

Lincoln University: Evolution of a Liberal Arts College, 1978-2016

**J.K. Van Dover
May 2016**

Contents

Preface: Caveat Lector

“To provide a higher education in the arts and sciences”: Lincoln University’s Origins as a Liberal Arts College

What are the liberal arts in 21st century America?

Is Lincoln University a Liberal Arts College? 13

1976-1982: Yes
1982-1999: No
1999-2013: Yes—at its core
2013-16: No

A Preview: Four Presidencies, Four Interim Presidencies 16

The Presidency of Herman Russell Branson, 1970-1985
The Interim Presidency of Donald Leopold Mullett, Interim, 1985-87
The Presidency of Niara Sudarkasa, 1987-98
The Interim Presidency of James Ashley Donaldson, Acting, 1998-1999
The Presidency of Ivory V. Nelson, 1999-2011
The Presidency of Robert R. Jennings, 2012-2014
The Interim Presidency of Valerie Harrison, Acting, 2014-2015
The Interim Presidency of Richard Green, Interim, 2015-

The Presidency of Herman Russell Branson (1970-1985) 20

Dr. Branson (1914-1995)
Dr. Branson’s Presidency & the Faculty
Dr. Branson’s Presidency & the University’s Liberal Arts Mission
Dr. Branson’s Presidency & the Academic Divisions
Dr. Branson’s Presidency & “Requirements for Graduation”
Dr. Branson’s Presidency & Two Liberal Arts Initiatives
Dr. Branson’s Presidency & 1890 Land Grant Status
Dr. Branson’s Presidency & Enhancement

The Interim Presidency of Donald Leopold Mullett, 1985- 1987

Dr. Mullett
Dr. Mullett’s Presidency & Curriculum Reform

The Presidency of Niara Sudarkasa, 1987-98

Dr. Sudarkasa
Dr. Sudarkasa’s Presidency & Three Academic “Centers”
Dr. Sudarkasa’s Presidency & the Barnes Foundation
Dr. Sudarkasa’s Presidency & the Physical Plant

The Acting Presidency of James Ashley Donaldson, 1998-1999

The Presidency of Ivory V. Nelson, 1999-2011

Dr. Nelson
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & the 2006 Curriculum
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & the Liberal Arts
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & Three Liberal Arts Initiatives
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & On-Line Education
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & the Barnes Foundation
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & the Barnes Foundation
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & the Physical Plant
 Dr. Nelson's Presidency & Accreditation

The Presidency of Robert R. Jennings, 2012-2014

Dr. Jennings
 Dr. Jennings's Presidency & the Structure of Studies
 Dr. Jennings's Presidency & The End of the "Core Curriculum"
 Dr. Jennings's Presidency & Three Liberal Arts Initiatives
 The Humanities Conference; The Humanities Journal
 The Liberal Studies Program
 Lincoln's Global Heritage and Legacy
 Dr. Jennings's Presidency & the Physical Plant

The Acting Presidency of Valerie Harrison, 2014-2015

Dr. Harrison
 Dr. Harrison's Presidency & Curricular Changes

The Interim Presidency of Richard Green, 2015-

Dr. Green

Appendices

Appendix 1: Lincoln University's Declared Identity, 1976-2016
 Appendix 2: The 1978 Curriculum
 Appendix 3: The 1988 Curriculum
 Appendix 4: The 2006 Curriculum
 Appendix 5: Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts (Core Curriculum 1988) & Eight Institutional Learning Outcomes (General Education 2015)
 Appendix 6: The 2013 Reconfiguration of the Academic Structure
 Appendix 7: The SECURE "core values"
 Appendix 8: The Graduate Programs

Preface

Though I have tried to keep my facts and my opinions clearly distinguished in the following account, and wherever practical have cited sources for the facts, this is not an entirely unbiased history. It is only fair that I declare my bias before I begin. I think that a liberal arts education remains a valuable core in undergraduate education in 21st century America. Liberal arts colleges are pressed by large public universities from above and by community colleges from below, but I think that there is a useful (and, I hope, still a viable) niche for them. And I think it is especially important for that niche to continue to be open in the universe of HBCUs. I want Lincoln University to continue to fill that niche.¹

And I write only about the aspects of the university that I as a faculty member know. The Liberal Arts are, of course, the Arts *and the Sciences*. If the Sciences receive less attention than they merit in the following account, it is in part because, at Lincoln, they seem to have been able to take care of business. The Natural Science Division/School/College may have had its difficulties over the years, but its place in the core liberal arts curriculum has never been challenged. Eight credits of laboratory science and three credits of college-level mathematics was required in 1978; in 2016 the requirement is seven credits of laboratory science and three credits of college-level mathematics. And the quality of teaching in the Natural Sciences has remained strong; Lincoln continues, for example, to produce a small cadre of students who succeed in the very challenging environment of modern American medical schools. The Arts and the Humanities, on the other hand, have been more vulnerable to the exigencies of 21st century higher education—at Lincoln as elsewhere.

And it is very important to note that I cannot speak with any authority about the financial prospects of the university. Dr. Nelson, as President, was uncommonly open about sharing the financial statements of the university, but although I read them closely enough to be troubled by

¹ My bias in favor the liberal arts school is long-standing. I am myself the product of a small liberal arts college for both my BA (Lafayette College) and my MA and PhD (Bryn Mawr College). I believe I was well educated in that environment, and it has been my privilege to try to offer the same sort of education to students who have matriculated at Lincoln University. I believe that a liberal arts education is still a valuable thing, and I would like to think that Lincoln University, which has actually been what it has sometimes advertised itself as—a premier historically black liberal arts university, can retain that identity.

And, inevitably, I have a bias toward English. It is my great regret that Lincoln no longer has an English Department. I think that the English Department is the heart of the Arts and Humanities half of the Liberal Arts, and for three reasons: First, the English Department (or, in 2016, the portion of the Department of Languages and Literature that teaches English) sees every undergraduate at least two semesters (and until 2015, up to four semesters) in English composition. And because composition often requires students to write about their own experience, English professors get the most direct exposure to the sorts of lives the students have actually led. Second, the English Department teaches every student a semester of World Literature, a course which compels students to confront masterworks of poetry, drama, fiction, and philosophy from around the globe. And finally, the English Department—because its commitments to these service courses is so large—is necessarily staffed by a large and diverse faculty, which means that the English major can provide students with a wider than usual range of approaches to teaching and to thinking in its upper division classes.

what seemed to me to be a relative imbalance in the increases in total faculty salaries and total administration salaries (an imbalance, which, of course, I thought unwisely favored administration), I cannot make any really intelligent analysis of university finances. And so, while I, as a faculty member whose bank account has, for 38 years, seen a regular, necessary, and appreciated transfer of funds from the University's account, may prescribe an ideal curriculum offered by a fully staffed faculty of liberal arts scholars, I do not have to pay the scholars' salaries. It may well be that the constituency for liberal arts colleges generally and for historically Black liberal arts colleges in particular is vanishing. The cost of a college education, with the associated burden of loans, may well mean that to survive the institution needs to promote a vocational education that, in order to prepare students for immediate post-graduation employment, that it must emphasize accredited learning tracks of such **depth** that they leave little room for the exploration of the arts and the humanities. It may be that a "nurturing and stimulating environment" is, in 2016, fiscally viable, and a premier historically black liberal arts university is not. I have my clear view on the question, but I do not have to pay the bills.

Two anecdotes

My narrow and privileged faculty view of how to run the university may be set against two anecdotes in which a Lincoln University Vice President for Academic Affairs tried to explain to the faculty the facts of university life. Dr. Bernard Woodson was Dr. Branson's VPAA. He was by training a biologist, and at a faculty meeting in the early 1980s, he used a biological analogy to explain the nature of the university. Parasites, he informed us, draw sustenance from their hosts. If they draw too much, the host dies, and so, inevitably, do the parasites. Lincoln's faculty, he warned us, were seeking to draw too much. In his vision, the administration was the host, and the faculty were the parasites (students were not a factor in his analogy).

Two decades later, Dr. Nelson's VPAA, Dr. Grant Venerable, a chemist, did not resort to analogies. At two different faculty meetings, his contribution to a vigorous debate was to remind the faculty directly: "It's not your university. It's the Board of Trustees' university."

