

Unit One History

History of Unit One Living-Learning Community

Summary Description of Unit One

Composed Fall 1994

Unit One is an academic program located in Allen Hall and is a part of the University of Illinois Residence Hall system. Unit One is co-sponsored by the Vice Chancellors for Academic and Student Affairs. The goal of Unit One is to provide an enriched academic program that also addresses the personal and developmental needs of its students while providing challenges and alternatives that are not usually available to lower division undergraduates at the University.

Unit One was established in 1972 by Chancellor Jack Pelteson in response to recommendations made by CRUEL (Committee on the Reform of Undergraduate Education). The program was established as an alternative education program that stressed faculty tutorials. During its formative years, Unit One was evaluated eight times. It was eliminated from the budget in 1978, 1979, and 1980 for not having met campus criteria for excellence. It was maintained in the budget because of the efforts of students, faculty, parents, and several administrators who believed that the program could meet its potential if it were properly supported and managed. Under the guidance of a thirteen member faculty advisory committee appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and with the support of the Office of Residence Life in the Housing Division, the program was reorganized in 1981 and evaluated at the campus level by COPE (Council on Program Evaluation) in 1983. COPE gave Unit One a strong endorsement for having significantly improved the quality and rigor of the program. The program has since been incorporated into the campus structure and has been expanded from its original 150 students to its present resident population of 655. During the period of reorganization, Unit One altered its academic focus from supporting students' working with faculty in tutorial situations to that of a focus that emphasizes class-oriented academic ventures, academic support, small group interaction, and educationally focused programming.

Allen Hall houses 655 students. Approximately 80% are freshmen/sophomores; their curricula mirror University enrollment patterns. Students learn about Unit One through the Housing Division website, from friends, through high school networks, and from campus visits.

Unit One students are not required to participate in Unit One programs in any particular way. Non-residents of Allen Hall are welcome to use the programs and facilities of Allen Hall as long as residents are given first priority when space is restricted.

Unit One features several programs:

- Credit courses: About fifty academic courses are taught each semester. Courses range from elective seminars and non-major art courses through general education requirements. Class sizes are small (5-35). All courses are credited through departments; all instructors have departmental appointments. Instructors come from the ranks of the faculty and teaching assistants. All faculty are offered the flexibility to try new ideas for course content and teaching methods. They are guaranteed small class sizes in seminar format, support services and free meals with their students.

Unit One courses are all taught as departmental offerings by instructors appointed by these departments. Students incorporate Unit One courses into their regular study load in their curricula as fulfilling requirement and/or elective credit. Semesterly enrollments range between 900-1000.

- "Guests In Residence at Unit One" is a program whereby 6-8 guests per year are brought to live in Allen Hall for one week per guest. These guests provide non-credit workshops, discussions, and classes for the students of Allen Hall and the campus community. Some of these guests are cosponsored by the Miller Endowment as Miller Visiting Professors and some of these guests are featured as MillerCom lecturers during their visit at Unit One. Guests include artists, social and political activists, journalists, etc. Guests are solicited by students and staff and range in public visibility from little to very high. In addition to Guests In Residence, Unit One frequently houses visiting departmental guest lecturers.
- Non-credit programs: Non-credit programs evolve in response to student needs. In the course of a school year, typical programs include topical discussions, faculty lectures, speed reading and study skills courses, academic advising, tutoring in math, chemistry, and writing, field trips to such places as Chicago's Art Institute, outdoor trips, and the types of programs which are expected in all University Residence Halls such as blood drives, social events, films, etc. Many long-lasting student groups also exist in Unit One/Allen Hall (e.g., Writers' Club, Ecology Group, Volunteer Group, Actors Group, Comedy Group).

Unit One is staffed by an academic director, a program director, 2 visual arts instructors, an office manager and a part-time staff of 3 student program advisors, music coordinator, administrative assistant, and a residence hall staff that includes an area coordinator, resident director, hall secretary and 9 resident advisors.

