MEMO TO: Members of the Faculty

FROM: The Committee on Educational Policy

SUBJECT: Professor Gaudino's Proposal for a "Williams in the City" program.

Professor Gaudino has submitted (and the CEP has approved) a proposal called "Williams in the City", the second in a three part study of experience and education. The philosophy of the program and the details of its operation are explained in his attached statement.

Because Professor Gaudino will be in India when the faculty considers his proposal on February 11, he has agreed to discuss the program at an open meeting: 4 p.m.; Thursday, January 29, 1970 at the Faculty House. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Lawrence Graver
For the CEP
A student recently graduated from Williams wrote this about his experience working in a city.

"I think that going into Vista is the smartest thing I ever did. I don't think any book on the ghetto, or urban problems, or on the school crises has ever moved me as much as living in the midst of it. There are just some feelings and emotions that books can never bring out. Values and everything about middle class life are questioned. Outside, maybe only a few blocks away, there is a completely different culture with completely different laws and values. I don't think that once you are here you can ever go back and be the same.

"I find myself at odds with this new value system. A good example is the use of physical force and intimidation to convince someone to do something. These are not just values of militants, but accepted by most students and young black people in general. These values are alien to me. I could not possibly accept them as my own, but I sometimes find myself using that method of persuasion (feeling very uneasy, but still using it).

"This brings me to one thing I dislike most about VISTA. During my year in VISTA, I don't think that I am really living. I am not experiencing because experiencing implies the existence of value systems and the integration of present experiences with past ones. Things that happen to me now, they have been shoved into the background not to reappear (and then in a different form) until I return to my culture. I feel as though I am a void. One does not live in VISTA; one gathers facts and information that hopefully will help one live better in the future."

It is difficult to put one's own experiences into perspective. Especially now. It is much easier to isolate it, to treat it as unique, to protect it or to protect oneself. There is a tendency to separate: what we feel from what we do; how we think from what we are; our experience from learning. The conflict of values this student has experienced is a real one. In his case, this conflict does not create understanding but a void. He is changed, but it is not a change of perspective. He separates the world of his own growth and maturity from the one he discovers in VISTA. This separation in his mind is reflected outside in the separation of city from suburb, of blacks from whites, of social class from social class. This separation is a serious problem, one of our most serious. And, it is fundamentally a problem of education.

The aim of the education attempted in these experiments is seeing rather than doing. It is perspective rather than problem solving. It is the suspension of judgment for the purpose of judgment. It is not to deny difference and conflict but to use them to educate. It is to see alternatives as expanding or augmenting. It is to question any one conviction which insists on excluding others. It is to put one's experience, one's learning, one's problem solving, one's convictions, one's feelings into touch with their opposites not for the discovery of the void but for a more humane and perceptive action.
This examination of perspective in education will extend over three years at
Williams. The first year will be a study of India; the second year will examine the
American city. In the third year, a description and evaluation of successes and
failures will be undertaken. This description is in three parts: I) the purposes and
methods of study; II) India as example; III) the American city as example.

I -- The Purposes and Methods

Each program is a year's duration with the autumn semester at Williams and
the rest of the year in India or in a city. The number of students in each year is
15. There is a double credit core course in political science which includes formal
course work, films, lectures, cultural events and discussions with people with
experience. There are two courses from other departments: for India, art and
economics; for the city, art or economics and biology. The content of the double
credit course centers on ideas of public authority, social and economic change,
community and group values, tension and conflict, alternatives.

The focus of both years is a subject matter rather than a discipline. It centers
on India and on the city rather than on the formal disciplines such as biology or
economics. Still these disciplines become important to the student as ways of seeing,
as means of analyzing subject matter, as assumptions of relevance. That is, the
way an ecologist with roots in biological science may see production, the conditions
of growth, a city's needs may be very different from the way an economist sees the
same things. Subject matter cannot really be separated from the way it is seen. It
is assumed in these programs that the theme of transition in traditional society and
in the modern city is a subject matter which, by its very nature, raises fundamental
questions about what knowledge is and how it is conceived and applied. The emphasis
on a defined subject matter amplifies the disciplines which study and illuminate it.
It shows similarity and different. It gives perspective.