As a matter of law, Dr. Venerable was certainly correct. The proprietors of American universities are indeed the Boards that govern them. And Lincoln's Board of Trustees, like most university Boards, is composed of professionals, business men and women, alumni, political appointees ("Commonwealth Trustees"); few, if any, are (or have ever been) teaching members of faculty. The Board of Trustees, which includes ex officio the President of the University, *are* then the host; faculty (and, as well, students, staff, administrators) *are* the dependent parasites. But without its parasites, what is this host? The men and women of the Board of Trustees do not sap significant resources from the university; indeed, in theory at least, they often contribute significantly to the financial resources of the university. But their knowledge of what a university does and how it does it on a daily basis is limited; some—the alumni—have spent four years on the campus; most have spent at least four years on *some* campus. All bring important outside perspectives, but the owner's wisdom about the engineering of the academic curriculum may be less well-informed than that of the parasites.

From an historical perspective, as opposed to a legal one, Dr. Woodson's analogy got the point exactly wrong. The modern university began in the Middle Ages in places like Paris and Bologna when eminent teachers drew students to their lectures. Eventually there were enough attractive teachers and attracted students to require an infrastructure that had to be run business managers who could facilitate the encounters between faculty and students. Historically, then, administrators are the parasites (necessary

parasites, to be sure), and this is true at every American university, not just Lincoln. They are necessary and valuable parasites,² and I mean them no disrespect; but it will be clear in what follows that I regard the faculty as the element that constitutes the essence of the university, and which is best situated to determine what academic directions the university should take. Other units will be better qualified to define the constraints, physical and fiscal, under which the institution can actually move in those directions. But the faculty, who know their fields, their peers, and their students (and who often vigorously disagree with one another), remain the most competent judges of what a university education should comprise.

Finally, whether the central authority of the university is the faculty that teaches or the board and administration that pay the bills (or, for the most idealistic among us, the students who come to learn), this account is limited not only by the bias of its author, but also by his ignorance. Those who know better or who know more are welcome to append critiques or supplements. In this digital era, when correction of a text is easy, readers, if there are any, should seize the opportunity to improve (and extend) this history.

² The explosion in the numbers of college administrators over the past four decades in American universities in general, and certainly at Lincoln—the number of Vice Presidents and Assistant Vice Presidents and Directors and Deans has risen far more rapidly than the number of faculty or the number of students—suggests that Dr. Woodson’s caution might be pertinent.

“To provide a higher education in the arts and sciences”: Lincoln University’s Origins as a Liberal Arts College

As Horace Mann Bond noted in the first paragraph of his history of Lincoln University, *Education for Freedom*, Lincoln “was the first institution founded anywhere in the world to provide a higher education in the arts and sciences for youth of African descent” (3). The key phrase is “higher education in the arts and sciences.” When the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania chartered Ashmun Institute on April 29, 1854, the new college was described as “an institution of learning for the scientific, classical and theological education of colored youth of the male sex” (Bond 216). This set it in direct contrast to the “African Institute” that had been founded through the benefaction of Richard Humphreys in 1837; that institution had been dedicated to the instruction of “the descendents of the African Race in school learning, in the various branches of the mechanic Arts, trades and Agriculture, in order to prepare and fit and qualify them to act as teachers ...” (Wikipedia).³ Ashmun Institute, by contrast, would instruct its students not “in the various branches of the mechanic Arts, trades and Agriculture,” but in “scientific, classical and theological education.” It would be a liberal arts college. It would offer, as the etymology suggests, an education appropriate for a free man (Latin “liber”).⁴

What *are* the liberal arts appropriate for free men—and now for free women as well? From the 6th century AD through the Middle Ages, they were defined as seven fields of study, divided into two stages: the fundamental trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric; and the secondary quadrivium of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. Simplified in modern terms, the trivium might be seen as education in the arts (emphasizing the skills of writing, thinking, and communication) and the quadrivium as education in the sciences (with mathematics as fundamental): precisely what Horace Mann Bond saw as Lincoln’s mission in 1954: “higher education in the arts and sciences.” And precisely what John Miller Dickey and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania proposed in 1854, with “classical education” standing for the arts, “scientific education” standing for the sciences, and with—very much in the medieval tradition—“theological education” standing for ultimate use that Christian intellectuals could put their minds to.

Over the course of the next century, Lincoln experimented with supplements to the fundamental liberal arts education, supplements that proposed to add professional qualifications to that foundation. There was the original Theological Department, which did not close until 1959; there were also, for a brief time (1869-74), a Medical Department and a Law Department. But Lincoln remained, at its core, a liberal arts undergraduate university. It was from this university that the celebrated alumni graduated—Langston Hughes, Thurgood Marshall, Nnamdi Azikwe, Kwame Nkrumah.

³ By 1913, the African Institute had become Cheyney University, and it began to award bachelor’s degrees in 1914.

⁴ This is the point of Aristotle’s division of society and its education in Chapter 8 of his *Politics*. Occupations, he says, may be “divided into those which are fit for freemen and those which are unfit for them” (334). Illiberal education is the mechanical training that prepares workers for “employment which is pursued for the sake of gain and keeps men’s minds too much, and too meanly occupied.” It is vocational training. A liberal education, on the contrary, develops the minds and bodies of free men (and, we would now say, of free women).

1954 was the watershed year. The success of Thurgood Marshall (Class of 1930) in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* meant that over the course of the next twenty or so years, ambitious African-American students found an increasing number of opportunities for higher education beyond the Historically Black Colleges and Universities. As a result, Lincoln found itself obliged to admit an increasingly large percentage of underprepared students—students bright enough and ambitious enough to complete a college curriculum, but inadequately prepared by their primary and secondary educations for entry-level college work in reading, writing, and mathematics. As a result, Lincoln evolved a menu of remedial, pre-college-level courses (later euphemisms have included “developmental courses,” “basic courses,” and, in the 21st century, “success courses”) in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and oral communication. Throughout most of the period 1978 and 2016, some 60-70% of entering freshman have tested into at least one of these courses; some 30% regularly testing into two or more. A succession of University Presidents declared it their goal to raise the average SAT scores and the average high school GPAs of the incoming classes. And this is an admirable goal. But taking underprepared students and guiding them to graduation in four—or five or six—years is also an admirable achievement.

Lincoln University made other significant adjustments between 1954 and 1978. It had begun to admit women to degree programs in 1953, the year prior to *Brown v. Board*; in 1972 it joined Pennsylvania State University, Temple University, and the University of Pittsburgh as one of four Pennsylvania state-related universities; it began to offer a Master’s degree in Human Services in 1977; it opened the Urban Center in 1997 and moved its graduate program in Human Services to that location; and it opened its Coatesville campus in 2015. The Urban Center and the Coatesville campus were dedicated to the development of professional programs; the liberal arts were reserved, with minor exceptions, to the main campus, and even there they suffered a slow attrition as students and administrators tended to prefer those disciplines that led mostly directly to remunerative employment. That devolution of the liberal arts, 1978-2016 is an underlying theme of this history. They have not yet vanished; they are certainly diminished.

What are the liberal arts in 21st century America?

A modern liberal arts education, I think, rests on three principles: **breadth**, **depth**, and **choice**. **Breadth** is provided by the core curriculum, **depth** by the departmental major, and **choice** by the electives.

If students come to college well-prepared by their high school educations, then **breadth** can perhaps be assumed, and a core curriculum can reasonably be limited to as few as five courses (16 credits) that polish high school level exposure to English Composition, Mathematics, Literature, History, and Science. But when students come to college underprepared (and, by the late 20th century, most American high school undergraduates seem to be underprepared), the breadth that was largely missing in high school must be compensated for in college with a much larger core curriculum. Lincoln's core curriculum has always consumed around 50 credits (18 courses) of the 120 credits required for graduation, and even Dr. Nelson's determination to reduce the core's claim could drop the number only to 45.

Depth is provided by the department major. This depth is, for most students in the 1980s and after, the point of coming to college. The notion that college is a place to discover who you are, what you want to be, and what you need to know may have been an affordable (and very liberal artsy) ideal in the 1960s and 1970s; by the 1980s, with college education increasingly expensive and increasingly financed by loans, students come with the purpose of acquiring entrée into a remunerative occupation, and the major is the credential that seems to be the key to the entry. In 1968, when I was an undergraduate, students were discouraged from declaring a major until the second semester of their sophomore year, by which time, it was hoped, they would have discovered their own answer to the who-are-you, what-do-you-want-to-be, what-do-you-need-to-know questions. At Lincoln University today students who do not declare a major *prior* to their arrival on campus are regarded as troublesome anomalies, and faculty regularly see memoranda advising undeclared students to declare as soon as possible.