Unit One is fulfilling its mission and has met the recommendations made by the 1983 COPE study. Students give the program overwhelmingly positive evaluations. Student demand is very high, as evidenced by a higher proportion of returning students than most other residence halls and the high number of applications from incoming freshmen which exceeds our available space. The greatest challenges for Unit One, which seem to be endemic amongst programs of this sort, are the long-term instructional participation by faculty and the acknowledgement by student-residents that taking academic chances and exploring new territory are educationally rewarding experiences.

A Historical Survey: 1971-1985

Report by :Howard Schein, Former Program Director

UNIT ONE is a residentially-based academic program in Allen Residence Hall at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. UNIT ONE/Allen Hall is a living/ learning center: A program designed to combine features of the undergraduate resident's academic and personal issues into a holistic setting. UNIT ONE is characterized by the several programmatic features: Credit courses, co-curricular programming, and a Guest-In-Residence program. Allen Hall residents are characterized as being open to new ideas and interpersonal diversity, self-activating, and intellectually involved.

Allen Hall houses about 375 men and 300 women undergraduates, about 80% of whom are freshmen and sophomores. Their demography is consistent with the University's entire undergraduate population in terms of major and college distribution, hometowns, and grade points. The academic program offered by UNIT ONE is incorporated into their regular curricular schedules, and the co-curricular programming is available to all University students. UNIT ONE/Allen Hall residents are self-selected as a University Residence Hall housing option; once in Allen Hall, students are encouraged, but not required, to participate in all aspects of the program.

Although UNIT ONE and Allen Hall can be formally and structurally distinguished from one another, their interrelatedness is critical to either's flavor and effectiveness. Allen Hall is distinct from all other halls for intentional reasons, primary of which is the effect of UNIT ONE's formal offerings and philosophical position of encouraging active student participation in the decisions and actions that affect them.

UNIT ONE was established in 1971 by Chancellor Jack Pelteson's Commission on the Reform of Undergraduate Education and Living (CRUEL). In two preliminary documents (1,2) CRUEL adopted a set of proposals for implementing changes in the nature of undergraduate education at UIUC. UNIT ONE was born out of the perception that living and learning had been divorced from each other on this campus and that the mission of the University was not being logically extended to the residence hall environment. This environment was seen as a ripe area for furthering the cultural and intellectual development of University undergraduates as had been successfully demonstrated at other universities (e.g., Harvard Houses).

UNIT ONE's original mandate was purposefully broad:

- To explore the feasibility of modifying a residential unit to create a suitable living-learning environment.
- To try out an academic program to complement existing programs which would concentrate on liberal arts and sciences. (3) This mandate for developmental breadth is reflected in a letter from the search committee for the original director: "...the general conviction that the unit should be free to develop a type or types of residential instruction that do not necessarily adhere to the traditional modes of undergraduate education." (4)

Alan Purves, UNIT ONE's first director (1971-72), outlined several more specific goals:

- to enhance students' desires to develop themselves perceptually, intellectually, socially...and to allow them to develop for themselves a meaningful set of competence and experiences (...within the context of a community setting);
- to utilize tutorial study arrangements;
- to utilize interdisciplinary workshops that especially focus on how the social, physical and life-sciences interact with the humanities. (5)

Under the Unit's second (acting) director, William Plater (1972-73), the staff defined a set of more specific objectives. These objectives aimed towards creating an academic community of freshmen and sophomores where students would be taught to take a greater than normally expected degree of responsibility for their own educational and living experiences, toward using the University as a viable resource, and toward serving as an experimental base for new academic and residential programs. (6) Succeeding director Paul Hoover (1973-76) molded the program along these guidelines.

With Hoover's abrupt resignation in 1976, Roland Holmes, (1977-78), an assistant dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and George Douglas, (1978-79), a faculty member in the Department of English, assumed Acting Directorships. In 1980, Associate Director Howard Schein was named Program Director.