The second effect of a subject matter approach is to focus the student's atten-
tion, to give his study a wholeness and coherence. His courses relate to each
other in terms of common themes and issues. Study takes on very personal and
immediate meanings. The student is less liable to accumulate in a haphazard way
an unrelated assortment of facts, insights, theories. He prepares himself for some-
thing significant in his immediate future, something which will place uncertain,
unusual demands upon him. Hopefully, this will open new perspectives, new ways
of seeing, as well as a stronger motivation and a fuller day-to-day involvement in
study. Study takes on an objective reality: the things to be learned necessary to
understanding and living in India and in the city. There is purpose in study.

Throughout these two programs, the aim is to have these two essential parts
of an education, subject matter and the growth of perception in the student, instruct
and inspire each other. The two move together in tension yet amplifying each other.
The greater emphasis in the Williams semester is on formal knowledge, analysis,
academic authority. This is the important grounding for the perspective which will
emerge out of conscious experience. Yet the education is never wholly or exclusiv-
ely this. It remains a matter of emphasis.
At important points of transition in the program taped interviews will be held individually and privately, with each of the students. They will take place at the beginning, after the more formal study at Williams, at the conclusion of the experience, six months after the return to Williams. The length of these discussions will be an hour or more. Each is based on a replay of the interviews before. The purpose is to get the student's assessment of what he expects of his education, what is happening to him while he is learning, what changes occur in his attitudes. In the first interview he examines his former education: in the family, in school, among his peers. The later interviews carry on this assessment of his learning in terms of the period just completed. The student is also encouraged to keep a diary: a day-to-day reflection on what is happening to him. The parents of the student are kept informed of the content and purposes of study. They are encouraged to visit and participate at any point. The purpose is to personally involve them in an understanding of their son's education, to put them in touch with the changes in him.

In their months in India or at work in the city, the students have the responsibility for a paper involving some kind of analysis or perspective. The form this paper may take is open. It may vary from a very analytical, documented study of a specifically defined topic to an analysis of the student's own growth of understanding in reading and action. Each will choose the form appropriate to his learning. The assumption here is that students vary considerably in the way they learn, in the modes by which they express themselves, in the things they find challenging. The important point of discipline is to hold them to performance along the lines of their interest. Even more, to use these differences of style, of effort, of approach to educate each other.

Here then is a third educational aim: to encourage the education of students by students. This does not mean the collapse of authority or the neglect of subject matter. It does not mean the substitution of general bull sessions for clarity and coherence of discussion. It does not mean a situation of equality, nor immediately one of community. At a minimum, it means rather a transfer of authority from institution to students. It means that the students take on the task of questioning and understanding each other. They begin to take on the responsibility of each other's education. The most difficult first thing is to listen to and understand each other. There must be some minimum of trust. There is not just the contrast of different disciplines on the subject matter. There is as well the contrast of personal opinion, of individual personality, of different grounds of judgment. There is an honest exchange and conscious dialogue with others derived from a common study and experience. Important to the success of this program, and a problem in its success, is to have as varied a set of student participants as possible.

This transfer of authority comes about in slow steps and by different means. Through the interviews, diary, participation, the student begins to gain some insight on himself. Weekly discussions in an informal atmosphere are held on films of significance in which students play a strong role in directing and focusing the content and emphasis. They gain some confidence in questioning and judging through discussion with outside speakers, especially those nearest their own age. The discussions in class move from more teacher-controlled analysis of materials to student participation and eventually control. The transition into experience itself sets
up the student as an independent authority against a background of disciplined study and of close interaction with other students who see things differently. From his experience, the student learns. He becomes a teacher himself, a teacher about something he begins to know first hand. His paper is an act of teaching, of communicating, of judging. Seminars with other students, the continual articulation of his own discoveries in an alien situation, continue throughout this experience.

The aim of both these programs is perspective: perspective on academic disciplines, on the problems of transition in traditional and modern settings, on the contemporary world, on the student's own grounds of judgment, on his conscious and assessed growth in an alien situation, on the character and meaning of experience, on the significance of authority, on the responsibilities to one's peers in education, on what one is and what one wants to be. The aim is not so much to know or even to do, though both are present and relevant. The aim is to see. (At this point, one must smile at the immodesty of these claims.)