And if underprepared students have led the Lincoln faculty to prescribe a larger than usual core curriculum, they have also led faculty in particular departments to demand a larger than usual set of requirements for the major. If I remember correctly, the English major at Lafayette College in 1968 required 13 courses (39 credits). The English major at Lincoln requires a little more: 14 courses (42 credits).⁵ The History major—like English, traditionally a liberal arts major, is, in spring 2016, proposing to expand its current, admirable requirement of 39 credits to a rather illiberal 54 credits. The more vocational majors such as Nursing (57 credits), Engineering (77-80 credits), Criminal Justice (60 credits),—often urged on by certifying agencies—have always required additional courses. And some majors can be unexpectedly voracious. For decades Lincoln's education major (now, alas, swept into the dustbin of institutional history) used to claim 60-70 credits. The Music Performance major currently requires 65 credits. The current Business and Entrepreneurial Studies (BES) major requires an incredible total of 75 credits (2015 *Academic Catalog* p. 176), leaving 45 credits for the student to complete the core curriculum (45-49 credits) and thus 0 to minus 4 credits for electives.

⁵ Because the English degree is a Bachelor of Arts degree, English majors must also meet the BA requirement of an additional two semesters of a foreign language, which brings the practical total of the major to 50 credits.

When **breadth** consumes 45-50 credits and **depth** consumes 50-75 credits, **choice** often becomes moot. Not only are students not encouraged to experiment in various disciplines, they are virtually forbidden to do so. A BES major cannot squeeze in even a 1-credit HPR course in bowling. The History major might—if the right courses are offered at the right times—complete a minor (15-21 credits), but then there is no chance to explore a course or two in music or creative writing or psychology. **Choice**—and the self-discovery and expanded horizons that choice provides—becomes a rare luxury.⁶

The two major revisions of the curriculum tried to address the balance between these competing desiderata. The revision of 1988 produced a large, intellectually coherent core curriculum, one that not only provided for **breadth**, but justified the character of that **breadth**. The revision of 2006 aimed to enhance **choice** by reducing **breadth**, with the explicit aim of encouraging minors and internships. But almost immediately various departments, each arguing that **depth** in their particular fields of student required additional courses, began to consume the space that had been freed up, and, in 2016, students in several majors have virtually no **choice** at all.

⁶ Even with a 42-credit English major, I find, as an advisor, that it is rare that I have been able to tell a senior advisee that he or she can choose more than one or two free electives.

Is Lincoln University a Liberal Arts College?

What follows is abstracted from Lincoln University's *Bulletins/Catalogues*, 1976-2016. A fuller account of the sequence is presented in Appendix 1.

1976-1982: Yes

In its 1975-76 *Bulletin*, Lincoln defined itself as “a nonsectarian, coeducational, state related four-year college of *liberal arts*” (emphasis is added throughout). The first three adjectives emphasized the novelty of a university no longer affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, no longer only admitting men, and now in that peculiar condition of not being a State college, but of being “state-related”—by far the smallest of Pennsylvania’s four “stated-related” universities. The official “Purpose” of the university reiterated its liberal arts orientation: “to offer a thorough grounding in the *liberal arts* through a curriculum which, incorporating the heritage of the past, stresses the relevance of all knowledge to the problems of the present. The *liberal arts*, which encompass the sciences and mathematics, are the recognized preparation for the learned professions, for business and for public service, and best equip the student to play a useful role in an increasingly complex yet unitary world.”

1982-1999: No

The 1982-84 *Bulletin* presented a significant change. “Nonsectarian,” “coeducational,” “state related” and “four-year college” were retained, but “liberal arts” was replaced by “multi-purpose”:

Lincoln University is *a nonsectarian, coeducational, multi-purpose, state related four-year college*, providing undergraduate and graduate study serving the academic, cultural, and vocational needs of students who present a wide range of academic preparation and definiteness of purpose.

What the multitude of purposes Lincoln would serve was sketched by the phrase “providing undergraduate and graduate study serving the academic, cultural, and vocational needs of students who present a wide range of academic preparation and definiteness of purpose.”⁷

“Definiteness of purpose” seems to be meaningless verbiage, but “vocational needs of students who present a wide range of academic preparation” probably explains the erasure of the liberal arts. A “vocational” school may well aspire to include liberal arts, but it will not make them a priority.

In 1985 the flight from liberal arts was refined. “Lincoln University is *a general, multi-purpose, state-related, coeducational institution of higher education*, providing undergraduate and graduate study serving the academic, cultural, and vocational needs of students who present a wide-range of academic preparedness and definiteness of purpose.” No longer “four-year” and no longer a “college,” Lincoln now presented itself as a general, multi-purpose institution of higher education. A less informative description can hardly be imagined. The 1988 catalog

⁷ The apparent contradiction between “four-year college” and “undergraduate and graduate study” would be relieved in the next catalog by dropping “four-year college.”

seemed to recognize this, dropping both “general” and “multi-purpose.” But it also dropped “higher education”; neither a “college” nor an “institution of higher learning,” Lincoln called itself “*a coeducational, state-related institution*” (it did place itself “within Pennsylvania's Commonwealth System of Higher Education”).

1999-2013: Yes—at its core

In 1999, a new phrasing was adopted, restoring the liberal arts as central part of the university's identity. Lincoln presented itself as “*a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a liberal arts and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs* to meet the needs of those living in a highly technological and global society.” This phrasing remained in place until 2012, when the new administration preferred “*a progressive growing institution* with an expert workforce that delivers aggressive and comprehensive programs.” Even so, “*a liberal arts and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum* and selected professional and graduate programs” still lingered in the University's mission.

2013-16: No

“Liberal arts” was again excised in 2013. Newly re-branded as “The Lincoln University,” the institution now declared its mission was to maintain “*a nurturing and stimulating environment* for learning, teaching, research, creative expression and public service for a diverse student body, faculty and workforce.” The acronym SECURE was used to elaborate what the “*nurturing and stimulating environment*” meant: Students, Excellence, Care, Understanding, Respect, Ethics.⁸ The sentiments may be admirable; they do not evoke the liberal arts.

⁸ See Appendix 7 for clarification.

A Preview: Four Presidencies, Four Interim Presidencies

The Presidency of Herman Russell Branson, 1970-1985

In 1976-77, midway through Dr. Branson's fifteen year Presidency, simmering conflict between the administration and longtime faculty erupted in a remarkable battle that saw faculty members physically removed from classrooms, extended lawsuits, and faculty meetings commonly characterized by evident mutual disrespect between the President and the faculty.

In February 1984, the faculty engaged in a 13 day strike against the university.

Under Dr. Branson Lincoln made its transition from an eccentric 4-credits per course to the American standard of 3 credits per course. The university's finances were central preoccupation; Dr. Branson's hoped-for and never-achieved solution was achieving 1892 land grant status. In 1983, through the Pennsylvania Office of Civil Rights, Lincoln did receive an award of \$11.5 million to "enhance" the University. In the final year of the Branson Presidency, Lincoln received a major grant that underwrote a complete review of the core curriculum.

The Presidency of Donald Leopold Mullett, Interim, 1985-87

Dr. Mullett (1929-2013), Vice-President of Fiscal Affairs under Dr. Branson, assumed the Presidency during the two-year search for a new President. A major three-year (1986-89) grant from the Pew Memorial Trust via the Glenmede Trust Company enabled the faculty to develop a coherent organization of the core curriculum around Eight Integrative Themes in the liberal arts.

The Presidency of Niara Sudarkasa, 1987-98

Dr. Sudarkasa (1938-) became the first woman President of Lincoln University in February 1987. The new core curriculum was approved and implemented in her first years. Her academic priority was to instill a global perspective into Lincoln's academic vision, with a special emphasis upon Lincoln's historic links with Africa.

Problems with the administration of fiscal affairs and physical plant led to her premature removal from office.

The Presidency of James Ashley Donaldson, Acting, 1998-1999

When Dr. Sudarkasa's presidency was abruptly terminated in October 1998, Dr. Donaldson (1941-), a Lincoln alumnus and Vice President of the Board of Trustees, took over the position during the search for a successor. His brief term was characterized by wisdom and intelligence.

The Presidency of Ivory V. Nelson, 1999-2011

Dr. Nelson (1934-) became President in August 1999 and served until his replacement had been identified in November 2011. His Presidency was most notable for two related achievements. It was during his administration that Lincoln's authority to nominate members to the governing board of the Barnes Foundation became a focus of attention; he negotiated the terms under which Lincoln's control and the Foundation's location were, with some controversy, altered. It was also during his administration that the physical plant of the university was radically improved, with major renovations to existing academic and non-academic buildings and with the construction of important new academic and non-academic buildings. The improvements totaled a remarkable \$325 million (Holmes).