As has been the case with several other Midwestern, large university living-learning centers (e.g., Michigan, Indiana, Nebraska), the historical development of UNIT ONE is closely tied to two separate, but strongly interacting issues: Administrative/financial and educational philosophy.

The original administrative organizational structure of UNIT ONE was never laid out in a formal document. Although the program was instituted into the University via the Faculty Senate, the actual lines of report, financial support, clarification of the roles of the sponsoring units, and the boundaries of interaction between Housing Division and UNIT ONE staff were never clearly institutionalized (personal comment, Alan Purves). Many of UNIT ONE's ensuing problems resulted from the ambiguity set by these factors.

Educational philosophy also seemed to wander through an unclear developmental process. Although the program was meant to be an experiment, the goals of success of the experiment were never made clear enough to serve as evaluative guidelines.

The absence of administrative structure that involved the normal institutional process with the development of educational philosophy further widened the gap between UNIT ONE's development and institutional expectations so that a period of storm, 1974-80, involved a great deal of confrontation between proponents and opponents of the program.

UNIT ONE has always been housed in Allen Hall in the University Residence Hall system. In 1971, 178 freshmen began the program. In 1972 the program expanded to 250-300 to accommodate sophomores. In 1978 the program expanded toward inclusion of the entire hall (675). Non-residents have been encouraged to participate since 1974.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Housing Division jointly sponsored the program through 1979-1980. The budget hovered around \$100,000 and came, largely, from the academic sector. The Housing Division supplied a good deal of "in-kind" funds which were not formally acknowledged. In 1979 the Housing Division assumed about 85% of the actual funding.

Beginning in 1975, students began paying a modest fee of \$15/semester. This fee gradually increased to \$45/semester in 1980. The student fee represents two distinct issues:

- a necessary fiscal contribution toward the extra fees they receive;
- a "put-up-or shut-up" statement by the administration to the students who protested the program's being terminated for fiscal reasons.

The College of LAS terminated UNIT ONE in 1974, 1978, 1979, and 1980. The College did not perceive UNIT ONE as being central to the College's mission and cited alleged academic weaknesses as a major factor. Contributing campus political issues also appeared to be at work: Chancellor Jack Pelteson, the program's administrative proponent, was gone and a vacuum of sponsorship was created; the funds he had allocated to LAS for UNIT ONE had come to be considered College property (personal comment by Morton Weir, Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs to Howard Schein); UNIT ONE's director had never been reappointed; the College of LAS was in bad financial shape and needed funds for its central mission.

The first three terminations were rescinded due to lobbying efforts by students, faculty, and campus administrators. Students' commitment to the program and to their perception of undergraduate ownership of an academic program strongly motivated their solicitation of support from state legislators, their parents, faculty, and campus administrators. As the result of each year's student protest, UNIT ONE was gradually moved into the Housing Division and under a more direct supervision by the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, Stanley Levy, a strong and active proponent of the program. In 1980, Levy convinced the new Chancellor, William Gerberding and Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Edwin Goldwasser, to sponsor UNIT ONE at the campus level. This reorganization came in concert with a reorganization of the Housing Division, with its new director, Gary North, coming with good working knowledge of living-learning centers.

These reorganizational features included a strong, all campus advisory committee to oversee UNIT ONE's academic program, and an integration of UNIT ONE and Housing staff under a unified mission statement and administrative structure. It paved the way for the recent growth and reorganization of the program in a more academically credible direction.

Academic Program

The academic program is based on credit granting courses and co-curricular activities. The early program was founded on student-tutorial tutorials for variable, ungraded credit under the LAS 110 rubric. Seminar courses were added in 1972-73 under LAS 210 (3 hrs, graded). Tutorials soon became a secondary feature due to students' inability to assume the necessary level of responsibility and faculty's inability to commit time without departmental release.

In 1972, the UNIT ONE staff began incorporating several academic instructors who had no formal faculty ties to regular departments. These people were added in order to teach courses not regularly available in the University. These staff tended to be either advanced graduate students or recent Ph.D.s. They were hired by a UNIT ONE student-staff screening committee which included representatives from the College of LAS.