II - The Example of India

Seventeen sophomores and juniors at Williams College began this study of transition and social change in India in September of 1969. The students are resident on campus for the fall semester and the winter study period in January. In the fall, they study development economics and Indian art together with a double credit discussion course on transition in India. There is a summer reading list used as a preparation and background for study.

The students take up residence in India from February through June. They will pursue discussions with government officials, businessmen, teachers, villagers, politicians, planners, religious figures, social workers. They will live with Indians in their homes and in dormitories, both in the city and in villages and in industrial centers. Each student will be responsible for a major paper.

The basic theme of study in the double credit course is transition, the movement from traditional commitments and loyalties to the institutions and incentives of an industrial society. Transition is approached from four perspectives: the different cultural values involved in change, the contrasting styles of life and character demanded by traditional and modern societies, the effects on social structure of transition, the shift in the foundations, procedures, and ends of basic institutions. Transition is also studied as the tensions, opportunities, strains, ambiguities, hopes, confusions, problems of the movement into contemporary ideas and institutions. And there is an underlying effort to compare India with the United States. Here the aim is to sharpen the student's insight into his own situation, his own values, his own cultural positions. In discussions, comparisons with the United States are stressed where they animate Indian materials and make the student more aware of his own premises of thought and feeling.

The outside reading and the books used in discussions are from a variety of disciplines: political science, economics, art, history, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, literature and religion. Faculty members of the different departments
at Williams with an Asian specialty and interest are encouraged to participate in special seminars and lecture meetings. A significant aspect of the study is the cultural exposure it provides for the students and for the campus at large. There has been a weekly series of films from and about India, a weekly slide lecture presentation by a member of the faculty recently returned from several years in India, two photography exhibitions at the Lawrence Art Museum, an exhibition of Mughal and Rajput paintings at the Clark Art Institute, a performance of Indian Classical Music, a reading of Urdu poetry, and several lectures on Indian subjects.

By far the most important aim of extending such a study to residence overseas is the fusion of analysis and experience. The purpose here is to go beyond the untouched abstractions and unfelt conceptions of a classroom thousands of miles away from the reality of India. The aim is to pick up the formal discussion and place it down inside the nation's institutions and among its people: right in the offices and public spaces in Delhi, in the open fields and narrow lanes of village life, in the movement and new confusion of an industrial city, in the classrooms of Indian higher education. The program aims to fuse thinking, seeing, feeling into a whole understanding, to match the encounter of ideas with the meeting of people, to push beyond mere conceptualization to a touching of India itself.

This is an effort which involves pain, and certainly risks. The young American in India is at all kinds of disadvantages. The most evident are the physical: the adjustments to climate, living, food, various illnesses. The most difficult are the adjustments to a wholly new way of seeing and doing things. We accept this pain, and risk, as a necessary part of the program, as the essential basis for beginning an understanding of India, as relevant to our educational purposes.

Five months (21 weeks) will be spent in India from February through June. There will be five major study sections: 1) Delhi - politics, planning; 2) the village - caste and family as binding institutions; 3) Bombay - the study of a modern city in India; 4) the south of India - regional claims, the religious, university life, the community development effort; 5) the final seminar.

The first weeks in India will be spent in New Delhi. The students will live with Indian families in the capitol. This will be a period of adjustment to Indian life where the difficulties of environment and living conditions will be minimal. Seminars will focus on politics, the constitution, the institutions of national rule, the planning process, the intellectuals. We also hope to make full use of Delhi's cultural resources in music, dance, film, art, architecture, museums. We will talk with people from the university, in communication, of the professions.

The following three weeks will be spent in residence in an Indian village. The main purpose is to observe the round of life of the village, its castes and their inter-relation, the family structure, factions, the modes of work and social life. At the end, emphasis will be put on comparison of the perception and the reactions to the village among the students.
A month will be spent in and around Bombay. Here the problems of a major urban center will be discussed with leaders and critics of the city. We will also look at the character of urban industry and its work force, residential problems, municipal services, police, education, welfare. Again, the students will live with Indians in Indian situations where possible.