The core curriculum was modified in 2006, with the aim of reducing requirements and facilitating internships and academic minors.

Contention between administration and faculty, though somewhat less confrontational than in the 1980s, continued to characterize the relationship between the two. In November 2003, the faculty engaged in a 3-day strike against the university.

The Middle States Association accreditation review of 2008-09 found that the University was deficient in respect of Assessment of Student Learning, and placed the University on "Warning." The final years of Dr. Nelson's Presidency were committed to the eventually successful remediation of the assessment deficiency through a series of convulsive efforts to assess in a manner acceptable to Middle States.

The Presidency of Robert R. Jennings, 2012-2014

Dr. Jennings took office in January 2012. He undertook a major restructuring of the academic units of the university, redefining divisions and departments and emphasizing vocational tracks. The "Core Curriculum" was re-titled "General Education." The "Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts" that had oriented the academic regime since 1985 were replaced by eight assessment-based "Institutional Learning Outcomes."

His Presidency was abruptly terminated near the end of its third year.

The Presidency of Valerie Harrison, Acting, 2014-2015

Dr. Harrison, Lincoln University's General Counsel, assumed the Presidency in the wake of Dr. Jennings's departure in November 2014. She served through the spring semester 2015.

The Presidency of Richard Green, Interim, 2015-

Dr. Green was selected to serve as Interim President until a search for permanent President could be undertaken. As of May 2016, the search has not been inaugurated.

The Presidency of Herman Russell Branson

July 1970-June 1985

Dr. Branson (1914-1995)

Dr. Branson's first career was as a distinguished physicist, teaching the subject at Howard University from 1941 to 1968. In 1948, while performing research with the Nobel Award winning physicist Linus Pauling, Branson made a significant contribution to Pauling's work on the helical structures of proteins. He would be listed as third author on the article that published the discovery, and would, in 1984, claim that his contribution had been undervalued. He was the recipient of ten honorary degrees. Branson was, without question, a scholar and a scientist of distinction.

In 1968, Dr. Branson shifted his focus from teaching and research, and accepted the position of President of Central State University in Ohio, an HBCU once associated with Wilberforce University. In July 1970 he was selected to serve as President of Lincoln University, replacing Bernard Warren Harleston, who had been Acting President since the retirement of Marvin Wachtman in 1969.

Dr. Branson's Presidency & the Faculty

The defining quality of the academic atmosphere at the midpoint of Dr. Branson's Presidency was the open antagonism between a vocal and large portion of the faculty and Dr. Branson. The antagonism was deep; it appeared to be emotional as well as intellectual; although neither party descended to vulgarity, it was clear to me from the first faculty meeting that I attended that the vocal cohort of anti-Branson faculty suspected the President's motives in all matters, and that the President reciprocated the suspicion.⁹

⁹ As someone brought in as a part-time faculty member to replace one of their esteemed colleagues (and brought in by the Chair of the English Department—Dr. Gladys Willis—who was herself brought in to replace an esteemed colleague), I was not naturally an ally of the prevailing faculty cohort who saw Dr. Branson as a man whose mission was to dismantle the faculty as it existed. And in fact, during my first semester, Dr. Willis advised me not to attend faculty meetings. The English Department I entered was itself one of the most divided on the campus. Dr. Willis had supplanted Dr. Trotman (who was, in fall 1978, actively contesting his dismissal in court); she had already brought in two new full-time colleagues (Drs. Gabbin and Savage), and in August 1978, she added my wife and me to the faculty. The other full-time faculty members of the department—Dr. Farrell and Profs. Bellone and Hawes—were clearly not supporters of the new chair, but whatever animosity they felt was expressed outside my hearing. I certainly heard disagreements; I never heard disrespect. And I never noticed disrespect directed toward me.

What I did notice, in the English Department and in the campus at large, was an extraordinary commitment by senior faculty to the educational project that Lincoln University embodied. This did not make them right in their deep disagreements with Dr. Branson's administration, and I do not think they were entirely right. But they were, I think, heroic in their commitment to Lincoln and its value to the

The cohort was persuaded that Dr. Branson's brief from the Board of Trustees was to reduce the size of the faculty. This was the assertion made by the thirteen faculty members who sued the Board of Trustees and Dr. Branson in 1978:

The genesis of the controversy was President Branson's efforts to increase the student-faculty ratio from 12 to 1 to 20 to 1, which would have comported with guidelines promulgated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, independent recommendations, and the practice at other Pennsylvania state-related institutions which had higher ratios than did Lincoln. This would have necessitated significant reductions in the size of the Lincoln faculty. ("C. James TROTMAN, et al." paragraph 8)

At its meeting of 26 April 1977, the faculty had voted 46 to 10 to censure Dr. Branson and to ask the Governor of Pennsylvania to replace him. In response, on 28 April 1977, Dr. Branson had sent termination notices to every member of the faculty, regardless of tenure, granting them all a contractual final year in 1977-78 and giving the administration authority not to renew for 1978-79 the contracts of whichever faculty members it chose.

One of the motives for the President's actions was certainly financial. In his "Introduction" to Horace Mann Bond's *Education for Freedom*, Dr. Branson notes that from 1968 to 1971 the University's budget was in deficit; he was clearly proud that by the second year of his tenure, the budget had been balanced, and would remain balanced (xviii). But many of the faculty saw other factors at play. I remember being told by a senior faculty member in the early 1980s that the Board of Trustees' actual motive was to reshape the academic orientation of the University. It was felt in some quarters that during the tumultuous 1960s, Lincoln had become a haven for politically radical faculty, and that a less politicized academic environment was now a desideratum.

The most dramatic episode in Dr. Branson's refashioning of the University transpired in the English Department. The Chair of the English Department in April 1977 was James Trotman, who would become the lead complainant in the 1980 lawsuit filed by fourteen faculty members against the Board of Trustees and Dr. Branson. Dr. Trotman had been teaching at Lincoln since 1967 and had been Chair since 1973. In June 1977 he was notified that he had been replaced as Chair, and in December 1977 he was notified that his employment at Lincoln would terminate at the end of the 1977-78 academic year. Dr. Gladys Willis, whom Dr. Branson hired to replace Dr. Trotman, has described the unhappy atmosphere that she encountered in her first semesters in University Hall (Willis, *Faith*, pp. 56 ff.). Dr. Willis was the first African American to earn a PhD from Princeton University, but she found herself referred to by colleagues as Mrs. Willis.¹⁰

In the October 1, 1978 issue of *The Lincolnian*, W.T.M. Johnson, professor of Chemistry announced the formation of FLU (Friends of Lincoln University), and provided a vitriolic denunciation of Branson's administration:

The academic year 1977-1978, by any standard, must surely be considered the lowest point of Lincoln's long history. It was the year in which academic freedom was wantonly

African American community, and over the next few years I came to know and admire many of them. They seemed to *live* Lincoln, often literally: there were a number of faculty houses on and around the campus. I would hear comments from senior faculty such as "When I was walking through the dorm last night around 10 pm, I saw..." or "A student came into my lab a 9:30 last night, and we didn't finish until..." There are, in 2016, still examples of this dedication on the campus; Lincoln is still, for some, a mission; in 1978, it seemed to be the norm.

¹⁰ Lincoln protocol has always been clear: faculty with earned doctorates are addressed as "Dr."

destroyed and human rights arrogantly denied...It was the year of rule by injury, intimidation, insult and abuse.

Dr. Johnson reported that faculty in many departments had suffered, but that the English Department had perhaps suffered most of all. Dr. Trotman's dismissal was compounded by departure of a number of other faculty: Grace Rivero (voluntary), Marianne Russo (involuntary), and Edward Groff (involuntary separation, rescinded after protests). Dr. Johnson mentions the most dramatic event in the year of turmoil: the physical removal from University Hall of two English Department faculty members—Drs. Trotman and H. Alfred Farrell—after they attempted to prevent the new Department Chair, Dr. Willis, from teaching the class that she had assigned herself.

