (This might be difficult to maintain in light of the lesser number of students at Allen/LAR.)

A couple of respondents claimed that the Unit One non-structured structure has served to break down "floor cliques" while building up a ground-first-second-floor clique that has in effect eliminated many of the close relationships that accompany one's "membership" in a floor-group.

Contrast that view with this other minority position: "The main problem with Unit One is the snobbish attitudes of the people in it and non-members toward each other." Nevertheless, the dominant response (again, almost overwhelming) is exemplified by the words of this LAS sophomore: "People here tend to be more down-to-earth and innovative--not just worried about G.P.A.s (grade-point-averages)," from a former resident of Bromley Hall.

And the major disadvantage of that situation, as noted by a number of students, is that the free and open atmos-

phere is not always conducive to traditional studying. No one seemed to mind, however, and the general opinion seemed to be that "I wish that I had less classwork so that I could spend more time with the Unit."

The response to question #19 indicated that many respondents agreed that "no one should be denied the 'Unit One experience,'" and most supported the concept of gradually enlarging the program to take in (at least) all of Allen Hall. Those reacting affirmatively emphasized that the expansion should be gradual (not forcing out current residents) and that no attempt should be made to fill a "quota" of the residency of Allen Hall, letting in only those students who request entry and who come of their own accord, not as the result of any recruiting drive. A significant number of respondents noted that the current Unit One set-up could probably comfortably accommodate many more students and that, to double the number of Unit One students would cut in half the cost-per-student of the program. Most of these, though, realized that this is just mathematical folly.

Those who replied negatively to the expansion proposal did so because, in most cases, they thought the Unit could not comfortably accommodate more students without sacrificing the group's sense of community. One LAS freshman put it this way:



I have talked to some of the original Unit One people. They all agree that one of the Unit's big points was the living-together community feeling. The Unit is too big as it is now to promote any more community feeling than occurs through normal dorm life. A reduction of the Unit's size would be much more beneficial (in my opinion) than an increase in size.

Another frequent view is summed up by this respondent, who says that the current (although apparently decreasing, since no one made a big deal out of it under question #13) rivalry between the third and fourth floors would simply expand to an Allen-other-dorms conflict if the Unit took over the hall: "If the Unit is extended to include all of Allen," he said, "Allen will become, in the eyes of the outsiders, a fraternity and a sorority all in one--a world apart."

The question of whether the Unit should be expanded to let in additional applicants involved why students apply.

Answers to question #11 indicated that most students were swayed by the "brochure" the program sends out to incoming freshmen. Since this form has in the past been sketchy about the nature of the Unit (emphasizing instead the LAS 110 concept--which is now no longer exclusively a Unit feature and thus should not be the primary concern of incoming freshmen), and since it does, apparently, play such a dominant role in grabbing the attention of Unit recruits, a serious effort should be made to keep this brochure more "up-to-date" and informative than it

has been in the past.

Other factors frequently cited by students as drawing them to the Unit were its hint of individualism amidst a conformist Big U. "It sounded like an oasis," one respondent wrote, "in a desert of billions of people on the campus." Some looked at the Unit, with its assured space in Allen Hall, as a good way to avoid temporary housing. A couple of students indicated that they'd traveled this path, and both indicated that they were satisfied at Allen.

Next to the brochure, the most-frequently-cited reason for coming to the Unit was recommendation from friends and relatives. Take, for instance, this vignette related by a freshman:

I came to the Unit because my dad forced me to join. I did not want to, and I hated him for it. Faculty members living in the dorm: Icch!  
Now I am here and I love it. I think it is the greatest thing in the University. You can be yourself, do what you want to, and learn by doing it. It is great. I don't consider my Unit courses a chore, even though I learn.

Most respondents refused to deal with question #16 (budget cuts), either by leaving the space blank or by saying "nothing should be cut." Only 15 sophomores (or 34%) dealt with the issue. Freshmen, too failed to react. Most of them listed things that should not be cut. The frequent items here are the artists-in-residence program (cut back the number of artists, one student recommended), the Monday at Eight Series (but reduce it to a biweekly

event, another suggested) and the ceramics and pottery classes. These last two items, as noted above, might be the most ripe for budget-cuts, though, if the survey's response to question #10 is accurate.

Other budgetary ideas came in the form of support for the \$30/semester fee (or a pay-your-tutor-as-you-go fee), the concept of letting students do the secretarial and clerical work for the Unit and the dorm (eliminating a few salaries), the ending of the Unit's rhetoric program (suggested by freshmen a few times), placing an R.A. in charge of the photo lab, cutting the waste of paper (one student--justifiably, I think--complained about all of the one-side-only newsletters that go out), and turning over the LAS 110/210 coordination function to the LAS college.