Over a month is planned in the South, with residence in Hyderabad, Madras, and other southern cities. The students will live at this time in student dormitories and take a close look at university life. There will be an examination of the major religions of India, with special emphasis on the character and status of the Muslim minority community. The claims of regionalism will be examined. Also, a first hand analysis will be made of the Community Development Program as it operates practically at the block level.

After some travel, the students will convene for a final two weeks of integrative seminars, and discussions of their papers. The student will be free to return home from Delhi on July 1.

The fall courses in economics and Indian art and the double credit seminar on India are graded as courses normally are at Williams. The winter study is pass-fail, as is the spring semester in India. This program has many of the advantages of junior year abroad such as travel, a foreign experience, new motivations for the student. It has the added advantages of an integrated syllabus, academic work according to Williams standards, the action and expression of the student in ways most relevant to his own commitments, his assumption of responsibility for educating himself and others.

During and at the conclusion of the project, each student will be asked to judge independently the various phases of the program: summer reading, seminars at Williams, lectures, cultural programs, films, preparation and execution of the paper, seminars and discussion meetings in India. These judgments are essential to the final assessment.

III - The Example of the City

"The City" will be a year's study at Williams and in New York for fifteen students in the academic year 1970-71. The approach and procedures discussed in Section I will be followed, but the group of students will be completely different from those going to India. Incoming sophomores will be encouraged to participate and incoming juniors will be accepted. The students will be in residence at Williams in the autumn semester with a full course schedule. They will go into New York from January 1, 1971 to September 1, 1971 for work and scheduled seminars.

The autumn semester at Williams will consist of a double credit course in political science, the course on ecology in the biology department and the environment studies course either in art or economics depending on the fall offerings. The political science course will have a formal subject matter and also include other events and activities in preparation for the work experience. The subject will be
transition in the city against the framework of accepted ideas about public authority and change in America. The course will include study of classic works on liberal political philosophy and economics, an analysis of the motives and premises of the new industrial state, contrasts between liberal pluralist politics and more militant views of the political process, on examination of various group or ethnic claims within the city, assessment of various approaches to law, administration, education and services of the city, some examination of the city in its historical development, and, finally a discussion of the city as an environment. The course will include weekly films with open discussions afterwords. Meetings will be arranged with Williams graduates and faculty members with experience in the city. The taped discussions with students on their own educational perspectives will be taken at the beginning and end of the semester, as well as in June and six months after their return. The seminars and events of the course will aim at increasingly involving the students in dialogue, exchange, response to each other. It is important that a reciprocity grow here because it will be very basic to the success of the seminars in the spring. The students must be both willing and able to take over the teaching of each other. This is the most difficult and yet most necessary part of this effort.

Each student will have a job in the city in some work or agency which relates to his own personal interest. The program will, in selecting students, encourage great variety in interests: differences of style, job, judgment. The program will include students with interests in law, medicine, politics, education, public administration, community organization, the arts. Each student will find his own job, with help from members of the Williams community. These jobs will be what they do, but not what they learn. They will be grounding from which the student examines the profession or activity which interests him. He will relate it to transition in the city, to the issues and problems discussed in the fall, to the interests, feeling, perception, analysis will have to go considerably beyond the daily routine thing each does in his own job. The student's perceptions will form the basis of monthly seminars with each other in which they will try to integrate together what they are learning. The main academic project will be a major paper concerning what each has learned. There will also be periodic seminars with leaders in the city in the various fields under examination. The instructor will be in close touch throughout this time with each student by visiting their work and living place at least once a month.

The success of this education depends on the ability of the students to get beyond their work to its significance, to its life style and institutional meaning. The education is to see a part of the city in its full concreteness of attitude, organization, expectations, and how it relates or contrasts to other parts of the city seen by other members of the group and by the various speakers who will come to the group. Several differences are important: the initial differences of style, commitment, politics of the students themselves; the differences of their activity and work; the different views of authority and change studied in the fall; the contrast in the disciplines' views of the city; the different judgment of speakers and visitors to the spring seminars. Out of these differences, contrasts, confrontation the perspective on the city forms and develops. Absolutely crucial to their way of educating is the students' willingness and ability to initiate and to accept full responsibility for his learning. This in turn depends on the success of the preparation and involvement...
Memo to: Professor Gaudino

From: Stephen R. Lewis, Jr.