Sections of Rhetoric 105/108 restricted to UNIT ONE students have also traditionally been offered in Allen Hall since 1971.

Until 1980, most UNIT ONE courses were seminars taught by UNIT ONE instructors under LAS 210. Some departmental seminar courses were included on an irregular basis. Prominent UNIT ONE courses revolved about Community Internships, Women's Studies, Interpersonal and Black/White Relations, Music (Composition and Instruction), Ceramics, Photography, Peer-Teaching, Artist-In-Residence Seminar, Interdisciplinary Studies and Tutorial Studies.

The feature characteristics of these courses were small class size (12-18), seminar format, flexible structure, innovative approaches to subject matter and presentation, student participation in design and content.

Following the reorganization of 1980, and in response to student requests, several changes occurred: All courses and instructors were accredited through regular departments, and all teaching was credited under departmental rubrics; most courses became letter-graded; many sections of standard course-catalog courses were added to the list of courses. The present UNIT ONE Courses Timetable offers about 20-25 courses each semester.

With few exceptions, all courses are taught through departments with departmentally appointed instructors. About 50% of these courses are listed in the University Courses Catalog and the other 50% represent elective credit in art and design, performance (music and dance), and various elective seminars.

Courses at UNIT ONE tend to be smaller, when appropriate, than comparable campus sections; graduate instructors are chosen for their proven ability to teach well; discussion is encouraged; instructors keep in-hall office hours and receive meal passes to facilitate interaction. Regular faculty are solicited to teach seminars and had, in the 1980s, the option of a \$1,500 stipend. The Faculty Advisory Committee monitors course and instructor selection.

A "Transition Statement" Composed in the Mid-1980s

Student Participation and Residential Features

Through 1973, UNIT ONE students occupied distinctly separate floors in Allen Hall. To help solve problems created by having two populations (UNIT ONE and non-UNIT ONE) of students, the 300 UNIT ONE students were integrated into Allen Hall. In 1979-80, all students in Allen Hall became affiliated with the program.

Students were self-selecting on the basis of an application made available to all students holding a residence hall contract. Through 1973 the selection process included the advisory board's screening of student essays. This process was dropped after the program's third year. In 1985, selection into UNIT ONE was incorporated into the process of submitting a University Residence Hall contract.

Until 1985, applications usually came close to filling vacancies with some years being quite high and others falling short. With the implementation of the 1985 contract process, applications exceeded vacancies by up to 100%.

Despite lack of specifically designed facilities, UNIT ONE has (or has had) a good variety of equipment and laboratories to accommodate a wide variety of endeavors: Ceramics and photography studios, video equipment, radio station, computer terminals, visitor apartments, offices for staff, and a print shop.

Students have put out weekly newsletters, created occasional literary magazines, performed dramas, musical events, and dialogues, and sponsored faculty lecture series. Workshops are arranged when student demand exists.

UNIT ONE students have tended to be slightly above the campus average in grade point and tend to rank higher than average in verbal skills. This latter datum is reflected in the humanities and fine arts orientation at UNIT ONE. Students tend to be more highly motivated, as reflected by the high frequency of student-initiated activities at UNIT ONE (e.g., faculty lecture series, most workshops, concerts, visitors to Allen Hall, student government, course initiation). The most striking testimony to student initiative and organizational abilities has been their successful campaigns in response to UNIT ONE's four terminations.

These features of the residential component, having highly motivated, self-selecting students, provide the basic framework from which academic and residential innovation can be launched. It provides for the students' ability to assume a greater responsibility for regulating their own residential life (e.g., self-governing floors) and provides a framework where classroom learning is not necessarily distinct from the rest of a student's life.

The sense of community has been expressed in many forms over the years. Its earmark has always involved distinctive and innovative features that distinguishes Allen Hall from other campus living units. Hall government always tends to be strong and active; during 1977-80, it had no executive council and operated by ad hoc committees. Self-governing men's and women's floors were formed by student initiative. Well-known musicians frequently were in residence during their local performing jobs to play for and with students. The level of faculty involvement in discussion series has always been high.