Confusingly enough, a significant number (almost a plurality of those suggesting cuts) suggested that both the Monday at Eight and Artists-in-Residence programs be cut. In light of the fact that most of those who didn't answer this item did so because they thought "nothing should be cut," this movement is probably not significant.

#### IV. Conclusion

Unit One is, one can hardly help but conclude from these responses, a special place--at the very least in the

minds of its members. One respondent, a sophomore in pre-journalism, likes the Unit so much that he'd like it to be more than a mere subsidiary of the College of LAS:

I wish...that ~~Unit~~ One were a college, in the sense that we could take only courses, seminars, projects, etc., developed within our organization. This would allow the time to sufficiently devote oneself to learning. We should do away with grades and concentrate simply on seminar/tutorial types of learning, with as much practical experience as possible.

The project was begun as an experiment to "reform undergraduate education"; after four years either it has met with some form of success, or the rest of the University has failed miserably in at least one of its charges if a student (~~and~~ <sup>in addition to</sup> many others, as the survey emphasizes) looks at the Unit as a place to escape from the University in order to "devote oneself to learning."

Echoing these sentiments is a sophomore in LAS who writes that the Unit's artists-in-residence "have encouraged me to really think--an uncommon experience elsewhere within the Big U."

In a discussion with me last spring, Prof. Roland Holmes, the director of IPS (the independent-study program) told me that he thinks the Unit (along with IPS and the LAS General Curriculum office) serves a neglected portion of the University population which he calls the "mavericks."

The U of I certainly has no obligation to serve these

academic outcasts who aren't interested in choosing a career right off the bat, but the Unit seems to be, in light of response to this survey, the right sort of place in which to put them.

As things stand now, the program will continue. And that is a credit to those "mavericks" who worked, within the structure, for its continuance. Their level-headed actions to convince the administration of its responsibility to provide for a continuing experimental program probably speak louder than the results of any survey.

I hope this report will serve as a guideline for some needed changes within the Unit's structure. I fear an increased stagnancy in the program. It is imperative, I think, that the Unit and its participants keep clearly in mind that their key task is to avoid that stagnancy and to promote innovation. If no one is around to champion the cause of change for the better, we'll be stuck in another set of dark ages. The Unit, however, like the phoenix rising out of the ashes of the campus revolt of the last decade, is the hope of a new renaissance for undergraduate education.

Excelsior.

And now, after that fever-pitched, emotionally-charged conclusion, allow me to present the Bibliography--which, as originally intended, should have been much longer.

(My grades in my other courses, though, should have been higher, so that I might have devoted more time to this.)

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Hoover, Paul, and Treichler, Paula. Report on Unit One.  
Urbana: Unit One Mimeo, November 1974.

Sanford, Nevitt. The American College. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962. (Inspirational)

Smock, H. Richard, and Terwilliger, Edith R. An Evaluation: Unit I--A Living-Learning Experiment. Urbana: University of Illinois, Office of Instructional Resources, September 1972.

Trent, James W., and Medsker, Leland L. Beyond High School. Berkeley: University of California Center for Research and Development in Higher Education, 1967. (Inspirational.)

(And, on the pages following, the transcript of a special report for WPGU-FM, Urbana, prepared and broadcast in October 1974 on "In-Depth," a half-hour documentary. By Charles Meyerson.)

UNIT ONE has been called one of the last "children of the sixties."

The seventies are now threatening to abort this experiment in ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ individualized learning after only four years.

I'm Charles Meyerson, and this is <sup>WPGU's</sup> In-Depth. I'll be back to take a look at what Unit One is, what threatens it... and what may save it-----right after this.

\*\*\*\*\*

When the student ~~unrest~~ unrest that shook the campus in the late 1960s finally reached the administrative hierarchy of the University of Illinois, the chancellor's office ~~created~~ <sup>formed</sup> CRUEL....That's the Commission to Reform Undergraduate Education and Living, which is currently "on ice" and *inactive*.

Created in 1970 to humanize the often-criticized, "computer-run" campus, CRUEL's first and some say only major achievement was the creation of Unit One, billed since its beginning in 1971 as a "living/learning" experiment. The Unit's goal was to <sup>bring</sup> ~~integrate~~ *closer together* the dorm-room ~~with~~ and the class-room, in order to individualize education.

The board of Trustees authorized the University's Allen Hall as the home of Unit One--and that previously all-girls' dorm was remodeled to include a photography lab, a ceramics room and office space for ~~what~~ those who were to join the Unit One faculty.

Now in its fourth year, the Unit has grown from about 200 students living on Allen's ground and first floors...so that it now serves over 500 students, most of whom are freshmen and sophomores living on the ground, first and second floors of Allen. In addition, Unit alumni are often reluctant to leave the program, and they continue to participate in Unit activities even after they leave the dorm.