Although he was not terminated in 1978, Dr. Johnson himself was removed from his position as Chair of the Chemistry Department (a position to which Branson had appointed him).¹¹ A petition signed by 25 members of the faculty declared their support of Johnson and decried the “retributive action” of the President (“C. James TROTMAN, et al.” paragraph 15). A regular feature of faculty meetings when I first began to attend them in 1979 was Dr. W. T. M. Johnson standing in the right-hand aisle of Ware Center 141, being recognized by Dr. Branson, and reading a several page denunciation of the President's actions. Dr. Branson would stand silent on the dais, rocking on his heels until the screed was finished, and then move on to other business. Occasionally another faculty member would rise to add a comment, but the whole performance had a ritualistic air, at least to a newcomer. Academic business would be negotiated in the regular agenda, but Dr. Johnson, in a sort of parenthesis, voiced the animus that had not been laid aside.¹²

The Lincolnian published a second letter from Dr. Johnson on 26 October 1979, reporting that he and his thirteen colleagues were appealing the court's initial dismissal of their case and reiterating his view that “Lincoln should get rid of President Branson for the same kinds of reasons most Americans wanted to remove Nixon from the presidency: for abusing people and the powers of his office” (2). The circuit court did vacate the judgment against the faculty and send the case back to the district court for review in 1980, but Dr. Branson would remain President, completing his third five-year term in 1985. Dr. Trotman never returned to teaching at Lincoln, nor did Professors Rivero or Russo. There were, of course, a number of faculty members, many of them hired by Branson's administration, who saw Dr. Branson as striving to restore academic excellence to the institution; there remained, however, a large and vocal number of faculty members who continued to teach and who shared Dr. Johnson's view that Dr. Branson was an illegitimate authority committed to governing through “injury, intimidation, insult and abuse.” This fundamental antagonism between a vocal cohort of faculty and the President would continue (with variations in the identity and the motives of that cohort) in the

¹¹ Dr. Johnson was terminated in 1983, after a complaint by his department chair and a review by the Judicial Committee. Johnson filed suit and lost in District Court; in November 1985 he lost his appeal in the United States Court of Appeals, Third Circuit. It is perhaps only fair to note that while the Appeals Court found against Dr. Johnson, it did note that Johnson had been the first Black chemist to work for the DuPont Company, and that he “took a substantial cut in pay to teach at Lincoln” (paragraph 3). Though their behavior in protesting Dr. Branson's authority and policies was found by the courts to be unacceptable, the faculty who protested were genuinely dedicated teachers.

¹² Dr. Willis reports, “There were actually moments in the faculty meetings when I thought Dr. Branson would be physically attacked” (*Faith* 59).

Presidencies of Dr. Branson's successors—Drs. Sudarkasa, Nelson, and Jennings—though it was perceptibly less vocal at faculty meetings during Dr. Jennings's brief tenure.

I have been told that the autocratic President and the deferential faculty was, for a long time, characteristic of HBCUs, and that Lincoln's peculiar culture of antagonism was the result of newly installed Presidents unhappily discovering that Lincoln was not, in respect of faculty deference, a characteristic HBCU.¹³ Dr. James DeBoy, who joined the Lincoln faculty in 1975, has written, "Dr. Branson, a product of Southern HBCU academe culture, perceived his main job as 'keeping the lid on' (Phillips, 2002)." DeBoy adds,

To be fair, there are legitimate claims posited by HBCU proponents that strong, i.e. autocratic leadership was responsible (and, indeed, required) for the survival and progress of some Black campuses (Minor, 2005). Not surprisingly, Lincoln faculty rejected such an argument...at least for this Northern HBCU campus. (236)

The academic tumult of the decade 1978-1988 was doubtless painful to both sides, and given that both sides were well-intentioned, should have been avoidable.¹⁴

A final note on academic autocracy: not only was the university governed from the top, so were the departments. Department chairs were appointed by the President,¹⁵ and—with remarkable exceptions such as Dr. Trotman and Dr. Johnson—were appointments for life. Chairs served for decades without review. There were virtues to this system—chairs knew their departments; department faculty knew their chairs. There was predictability and continuity. But there was, inevitably, room for abuse and for faculty resentment. In 2000 the chairs were limited to five-year renewable terms of office, and for a period around 2010 it appeared that faculty might begin to elect their own departmental chairs. More recently, however, faculty elections have been ignored or nullified, and though a mandatory turnover through term limits has perhaps reduced the authority of the chairs, the faculty is still in some degree disempowered.

Dr. Branson's Presidency & the University's Liberal Arts Mission

The final three catalogs of Dr. Branson's tenure (1975-76, 1979-80, 1982-84) reproduce the same statement of the University's mission, a statement that makes explicit Lincoln's on-going dedication to the liberal arts:

OBJECTIVES

*It is Lincoln University's purpose to offer a thorough grounding in the **liberal arts** through a curriculum which, incorporating the heritage of the past, stresses the relevance of all knowledge to the problems of the present. The **liberal arts**, which encompass the sciences and mathematics, are the recognized preparation for the learned professions,*

¹³ While I am relating what I have been told and cannot verify, I will add this illustrative tale recounted by a faculty member in the early 1980s: it was said that a President of Lincoln prior to Dr. Branson had the habit of strolling across the campus on payday with a wad of bills in his pocket, offering to cash faculty paychecks. True or not, it is emblematic of how the faculty saw the President seeing the faculty

¹⁴ This saccharine conclusion is my honest judgment; I doubt it would be ratified by partisans on either side.

¹⁵ It is possible that the President, at least occasionally, made these appointments after consulting the faculty of the relevant department. I am not aware of such consultations having occurred.

for business and for public service, and best equip the student to play a useful role in an increasingly complex yet unitary world. From this premise and from the aims of the several divisions of study the objectives of the college are derived:

First, to cultivate an inquiring and critical mind; to direct it toward the apprehension of truth; and to arm it with those skills essential for effective oral and written communication.

Second, to acquaint the student with the cultural aspects of civilization as expressed in languages, literature, art, music, religion, and philosophy; and to cultivate an appreciation of the role they play in the enrichment of human life.

Third, through the medium of mathematics and the laboratory sciences, to enable the student to cope with the quantitative aspects of life, and to familiarize him with the nature of the physical and biological worlds and with scientific method.

Fourth, to promote understanding of contemporary societies and culture, in terms of their historical antecedents, of their interrelations, and of their economic, political, social, and psychological factors; and to inculcate the values of good citizenship and service to one's fellow man.

Fifth, to develop recreational skills and to encourage participation in all areas of life that promote the health and general welfare of the student; and to develop strength of character and convictions consistent with the ideals of free men.

Sixth, through intensive instruction in the area of the student's special competence, to qualify him for successful graduate or professional study.

Because we believe that only by freely living and learning together shall we move to greater understanding of man's personal and "collective problems, Lincoln will actively seek to enroll students of diverse race, color, and national origin. The faculty and board of trustees of Lincoln University, both of which are broadly interracial, are persuaded that this is among the desirable objectives of a liberal education.

To achieve such diversity and to provide the educational values of learning to live constructively in a pluralistic society, Lincoln University will continue, as it has traditionally done with conspicuous success, to accept students with underprivileged backgrounds and grounds and to provide compensatory educational opportunities to the full limit of its resources

(Lincoln University Bulletin 1975-77, pp. 5-6)

Five of the six “objectives” accord with traditional aspects of the liberal arts as understood in 20th century American higher education (**breadth**) and correlate to the core curriculum then in force: 1. critical thinking and communication skills, 2. languages, literature, and the arts, 3. science and math, 4. history and social science, and 5. physical health. The sixth objective relates to the student’s chosen major (**depth**), and implies that all students aspire to the

professions and intend to pursue further studies. This was the ambitious objective that distinguished Ashmun Institute from the “African Institute” (which eventually emerged as Cheyney University). The African Institute would train African Americans for vocations; Ashmun Institute, from its inauguration, aimed to teach African Americans the Liberal Arts as a preparation for professional careers as ministers, doctors, and lawyers. This was the objective that seemed to be fulfilled in the Lincoln of the mid-20th century—the Lincoln of Langston Hughes and Thurgood Marshall, of Kwame Nkrumah and Nnamdi Azikiwe.

But, as the final paragraph of “Objectives” implicitly acknowledges, Lincoln was, by the mid-1970s, committed to accepting and educating students whose primary and secondary educations had underprepared them for university studies. This meant not only that Lincoln would be required to “provide compensatory educational opportunities”; it meant that many students would come to Lincoln expecting their Bachelor’s degree not “to qualify [them] for successful graduate or professional study,” but to provide them with a credential directly relevant to the work world. They expected their Lincoln education to be more vocational than professional. They needed jobs upon graduation, not admission to graduate school or law school or medical school.

And these underprepared students were in 1978, and have remained, the majority of Lincoln’s student population. What was once called “remedial” English, and then “developmental English” and then “basic English” (and briefly, in the 21st century, “success English”) tells the story. Most new students—60-70% of them—have placed into English 098, 099, or 100 during my 38 years at Lincoln. It should be obvious, but I will say it anyway: this placement does not mean these students do not belong in college; it does not mean that Lincoln has ever needed to lower its academic standards. “Underprepared” means only that bright minds have not been trained in the vocabularies of academic success. And Lincoln formally adopted the position that it would supply the resources necessary to remediate this deficiency.