In general, the amount of co-curricular programming at Allen Hall leads all residence halls, and with the added expertise of the UNIT ONE staff, the level of quality is consistently high.

UNIT ONE/Allen Hall has always been characterized as a politically and socially active undergraduate center. Many factors contributed to this including the self-selected students, the nature of the type of faculty and staff that chose to work in this type of environment, and the synergistic effect of giving students the ability to manipulate their setting. Ironically, many of the more invigorating periods at UNIT ONE, in terms of heated discourse and controversy, centered around social and political issues such as race relations, international politics, ideologies of the left and the right, and feminism. The issues raised by these discourses frequently caused students a great deal of discomfort, a logical outcome when freshmen/sophomores' values are challenged. The consequent disruption of the community was severe, in several instances; but the process of reconciliation often served as a creative process, unto itself, with instances of outside mediators (e.g., The Reverend Charles Switzer of the McKinley Foundation) showing the community how it can come together through discord, and the formation of student coalitions to mend fences.

Artist-In-Residence Program and Speaker Series

From 1971-73, the Artist-in-Residence program had one resident artist per year. These people were brought to UNIT ONE to create a more intimate learning environment between artists and students than normal classroom interactions could afford. Artists' overall experiences were productive and resulted in several long-term UNIT ONE programs (one artist started the ceramic program), but their levels of sophistication were usually beyond the reach of students. This resulted in decreasing personal rewards for the artist over the course of the year.

In 1974-75, the A-I-R program was revised, both in philosophy and structure.

Two main issues addressed were:

- accommodation of the needs of the "non-artists" among the UNIT ONE students;
- exposure of all students to a broader range of "actively creative, self-employed people."

The nomenclature of "artists-in-residence became a sometimes misinterpreted description. Most people unfamiliar with the program expected the areas of expertise of visiting artists to be in the fine and applied arts. Actually, the diversity of A-I-R participants has been quite wide. It includes fine artists, such as dancers, painters, and musicians, as well as writers, scientists, political activists, and feminists. Several participants have national notoriety. The program was re-named "In-Residence at UNIT ONE" to avoid the perception that all guests were fine artists.

All guests are chosen by an all-hall vote on the basis of application. Applications are solicited by students and staff, arrive via the grapevine of past participants, and are solicited from faculty. The Miller Endowment frequently co-sponsors programs.

When at UNIT ONE, artists are given a two-room suite in Allen Hall, board, a stipend (\$400/week), and air travel expenses. Artists are expected to interact with UNIT ONE students and with interested members of the University and Champaign-Urbana communities in forums appropriate to the type of exchange with facilitates the sharing of ideas, skills, and talents. An artists' initial presentation is usually an informal talk and/or performance during the first day of residence. Discussion sessions, workshops, clas

Generally, this program has been judged highly successful. It has served as a model for similar programs at other universities (e.g., University of Indiana).

Other visitors also stay at Allen Hall on an ad hoc basis. Departmental and unit (e.g., Millercom) guests frequently stay at UNIT ONE in exchange for "rap" sessions. Musicians, for instance, will hold workshops following regularly scheduled campus concerts. Campus lecturers will hold question-answer sessions. These interactions are usually informal and personalized, giving an unusual opportunity for freshmen and sophomores to directly interact with eminent visiting scholars, political figures, and artists. Eminent visitors have included Henry Steele Commager, Tom Hayden, Vivian Gornik, and Julian Bond.

Outreach Programs and Formal Liaisons with University Programs

One function prescribed for UNIT ONE was to test the feasibility of testing new educational programs for undergraduates. This function was never fully realized, but experiments were initiated during the earlier years.

An exchange program with Parkland College was meant to offer vocational skill development to UNIT ONE students. University crediting problems hindered implementation.