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The project was originally funded independently of any college and was solely under the jurisdiction of the chancellor's office. As budgets got tighter, ~~and~~ though, the Unit--which includes students from all the undergraduate colleges--was shuffled off to the College of Liberal Arts and sciences (that's LAS), which had the money to fund the project.

Despite the Unit's changes, though, its basic nature and function seem not to have changed too much from its inception. The Unit's first director, Dr. Allan Purvis, addressed a group of Unit One students at a meeting Thursday night, and he told them this:

---CART 386--cut #1---27sec--outcue: "and learn together."

Purvis, who is currently Professor of English Education for the University, explained what he thought made the Unit a workable ~~program~~ program.

--CART 386--cut 2--:17--extro: "kinky people live together."

THE current director of the Unit, Paul Hoover, explained the more academic ~~benefits~~ benefits of the Unit:

---CART 386--cut #3--:47--extro: "resources available here."

But, this summer, the experiment's end came into sight. Hoover, who replaced Purvis as the Unit's director ~~just~~ just over a year ago, received a letter from LAS dean Robert Rogers, who said that the LAS budget was shrinking--and that, for practical purposes, Hoover should expect this year to be Unit One's last. Rogers explained the rationale for the move this way:

●---CART 386--cut #4--:32---extro: "support for Unit One."

Rogers also told me that he thinks the Unit has served its purpose and that he thinks its time to move on.

---CART 386--cut #5--1:15--"...dimensions of Unit Two."

UNIT TWO, as Rogers envisions it, would focus more on classroom innovation than dorm-living modification.

---CART ~~386~~ 431--Cut #1--:15--extro: "...concept."



333333

I asked him in which ~~XXXX~~ areas he thought a "Unit Two" might experiment.

He responded:

CART 431----cut 2--:25--extro: "traditional curriculum."

The dean confirmed that Unit One's major innovation, the LAS 110 course, would probably outlast the Unit, ~~administered~~ and would be administered by a faculty member. The course has allowed Unit Freshmen to get credit for independent-study and tutorial projects ranging from producing animated cartoons to analyzing the chemical content of stars. For the first time, ~~this~~ LAS 110 was opened to non-Unit students this semester, with fanfare (in the form of Daily Illini ads and Illini Union posters) urging freshmen to sign up.

Unit One sophomore Ron Schwartz told me how LAS 110 had helped him:

---CART 431--cut#3--:20--extro: "in unit activities."

The LAS 110 concept, though, is probably the project most easily adapted for use by the entire university. The Artist-in-Residence program has just gotten under way this semester. Under the program, a number of celebrated artists, writers, musicians and dancers will be living in Allen Hall's remodeled guest quarters for a few weeks each. These practitioners of the fine arts ~~will~~ will be conducting seminars, giving lectures and meeting privately with interested students from the entire University.

Despite widespread praise and interest in the program—and a lot of favorable publicity in the Daily Illini—the program may be ~~done~~ <sup>done</sup> before it gets going.

Unit One Associate director Paula Treichler ~~says~~ told me that she thought the ~~the~~ concept wouldn't work if divorced from the ~~project~~ Unit:

CART 344--~~cut~~ cut #2--1:07--outcue: "...would ~~it~~ work."

(4)

Dean Rogers, however, told me that he thought Artists-in-residence ~~would~~ could probably be set up in other dormitories.

Unit One has been one of the major promoters on campus for women's rights and the development of women's self consciousness. ~~Miss~~ Treichler has been instrumental in coordinating the Unit's Monday at 8 lecture series. The program last year brought hundreds of women from the community to Allen Hall Monday nights, where lecturers spoke on topics ranging from rape to the establishment of day-care centers.

Treichler told me ~~she discussed through the program~~ about her success in bringing the program to Allen Hall:

CART 371--cut#3--:35--outcue: "which to do that."

Dean Rogers claimed that the end of Unit One doesn't signal a return to "old times,"; ...Treichler said just the opposite.

----CART 431--cut 6--:32--"that threatened them."

UNMANNED  
UNARMED "SILVERBIRD"  
"Academic Misfits"

Proponents of the Unit aren't about to give in to ~~those~~ Treichler's ~~academic misfits~~ so easily, though. As Paul Hoover explained, the Unit is fulfilling a valuable function in ~~society~~ the university community:

CART 431:--cut 3--:57--outcue: <sup>individuals</sup> "in the arts."

Allan Purvis told the Unit One students Thursday night that ~~that~~ "creating an audience" can be ~~used as~~ a good lever for getting ~~needed from foundations~~ financial support from large foundations. In outlining possibilities for saving the Unit, Purvis said ~~things~~

CART 344--cut #1--:00--outcue: "it has to be sexy."