Subject: Williams in the City

January 27, 1970

I was most distressed to find that the course in urban economics had been dropped in favor of a course in Biology as a prerequisite to the Williams in the City Program next year. I believe that this is more than just a parochial view, though of course I could be wrong. In re-reading your revised proposal which includes the insertion of the Biology course instead of the Economics course, I can find no real logic to it. I fully understand why Art should be included, but it seems to me that a discipline which focuses in a general way on problems of the city, whether Anthropology, Sociology, Politics, Economics, or Architecture, is essential to the educational aims of the program as spelled out here and elsewhere. The purpose would not be to teach institutions of a particular city, but rather to provide an analytical framework against which students may reflect their experience in the city. I thought that your idea of having the students take a course in economic development rather than a course on the development of India in preparation for the India trip was soundly conceived. I can't agree about the Biology course, unless I was convinced that there were sufficient analogies between the theories and discipline of ecology and the analysis of the growth and decline of a city and that people on the faculty here were capable of bringing to students' recognition those particular insights. I have yet to be convinced or it.

I know you are terribly busy at this time in getting ready for your departure. However, since the proposal on Williams in the City will come before the faculty after you have left, I think it is important that I get it straight in my understanding before you leave. I would find myself in a most difficult position personally if the proposal remains as it is, since I would feel obliged to oppose it in the faculty meeting, even though I have been a strong supporter of the Williams in India Program and was initially very taken with the Williams in the City Program.

I was also mistaken, apparently, about the amount of time that you would spend with the students in seminars and discussions while they are
at the city themselves. I would hope that your course load in the spring semester could be lightened enough from other duties to provide an opportunity for you to spend considerably more time in the city than once every two weeks or so, which was the impression I had from the CEP as to the amount of time that you intended to spend there. Perhaps you can clear this point up with me before you go also.

Again, I am sorry to dissent on the choice of courses. And, again, I would urge the introduction into the first semester program of a discipline course on some aspect of the city in general rather than something which is only remotely connected such as the ecology course.

S.R.L., Jr.

SRL:kh
February 6, 1970

MEMORANDUM TO: The Faculty
FROM: The Committee on Educational Policy
SUBJECT: Professor Gaudino's "Williams in the City" Program

At the meeting of February 11, the CEP will submit for faculty action Professor Gaudino's "Williams in the City" proposal. Attached to this memo are four items:

(1) The proposal itself. This is a reworded version of the earlier description circulated by the CEP, with one major change: the required courses in the fall are Political Science 335 (double credit), Biology 201, and Economics 213F, Economics having been substituted for Art.

(2) The catalogue description of Political Science 335, a new course.

(3) A statement by the members of the CEP who voted for the proposal.

(4) A statement by the members of the CEP who voted against it.

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Lawrence Graver for the CEP
"Williams in the City" will be a year's study at Williams and in New York for fifteen students during the academic year 1970-71. The approaches and procedures will be similar to those of the "Williams in India" program, but the group of students will be completely different from those going to India. Incoming sophomores will be encouraged to participate and incoming juniors will be accepted. In my absence during the spring term, Craig Brown and David Booth will interview and choose the applicants. The students will be in residence at Williams in the autumn semester with a full course schedule. They will go to New York from January 1, 1971 to September 1, 1971, for work and scheduled seminars.

The autumn semester at Williams will consist of a double credit course in political science, the course on ecology in the biology department, and an urban economics course. The political science course will have a formal subject matter and also include other events and activities in preparation for the work experience. The subject will be the transition in the city against the framework of accepted ideas about public authority and change in America. The course will include study of classic works on liberal political philosophy and economics, an analysis of the motives and premises of the new industrial state, contrasts between liberal pluralist politics and more militant views of the political process, an examination of various group or ethnic claims within the city, assessment of various approaches to law, administration, education, and services in the city, some examination of the city in its historical development, and, finally, a discussion of the city as an environment. The course will include weekly files with open discussions afterwards. Meetings will be arranged with Williams graduates and faculty members with experience in the city. The taped discussions with students on their own educational perspectives will be taken at the beginning and end of the semester, as well as in June and six months after their return. The seminars and events of the course will aim to increase the student's understanding of the responses and perceptions of the other students. Such reciprocity is vital since it will be basic to the success of the seminars in the spring. The students must be both willing and able to take over the teaching of each other. This is the most difficult and yet most necessary part of the entire undertaking.