Nor was this mere rhetoric. Through the early 1980s, there was an active ad hoc Freshman Studies Committee.¹⁶ Tasked with supervising the entire first year experience, the committee focused much of its attention upon the developmental component. Headed by Dr. Deforest P. Rudd, a chemistry professor, and with representatives from the three disciplines who taught developmental courses—English (writing), Education (reading), and Mathematics (math)—as well as representatives from the staffs of the corresponding labs, the committee met regularly into the mid-1980s to identify and to attempt to solve issues affecting the academic progress of “students with underprivileged backgrounds.” The meetings were frequent; the discussions were often vigorous; and there was an emphasis upon assessment. The committee did not survive the presidency of Dr. Sudarkasa. Her focus on restoring excellence to academics at Lincoln led to a benign neglect of remediation. And this led to each of the six units—the three departments and the three corresponding labs—pursuing independent agendas.¹⁷

¹⁶ I was assigned by Dr. Willis to represent the English Department on the committee; it was my first exposure to the sort of commitment to the students that Lincoln inspired in its faculty. Dr. Rudd’s complete devotion to making Lincoln work for the students was inspiring.

¹⁷ One illustration of the diverse agendas: as a matter of practice, the three departments offering service courses (Math, Education, and English) necessarily proposed fewer sections of their developmental courses than they thought would be needed. (It is easier to add a new section than to cancel an under-enrolled section.) Faced with the inevitable oversupply of students needing the courses, the Math department usually said, “Take it next semester”; the Education Department usually said, “Increase the

Dr. Branson's Presidency & the Academic Divisions

The University was organized into three "Divisions": Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences.

The position of Chair of the various Divisions rotated among the Chairs of the constituent departments. (The Division Chair, I believe, received an additional release time for his or her service.)

I. The Humanities

- English
- Languages and Linguistics
- Music
- Fine Arts
- Philosophy
- Religion

II. The Natural Sciences and Mathematics

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics and Astronomy
- Mathematics
- Pre-Engineering Courses

III. The Social Sciences

- History
- Political Science
- Sociology/Anthropology and Human Services
- Black Studies¹⁸
- Education
- Psychology
- Economics and Business
- Physical Education

(*Lincoln University Bulletin* 1975-76, pp 65-66)

course cap from 25 to 30 or 35 or 40"; and the English Department usually said, "We need additional sections." Each strategy had its own merits.

¹⁸ Black Studies was, by the early 1980s, no longer sustainable, and had ceased to exist as a department or a major.

Historically, Black Studies constituted a department and a possible area of major concentration at Lincoln University. At this point in time [1982], because of the decline in enrollment of students majoring in this area, the selected courses in Black Studies are offered under the auspices of the History Department. (*Lincoln University Bulletin* 1982-84, p. 80)

The distinctive vestige of the major in the early 1980s was Dr. Clara Brock, Assistant Professor of Swahili, Black Studies & Black History since 1973. Dr. Brock was a relatively isolated figure, but she remained on the faculty for years after the disestablishment of the Black Studies major. (The major was re-established as Pan-African Studies in 2015 through the efforts of Dr. Zizwe Poe.)

These categories were widely accepted in American academia. They seemed a natural classification of three modes of scholarly inquiry. The Natural Sciences—physics, chemistry, biology, geology, and perhaps psychology—claimed for themselves the Scientific Method as it had evolved from the 16th to the 19th centuries, emphasizing experiment and quantification, and assuming that current science built upon and extended past science; the Natural Sciences took for granted that today’s science included all that was worthwhile in yesterday’s science—and more. The Humanities did not assume progress. Contemporary arts—literature, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, religion, philosophy, history—might or might not equal classical arts; they were not inherently better or worse. And the standards for evaluating the value of a given work of art were rarely quantifiable. The Social Sciences occupied a middle space; experimentation with human subjects is always problematic; there are practical and moral limits to experiments in sociology, economics, political science, and education (and the consequences of unrestricted experimentation has, in American history, been especially dreadful for minority and disabled populations), but the Social Sciences still aspire to the quantification and objectivity of the Natural Sciences. On the other hand, precisely because they deal with value-laden problems of human interaction, Social Scientists often call upon humanistic principles when they evaluate policies and problems. Throughout the decades 1978-2016, the Social Sciences consistently offered the most attractive undergraduate majors at Lincoln. Social Science majors seemed to constitute more than half of every graduating class. (And the Social Sciences were the *only* majors Lincoln ever offered at the graduate level.¹⁹) These three “Divisions” would remain the core structure of academics at Lincoln for the next 36 years.²⁰

Dr. Branson’s Presidency & “Requirements for Graduation”

In 1978, Lincoln shared with Temple University the peculiar custom of assigning four credits to most courses. Students enrolled in four courses (hence a normal load of 16 credits). Classes were assigned an hour and professors decided which of the five days they would not hold

¹⁹ The fuzzy borders between the three divisions can be illustrated by the Department of Psychology, which Lincoln assigned to the Social Sciences but has a strong claim to be classified a Natural Science and by the Department of History, also assigned to the Social Sciences by Lincoln, but regarded by many, including many historians, as essentially a field of the Humanities.

²⁰ Under Dr. Nelson, the Divisions would be renamed “Schools,” and the part-time (one-release) “Chairs” would be retitled “Deans,” and made full-time administrators. And the Graduate Program, which offered only Social Science degrees, would be assigned to the School of Humanities. This last assignment, inexplicable in principle, was based in practice on the fact that Social Sciences enrolled by far the largest number of undergraduates, and that placing the Graduate Program where logically it ought to be placed might have overwhelmed the Dean of the School of Social Sciences, and, presumably, underworked the Dean of Humanities.

Under Dr. Jennings, the three “Schools” would receive their ultimate promotion: they became three “Colleges.” The full-time Deans remained in place. But in 2013 the traditional American academic division based upon content and methodology was replaced by an intellectually incoherent map of studies (discussed below under the Jennings Presidency).

the class.²¹ When in 1980 it was decided to adopt the more common 3-credit per course system, there was some pushback from faculty who felt the four-credit/four-hour system was a benefit to students. The English Department, for example, retained four credits for each of its composition courses (ENG100, 101, and 102) for several years.²²

Students were required to complete 32 4-credit courses, for a total of 128 credits.²³ The requirements for graduation were as follows. (*Lincoln University Bulletin 1979-80*, pp. 50-51)

A. DISTRIBUTIONAL COURSES

- 1. Four “interdisciplinary” courses in the Humanities*
- 2. Three courses in three separate disciplines in the Social Sciences.*
- 3. The BS degrees required two semesters of a foreign language; the BA degrees required four*
- 4. Three courses were required in the Natural Sciences: two 4-credit courses in a lab science and one mathematics course*
- 5. Two terms of physical education activities.*

The “Distributional Courses” constitute the Core Curriculum and represent the principal **breadth** portion of the Liberal Arts curriculum.

The second unit of the curriculum was the focus of students (and students’ parents’) interest—the “major” that would orient them toward a specific career direction after Lincoln.

B. MAJOR FIELD: *a major field of study in which 8 to 10 courses have been completed with a grade average of C or better.*

The major represents the **depth** portion of the Liberal Arts curriculum.

²¹ Many professors choose to teach Monday through Thursday, giving students (and themselves) a three-day weekend. I always choose to give students a mid-week break, teaching Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday; this allowed me to have two days (Tuesday and Friday) on which to make longer assignments.

²² In 1986 the credits for the two non-developmental courses was reduced to three; eventually the 4-credit developmental course, ENG101, was divided into two 3-credit courses (ENG100 and ENG101) and the two standard freshman English courses were numbered ENG102 and ENG103.

²³ “Starting with the entering Freshman Class of 1976 (i.e. Class of 1980) completion of 32 academic courses (not including developmental courses Eng. 100, Ed. 100 and Math. 100) with a minimum grade average of 2.00 (C) will be required. Upon the satisfactory completion of 32 courses as stated below, the student will be recommended by the Faculty to the Board of Trustees for the degree of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science.” (*Lincoln University Bulletin 1979-80*, p. 50)

The third and final unit of the Lincoln education represents the **choice** portion of the Liberal Arts curriculum.

C. ELECTIVES: *The completion of 9 to 13 elective courses.*

Students were to be allowed electives. A lot of electives. (In the event, in 1978 as in 2016, departments cast envious eyes upon the liberty of these elective courses, and inroads—in the form of suggested, or even required, electives in the field of the major became all too common.)

