

ART HISTORY AND GENERAL EDUCATION

The Art History department's discussion regarding General Education took place during time set aside for this at a regular department meeting, before which the memos from the General Education Committee were circulated in order to provoke discussion. The general discussion that followed involved questions as well as comments.

The questions raised included:

- What is the "agenda" of this GenEd initiative? What does it intend to accomplish?
- How do the two documents circulated to initiate discussion relate to one another?
- Does the Committee have a "plan"?

The Art History department did not object to, and indeed was in support of endorsing both memos after having discussed them. The Cof C memo was seen as descriptive of what we as a community do and why we believe we do it. It was more difficult for most of the group to understand the purpose of the overarching "Goals" memo. Discussion began to acknowledge that approaching General Education from this broader perspective allows us to consider General Education as an ongoing process that is not confined to a checklist of courses. The point was raised that the "Goals" or "Outcomes" approach raises the possibility that courses which are not currently considered to be part of General Education might actually be able to be considered.

We did discuss our role as a department in General Education. None of our courses is required at present, though most of our courses presently count toward the Humanities requirement. The possibility of offering First-Year Seminar was discussed; there was some interest but also some concern as to how this might affect enrollments and our ability to provide our regular offerings.