Each student will have a job in the city in some work or agency which relates to his own personal interest. The program will, in selecting students, encourage great variety in interests: differences of style, job, and judgment. The program will include students with interests in law, medicine, politics, education, public administration, and community organization. Each student will find his own job, with help from members of the Williams community. These jobs will be what the student do, but not what they learn. They will be the grounding from which the student examines the profession or activity that interests him.
(2) Political Science 335  The City (Double Credit)

This course will cover a study of the premises of public authority including both liberal political philosophy and the logic of the new industrial state, an examination of pluralist politics and alternative views of political and ethical life, a discussion of various approaches to social change and revolution, analysis of the cultural and ethnic bases of various group claims and ways of life in the city and investigation into different approaches to administration and education. This course also includes weekly films and discussion, as well as meetings with Williams graduates and faculty members who have some experience of the city.

HOUR:  AB  

GAUDINO

(3) Majority statement:

The "Williams in the City" proposal has several admirable virtues. At a time when many of the proponents of experiential education seem anxious to substitute brio for analysis, Professor Gaudino has designed a course of study that invites interested students to mix intense personal involvement with intellectual detachment in ways that aim to increase learning and to guarantee perspective. Although much is made of direct felt experience, of personal engagement, and of the transfer of authority from teacher to student, there are obvious safeguards (analytical tape sessions, frequent seminars, regular conferences, the final long essay, etc.) to insure rigor, to increase perception, and to provide a reliable process of evaluation.

Because "Williams in the City" (like the complementary "Williams in India" program) is a carefully controlled experiment designed to make the Williams curriculum more varied, to provide detailed information about the different ways that students learn, and to contribute to future discussions of experiential education, it is worthy of support.

Lee Hirsche  
Lawrence Graver  
Neil Grabinis  
Peter Berek  
G. William Turner  
Mel White

(4) Minority Statement:

The debate over Professor Gaudino's proposed course "Williams in the City" is not a debate over whether Williams students should have experience in the city, or whether Professor Gaudino will spend enough time with the students once there. Indeed, he is one of the most conscientious professors on campus, and can be counted on to be most generous with his time.

The issue is the goal of the course: Is this to be a course about
perceptions, emotions, and values in the city? Or is it to be a course about analyzing the city? Students can and do emote, feel, and perceive by themselves; the primary role of the academic institution is to help them learn to analyze the ideas, processes, and issues in the world around them.

From Professor Gaudino's presentation to the CEP, it was quite clear that this was a course about emotions and feelings. His choice of prerequisites makes this quite clear. While the economics course is an analytic course on poverty, both the political science and the ecology courses listed as fall prerequisites were chosen because they presented different moral and emotional approaches to the city. Neither is aimed primarily at an analysis of the political, sociological, or historical processes the students will find in the city.

Perhaps this is a course aimed at a systematic examination of the perspectives and emotions of the people the students will encounter in the city. But professor Gaudino ruled this out at the CEP meeting when he stated that logical analysis was just one approach among many, that it was dependent upon a certain set of moral assumptions, that some people considered it immoral, and (by implication) that it would not lie at the heart of his approach to the city. An experience in the city aimed at feelings and perceptions may help the students, but Williams College should not give academic credit for an experience mainly because it is helpful to students. Professor Gaudino argues that once students become involved with the city, they will pick up the analysis. We have seen too many emotionally involved students thoroughly incapable of analysis to accept this view; on the contrary, once a student can analyze, he is better able to perceive on his own.

As a course on the city, this is not a good one. The prerequisites do not tie in closely with the urban processes students will observe in law firms, schools, and community organizations. Moreover, students untrained in logical processes are likely to be of little value to their employers, and hence likely to be relegated to boring, uninteresting job experiences which will teach them little. A work experience in the city for skilled students might have considerable benefit; this is not such a course.

One might argue that non-analytic courses on self-perception have a limited role at Williams. But this course takes too much of a student's time at the college.

Edward Moscovitch
William DeWitt
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