Early proposals for UNIT ONE to present courses and/or workshops in other residence halls met with little success until 1985. Photography instruction was frequently offered, when requested, but the organizational structure of other residence halls seems to have hindered the development of such programs. The same structural features seem to have stifled artists-in-residence working in other halls.

In 1985 a serious attempt at UNIT ONE outreach was begun at Pennsylvania State University. A graduate assistant was put into that area to help develop an academic program tailored to that area's needs. Courses, formal workshops, academic advising, and formal tutoring in math, chemistry, and writing are being explored as well as a linkage between formal course offerings and the experimental implementation of personal computers into one of the halls in this area.

Liaisons with other University units have proven to be more successful. UNIT ONE frequently co-sponsors campus activities such as the Feminist Scholarship 1978 Conference, several Miller professors, Millercom lectures, programs with the Afro-American Studies program, Women's Studies courses and lectures, and visiting departmental lecturer/workshop guests.

In most of these cases, UNIT ONE's co-sponsorship is linked to bringing participating guests in closer contact with UNIT ONE undergraduates. UNIT ONE usually provides funds, room and board, and/or organizational help.

Advisory Committee

Under Director Purves (1971-72) and Acting Director Plater (1972-73), a faculty advisory committee played an active role in guiding UNIT ONE. During 1973-77, the advisory committee's role diminished to extinction. Director Paul Hoover, in conference with LAS Dean Robert Rogers, assumed the duties of the advisory committee. Dean Rogers appointed a new advisory committee for 1978-80 with five regular faculty representing the Colleges of LAS, Fine and Applied Arts, and Engineering, and representatives from the Housing Division. This committee's function was to guide the academic program at UNIT ONE, especially in the areas of course development and staffing. This committee also played a role in creating a proposal for the future of UNIT ONE.

The 1978-80 advisory committee introduced two major changes in procedure at UNIT ONE. They prescribed the method by which courses are proposed and approved for offering under the LAS 110/210 rubrics and under departmental cross-listings. They also prescribed the method by which staff are hired. The latter procedure involved approval by a student-staff selection committee in conjunction with a representative of an appropriate department, approval by the advisory committee, and eventual approval by the head of the sponsoring department.

Beginning 1980, the advisory committee was appointed by the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Representatives came from colleges that serve freshmen and sophomore students (Liberal Arts and Sciences, Engineering, Commerce, Communications, Fine and Applied Arts, Education, Agriculture, and Applied Life Studies), an associate Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Head of the Housing Division.

Essentially, this advisory committee was charged with guiding the UNIT ONE program through revisions that addressed the major criticisms of recent evaluation studies and guidelines for overseeing the academic program's maintenance and development. The advisory committee chose to be more active in the academic realm and to be more advisory in the co-curricular realm. It set actively for all academic course offerings and instructional academic staffing, but did not choose to play an active role in determining co-curricular issues.

The Report of the Council on Program Evaluation (COPE), 1983: A Campus-Level Evaluation Committee

Evaluations

UNIT ONE was evaluated many times over the past nine years. I will review the six evaluations which were formally requested by the College of LAS and will also refer to other documents which contain evaluative data.

Smock and Terwilliger (1971-72) evaluated UNIT ONE during its initial year. (7) They based their conclusions on comparisons of objective data (e.g., entrance test scores) with academic outcomes and on interviews with students and staff.

They cited UNIT ONE as being successful for most participants with its strong points being tutorial studies, availability of academic staff, availability of educational and cultural opportunities, and their visits to Allen Hall. Weak points included constraints of the residence hall and "red tape." They also concluded that most of the successful UNIT ONE offerings could be exported to other residence halls (e.g., tutorial studies, classes in residence halls, special facilities, and artists-in-residence).

Smock and Goldstein (1971-72) (8) saw an overall positive feeling by students toward their UNIT ONE experience. They cited the strong points of the tutorial studies as being the uniquely close contact between freshmen and University faculty and the weak points as the absence of administrative supervision of these students. If UNIT ONE were to become a truly experimental laboratory for the University then more academic autonomy would be necessary.