To be eligible for graduation, students had to meet two additional requirements, one of which was serious and one of which was not.

--The satisfactory completion of a proficiency examination in English.

The Writing Proficiency Exam was a source of considerable anxiety. When, at the final April meeting of the faculty to pass on the list of graduating seniors, a Department Chair would rise to declare that one of his or her majors had satisfied all requirements and should be added to the list of graduating students, Elsie Winchester would consult her note cards, and more often than not report that the student had failed the WPE. The exam was administered once in the fall and twice in the spring (the second spring administration was an April last-chance test for seniors who had hitherto failed.)

--Participation in the Undergraduate Assessment Program for Counselling and Evaluation.

“Participation,” not “satisfactory completion,” was the requirement, and students participated. The test was usually an area exam in the field of the major; students appeared, circled in a sufficient number of dots, more or less randomly, and were credited with “participation.” This, at least, was the custom in the English Department.

A full commentary on the 1978 curriculum appears in Appendix II. It was an intelligible program with a clear liberal arts orientation.

Dr. Branson’s Presidency & Two Liberal Arts Initiatives

NEH Grant

In 1979, the National Endowment for the Humanities funded a grant proposal written by Dr. Willis, Chair of the English Department through a \$3,000 planning grant and a \$40,000 implementation grant (Willis, *Faith* 68). Her intention was to rethink the “four ‘interdisciplinary’ courses in the Humanities” that the existing distributional requirements specified (i.e. HUM 101 and 102, plus the two sophomore Humanities options—a total of 16 credits). Her purpose was threefold: to bring Lincoln’s Humanities curriculum into closer alignment with the general American standard, to upgrade the particular requirements, and to strengthen the liberal arts (Willis, *Faith* 70). The grant led ultimately to a curriculum in which the English Department would teach two three-credit English Composition courses (ENG101 and ENG102); the English and Foreign Language Departments would teach two three-credit

World Literature courses (ENG202 and ENG208), half the sections of each course were taught by English Department faculty; half by Foreign Language faculty.²⁴ The Art, Music, Philosophy, and Religion Departments each would teach a two-credit “Introductions” to their respective fields. The result totaled 20 credits. In 2006, this structure would be dismantled, and the number of credits assigned to the Humanities would be reduced by 25% (see below “Dr. Nelson’s Presidency & the 2006 Curriculum”).

The new World Literature requirement (ENG207 & ENG208) merits a paragraph or two. Dr. Willis, a Milton scholar with a PhD from Princeton University, was in some respects conservative in her approach to literature, but she saw that a World Literature course at Lincoln could not rely on what was still a very Euro-centric *Norton Anthology of World Literature*. She brought in a consultant (Donald E. Herdick of the Three Continents Press) and in 1980-81 a committee of faculty from the English and Foreign Language Departments produced a thick volume of readings in African, African American, Caribbean, Spanish, Latin American, Native American, Chinese and Japanese literatures. Copies of this in-house 300+ page anthology—*An Introduction to Third World Literature* (1981)—were distributed to all students taking ENG207-208 as a supplement to Norton’s anthology. When, a few years later, Norton radically reconsidered what “World” meant and produced a much broader anthology, the in-house supplement was abandoned.

ENG207 (world literature to 1650) and ENG208 (world literature since 1650) were surely the most humanistic of all courses offered at Lincoln University between 1978 and 2016. They were, of course, literature courses (*Gilgamesh*, *Odyssey*, *Inferno*, *Son Jara*, *Hamlet*, *Faust*, *Things Fall Apart*, *Sula*), but they also included religion and philosophy (*Genesis*, *Job*, *Apology of Socrates*, *Mahabhrata*, *Quran*, *The Prince*). Because the courses were sequenced chronologically from 3000 BCE to the present, they provided a historical perspective that students acquired nowhere else in the curriculum. And because the courses did span the globe, they also provided a uniquely broad geographical perspective.

The Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Festival

The 1980s saw an effort to institute a celebration of the arts through the Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Festival. The inaugural festival was held in November 1981; a second festival was held two years later in 1983. Poets and scholars were invited to make presentations, and music and dance performances were scheduled. The prime mover behind the festival was, I believe, Dr. JoAnn Gabbin of the English Department (with, of course, the support of her Department Chair and the Chair of the Humanities Division). With her departure from the campus, the Festival was not repeated a third time.

Dr. Branson’s Presidency & 1890 Land Grant Status

The one positive theme that recurred through the second half of Dr. Branson’s Presidency was his ambition to secure land grant status for Lincoln, what he always referred to as “Eighteen and Ninety Land Grant Status.” The 1890 law was the Second Morrill Act. The initial Morrill Land Grant Act, passed in 1862 granted every state 30,000 acres of federal land; the proceeds of the sale of that land were to be used to establish institutions of higher education “where the

²⁴ Eventually, as the faculty of the Foreign Language Department was reduced, World Literature would be taught solely by faculty of the English Department.

leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life” (“U.S. Code §304). Because, following Reconstruction, the land grant colleges in the South were closed to African American students, a second Morrill Act was passed in 1890, providing comparable support for parallel Black land grant colleges. Pennsylvania State University was Pennsylvania’s 1862 land grant college; it was Dr. Branson’s ambition to have Lincoln declared Pennsylvania’s 1890 land grant college, and he would regularly report to the faculty on the progress of his dream, usually with a comment about the unenlightened supporters of Penn State in Harrisburg and elsewhere who continued to obstruct his proposal. On 2 June 1980 bill to recognize Lincoln as Pennsylvania’s 1890 Land Grant institution was introduced on the floor of the House of Representatives (HR2626); it was thought to mean \$3 million for Lincoln. Dr. Branson continued to pursue the dream for several years. On 25 March 1983, three years into the effort, he was telling *The Lincolnian* that becoming the 17th Black land grant college “would be a good thing for Lincoln” (1). But in the end, Penn State prevailed, and it remains Pennsylvania’s sole land grant university.

Had the effort been successful, the implications for Lincoln in the 21st Century might have been great. On the one hand, a significant and reliable source of funds would have been established; on the other hand, land grant status would have obligated the University to develop programs to deal with problems such as environmental planning, aging, housing, and nutrition among non-urban minorities. Lincoln’s heritage as a small liberal arts HBCU might have been sold for a mess—a substantial mess, to be sure—of pottage.

Dr. Branson’s Presidency & Enhancement

If Land-Grant status eluded Lincoln’s grasp, a significant windfall did come during the Branson Presidency. In 1983, Pennsylvania initiated a statewide desegregation plan that was approved by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights. A chief beneficiary was Penn State, but Lincoln and Cheyney also profited. Lincoln University’s award was reported to be \$11.5 million over a five year period (*Lincolnian* 28 September 1983, p. 1). The largest portion was the \$6.5 million dedicated to a new academic building for mathematics, computer sciences, social sciences, and humanities, which would eventually emerge in 1991 as Dickey Hall.²⁵

If the intent of the Enhancement money was to make Penn State less white and Lincoln and Cheyney less Black, it did not succeed. But it did provide Lincoln with the resources to make genuine, if small, improvements to its academic environment.

²⁵ How the “Enhancement money” was spent elsewhere I cannot report. In 1987-88, the English Department secured \$20,400 for 8 projects: Writing-Across-the-Curriculum, Equipment for the Journalism Course, Publication of Instructional Materials (*A Brief Guide to College Writing*), Computer Terminals (at \$7500, the largest award), Instructional Resources, Videotapes for Cinema Course, Performance of Julius Caesar (memo from Dr. Mullett, VP Fiscal Affairs, 27 January 1988).

The Interim Presidency of Donald Leopold Mullett July 1985-February 1987

Dr. Mullett

Dr. Mullett was a Lincoln alumnus who returned to the campus to serve as Comptroller, Business Manager, and Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and Treasurer. Following Dr. Branson's retirement, he served as Interim President. When the search for a new President had to be reopened, he agreed to serve a second year. In September 1987 it was announced that Lincoln would inaugurate its first female President, Dr. Niara Sudarkasa.