Another option facing those who want to save the Unit...is consolidation with other "children of the 60's": Individual Plans of Study <sup>or IPS</sup> and General Curriculum are two ~~other~~ "individualized" IAS programs which ~~have been~~ are ~~potential~~ due for ~~a~~ budget cuts. Rogers has asked the directors of the two offices to consider joining forces and office-space to save money, and he indicated that they might wind up using some of Allen Hall's ground-floor office-space...which could result in ~~reduction of the number of faculty~~

~~Rogers~~ <sup>a</sup> new life for Unit One.

**BUT IT MAY NOT.** Rogers explained why he didn't consider Unit One for consolidation with IPS and general curriculum;

CART 371--cut #2-- :40--"solve them together."

Another option for saving the Unit is the possibility of making Allen hall a special "Dormitory for the fine arts." Successful programs at other universities have asked students to pay an extra \$25 a semester to maintain the sort of programs the Unit operates at the U of I, according to Paul Hoover. He ~~explained~~ told me how such a plan might work:

CART 431--:57--take 4--outcue: artists program here.#

*Most of that \$100,000 budget goes to pay the unit one staff.*

At a ~~special~~ Thursday night's meeting of Unit students, the group discussed other potential methods of saving the Unit. A committee has already been established to write letters to the University administration and to the Illinois General Assembly arguing that the Unit program be continued.

The meeting's hero, though, turned out to be former director Purvis, who suggested one avenue not considered previously.

5 5

PURVIS NOTED THAT one of the original founders and, as he called it, "suggr daddies" of the Unit has been the university's housing division. Telling the group that it should schedule talks with Sammy Rebecca, director of housing, he came up with this suggestion for replacing the staff that might have to be dismissed if IAS drops its funding of the Unit:

CART 411,--cut 1--:20--outcue: photography tutors, etc"

~~Students~~ Students leaving that Thursday meeting were enthusiastic about the Unit's chances of survival. If they succeed in their goal to enlist public support (as well as financial aid) for the program, ~~xxxxxxx~~ future students will have the opportunity to experience what Sophomore Bob Rebitzer describes as a tremendous opportunity to explore the University on a personal level:

CART 386--cut 4--:36--extro: got to offer."

Slow down

No matter ~~what~~ the future of Unit One, the students ~~who have experienced the~~ had lunch ~~at the university of the~~ who have ~~studied~~ with artists from ~~halfway~~ around the world, ~~and~~ hobnobbed with nuclear physicists and explored the history of Mickey Mouse are sure to have gained ~~insight into public relations~~ the more personal relationship with the university that the CRUEL commission ~~intended them~~ <sup>envisioned</sup> to get. ~~They will be able~~ They, at least, will be able to convey their experience in the lviing/learning experiment to future students. ~~Something should be done~~

Music

I'd like to thank Indepth's

I'M CHARLES MEYERSON, AND THIS HAS BEEN IN\*DEPTH, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER--BRUCE KITE.

IN\*DEPTH IS A ~~PROGME~~ PRE\*RECORDED PUBLIC AFFAIRS PRESENTATION OF WPGU NEWS.

# 336 regard ... what happens to Unit 1 (:15) Dear Rogers  
(Paul Hoover's fate)  
why isn't Unit One up for consolidation?

# 336 it reflects an attitude ... solve them together (:40) Consolidation - Rogers  
but ... consolidation is possible

# 132 to have & anticipate ... consolidated of shift (:40)  
(IPSA & GH might take over  
considered space.) (Rogers)

# 139 "we don't expect ... unit 2" (Nice try, but it's time to move on)  
(:15)

# 139 last time & participated ... unit activities (:20) (Ron Schwartz  
on play)

# 139 "I think what I've heard tonight ... <sup>we'd</sup> learn together (:25)

# 409 "what you see as ... <sup>we'd</sup> learning people live together  
(importance of Unit One)  
(:15)

(Purvis on  
addressing unit...  
still is what  
it was to be)

~~# 409 "It seems to me that..."~~

# 414 "It seems to me that... <sup>photography</sup> ~~grammar~~ tutee, etc" (:20)

# 344 "Another way of doing ... & it has to be  
sexy." (:00)

(Purvis on  
Housing...  
Call/talk to  
Rebecca)  
Housing = "Sugar  
Purvis on  
grants to  
Unit One

# 644 "Well, the problem  
... wouldn't work (1:05)

# 371 "LAS 110 should (<sup>Spring</sup> 110+210) 198: also in  
jeopardy" (:41)

# 371 "I think ... (off-campus study & city survival) ... <sup>leaves</sup> all that." (1:55)

# 371 "In a way ... (unit in women's stuff) ... <sup>to</sup> which ~~is~~ do  
that" (:35)

(Treichler  
on problem  
with Artist  
program... &  
divorcing Unit)

# 43 "During the sixties... <sup>cut #5</sup> that threatened them" (10:30)

# 421 "One of ... <sup>6</sup> praise for  
unit ... appreciation of that" (1:05)

TREICHLER