Caully and Dawson (1976) (9) stated that the problems with LAS 110 courses and tutorial involved the lack of motivation due to the lack of grades (s/u grading), the sometimes absence of regular faculty as tutors, the sometimes lack of student/tutor initiative to generate a project, and the students' giving this course a lower priority. UNIT ONE students, however, performed above University averages in grade point and selection index. These evaluators suggested that the "academic community" has a strong educational impact on UNIT ONE students, but that the concept of UNIT ONE as a response to the "60's" may have to change to accommodate the students of the late 70's and 80's.

A committee chaired by Franz Hohn (Department of Mathematics) (1977) (10) found that structural differences between the Housing Division and the academic staff at UNIT ONE had caused friction for quite a while. They agreed that LAS 110 was a success, and that the artist-in-residence program had evolved well. UNIT ONE had not, however, met its originally planned goals of giving faculty a place to experiment. They recommended that UNIT ONE continue under the aegis of LAS, but with an advisory board from all colleges, that the program revolve around LAS 110 tutorials, that the UNIT be divorced from the Housing Division, and that Housing Division offer non-credit encroachment programs (such as A-I-R) in its residence halls.

The LAS Task Force on Resource Reallocation (1978) (11) recommended that UNIT ONE be discontinued since "its impact on LAS educational programs has not been sufficiently great to warrant its continuance" in the light of budgetary considerations. This report was countered by a response from UNIT ONE Acting Director Roland Holmes and Associate Director Howard Schein (1978) (12).

Two student evaluations (Meyerson, 1974 (13); Bonfiglio, 1978 (14)) addressed the residential aspects of community. They found it to exist more strongly in UNIT ONE than in other residence halls.

Pines et al (1979) (15) recommended the creation of a Center for University Education. Most of their proposed functions for this center already had been tested at UNIT ONE, but it appears that the committee did not consider using the UNIT ONE model as a testing ground.

In 1978 a committee chaired by Harry Broudy (Philosophy of Education) and (16) recommended that the program be continued with some basic revisions.

In 1980, a UNIT ONE Steering Committee submitted a Preliminary Budget Request (17) to the University proposing the creation of a non-degree-granting undergraduate Residential College based on the UNIT ONE model but with much greater involvement of regular departmental faculty. This request was ranked 34 of 68 by the evaluating COPE committee (18): "There was a general antipathy to UNIT ONE in terms of its current image of life experiences, student-designed courses, and teaching assistants. There was general support of the concept of residential living with the involvement of full-time faculty. The major concern was whether the image of UNIT ONE would allow an evolution into a more academically oriented program or if it wouldn't be better to kill UNIT ONE and start over."

UNIT ONE was given three years (1980-83) to answer criticisms with a redesigned program.

In 1983, the Council on Program Evaluation (COPE) issued its evaluation of UNIT ONE's three year reorganization. (19) The COPE report's Conclusions and Recommendations state that UNIT ONE has successfully reorganized along the Vice-Chancellor's guidelines, that the program's academic quality is acceptable to the campus, that students are satisfied with the program, that its current organizational report line under two vice-chancellors is appropriate, and the report "strongly urges that the UNIT continue to be supported."

UNIT ONE currently offers about 25 courses/semester, has added an academic advisor to the staff, is redefining and reorganizing the In Residence Program, and is redefining its educational role in light of the stated needs of its current student population. The structure of the Unit has always been flexible enough to change in order to be responsive to students' requests. The UNIT ONE students of the 80s are more achievement oriented along academic and career pathways than their predecessors; new UNIT ONE offerings reflect this direction.

Also See: The Zen of Unit One

The Zen of Unit One (pdf)

A spirited description of Unit One/Allen Hall by its Director Emeritus, Howie Schein. Also published as Schein, H. K. (2005). The Zen of Unit One: Residential Learning Communities as a Way to Foster Liberal Learning at Large Universities. In N. Laff, (ed.), Identity and Learning in the Liberal Arts. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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