Dr. Mullett's Presidency & Curriculum Reform: The Pew Grant (1986-89)

In the spring of 1986, Lincoln University received a major grant from the Pew Memorial Trust via the Glenmede Trust Company to reform its core curriculum. I was told that the grant proposal had been written by Dr. William E. Gardner, Vice President for Development (and Professor of Psychology) under Dr. Branson and Dr. Mullett. (Dr. Gardner had been a potential candidate to replace Dr. Branson; in the event, following the selection of Dr. Sudarkasa to succeed Dr. Branson, he departed and became the ninth President of Savannah State College.) The three-year grant provided for release time for faculty, travel to conferences, and consultants. The execution of the grant was assigned to the faculty. Dr. Anthony Applegate was selected to direct the grant, assisted by three faculty members, one from each Division, who would receive one release-time per semester. Dr. Applegate was highly motivated, and he pushed his colleagues to think innovatively. At no time was there any interference from the administration; the curriculum revision was entirely faculty-driven. I was invited to serve as the Humanities representative, and participated for the first two years (I was out of the country for the third year).

In 1986-87, the four members of the committee met weekly in Cannon House. We each attended relevant conferences and reported back to the committee. The two principal themes in the academic air in the mid-1980s were interdisciplinary studies and critical thinking. Our principal consultant came from King's College in Wilkes Barre, which had just completed an exemplary revision of its core curriculum. We agreed upon eight key themes that would characterize the liberal arts (Communication Skills, Critical Thinking, Values, Science and Technology, Numerical Data/Computers, Intercultural Experience, Historical Perspective, Art and Aesthetics), three communication skills that would be reinforced throughout the curriculum (writing, thinking, speaking), and the unifying principle of interdisciplinary study. By spring 1987, the committee had drafted a beautifully coherent, radically new re-conceptualization of the core curriculum. Dr. Applegate brought it to the March meeting of the faculty, where it was, in shockingly short order, rejected and returned to the committee for reworking.²⁶

²⁶ This provided an excellent lesson in the danger of academic echo chambers. The four of us had worked intensely at our weekly meetings and at the various conferences we attended. In a couple of meetings toward the end of the year we sat at a table in Cannon House and enthusiastically constructed a

When the committee reconvened in fall, it would unfortunately be missing the vigor and the intellect of Dr. Applegate, who had chosen to move on from Lincoln; fortunately, it gained the vigor and intellect of Dr. Winchester, who directed the final two years of the grant. The new reconceptualization achieved under Dr. Winchester held to the principles that underlay the misguided effort of 1986-87, but was less radical and took into account the realities of faculty needs in various departments. And it was more widely discussed in Departmental and Divisional meetings. It was presented to the faculty in spring 1988, approved, and implemented in Fall 1989.

Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts

The curricular reform began with eight principles—what became known as the “Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts”;

1. Communication Skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking
2. Critical Thinking: Problem Solving
3. Values
4. Science and Technology
5. Numerical Data/Computers.
6. Intercultural Experience
7. Historical Perspective
8. Art and Aesthetics

comprehensive and coherent template, with all the bells and whistles that our conferences and consultants (and our own imaginations) had produced. We were ourselves a diverse group in gender, in race, in nationality, in seniority as well as in our academic disciplines. It was, therefore, too easy for us to think that having persuaded one another of the ideal curriculum for Lincoln, we would have no problems persuading the rest of the diverse faculty. We were shocked by the objections from our colleagues when the proposal was brought to the floor, but the real problem was that we had shocked our colleagues. We had persuaded each other; we had done nothing to prepare the faculty. This was not just a matter of not having circulated a draft in advance, or even of having circulated a draft with extensive arguments in favor of each detail. It was a matter of not having consulted our colleagues, of not having gotten their feedback, of not having incorporated their improvements and of not having had the opportunity of answering their objections.

Consulting the faculty has not been a priority in any of the Presidencies except that of Dr. Donaldson. Some administrations have not been much interested in “consulting” the faculty (in which there is at least the appearance that selected faculty have participated in discussions that take place prior to decision-making). I honestly believe that actual consulting with faculty, though perhaps at times tiresome and even frustrating, would improve most academic reforms, and certainly would make faculty more invested in their success.

(See Appendix 5 for the full description of each of the “Eight Integrative Themes” produced in 1988, with a comparison to the “Eight Institutional Learning Outcomes” that replaced them in 2015)

Themes 1, 2, and 5 related to skills—Lincoln’s equivalent to the trivium. The high placement of “Critical Thinking” reflected the spirit of the times, but critical thinking has remained a preoccupation of higher education at Lincoln and elsewhere. The “Listening” and “Speaking” elements of “Communication Skills” should be noted. A large percentage of Lincoln students tested into the development speech course (EDU102 Oral Communications).²⁷

The structure of the new curriculum was as follows:

1. Discipline or honors based three-credit **freshman seminar** [3 Integrative credits]
2. **Humanities:**
 - two semesters of English Composition (6 credits)
 - two semesters of World Literature (6 credits)
 - four 2-credit introductory courses in music, art, philosophy and religion (8 credits)

[20 Humanities credits]
3. **Social Sciences:** A minimum of twelve (12) hours in three different disciplines chosen from among the social sciences. [12 Social Science credits]
4. **Foreign Language:** [8 Language credits for the BA; 16 Language credits for the BS]
5. **Natural Sciences:** A minimum of three full courses in the Division of Natural Science. Two of these courses must be in the laboratory sciences and the third must be in mathematics. [11 Natural Science credits]
6. **Computers:** A one-credit course on computer applications. [1 Computer credit]
7. **Health and Physical Education:** A three-credit program of wellness and health fitness. [3 HPR credits]

²⁷ A widely circulated anecdote told of a recruiter for a major corporation who came to campus asking to interview students with GPAs over 3.30; after meeting with several students he emerged to ask to see any students with GPAs over 3.00 who could speak properly. The recruiter’s racial bias might well be questioned, but there was no question that Lincoln wanted its graduates to be positively received by interviewers for such corporations.

8. **Emphasis Courses:** A minimum of two courses with a speaking emphasis, two with a writing emphasis, and two with a critical thinking emphasis.
9. **Upper Division Seminar:** A 300 or 400 level course, taken in the junior or senior year, which is located outside of the student's major department.
[3 Integrative credits]
10. **Major Field:** A concentration in a major course of study where eight to ten courses have been completed with a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or better.
11. **Electives:** The completion of from nine to thirteen elective courses.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1988-90 (pp. 70-72)

The total core curriculum consumed for Bachelor of Science candidates 58 of the 120 credits required for graduation; for Bachelor of Arts candidates, with 8 additional language credits, it consumed 66 credits. (Appendix 3 provides a detailed commentary on the 1988 curriculum)

Requirements #1 and #9 (Discipline- or honors-based freshman seminar; Upper Division Seminar) were innovations intended to frame the interdisciplinary **breadth** of the new curriculum. They aimed to expose students to content outside the fields that they would choose to major in, and the outcomes in each of the various seminars were supposed to be shared with the entire cohort at a mandatory convocation. Requirement #2, (Humanities) also emphasized **breadth**, with a pair of World Literature courses covering global literature and thought 3000 BC to 2000 AD and four separate introductions to Art, Music, Philosophy, and Religion. The Social Science requirement (#3) was reduced in size, and now enforced **breadth** by focusing on three themes: African American Experience, Empowerment course, and Globalization. The Foreign Language requirement (#4) simply repeated Lincoln's long-time practice: the BA degree would require passing a language course at the 202 level; the BS degree would require two semesters of a language. The Natural Science requirement (#5) was unchanged. The one-credit Computers requirement (#6) was a nod to the novelty, in 1988, of the Personal Computer. The Health and Physical Education requirement (#7) divided the former 3-credit course into a 2-credit classroom course and a 1-credit activity course. The 8th requirement, Emphasis Courses, attempted to institutionalize the recognized principle that important skills must be learned and, if they are to be retained, must be used repeatedly.

The Major Field (#10) constituted, as always, the **depth** portion of the liberal arts curriculum.

And the Electives (#11) were, of course, the **choice** portion, and 9-13 courses, had 9-13 elective courses ever actually been realistic, represented a respectable amount of **choice**.

The imperfections of the 1988 curriculum emerged over the next few years. The University Seminars were more admirable in concept than in practice. University Seminar I seemed to work well in its first year (the final year of the three-year grant that funded the curriculum revision). Under direct supervision, the new syllabi were tested, and the semester-

end convocation of student presentations took place. But lacking supervision, the University Seminar I courses lost the enthusiasm of most faculty; the convocations ceased, and the inconsistent quality of the 190 courses came to depend entirely upon the individual faculty members who offered them. The University Seminar II courses (390 courses) never achieved the integrative, interdisciplinary purpose they had been designed to fulfill. The Writing, Speaking, and Thinking Emphasis courses became problematic as some departments declined to identify enough of their courses as Emphasis, and their majors consequently had to hunt for appropriate courses outside the major. Additionally, while some faculty were earnest in justifying the “Emphasis” marker, ongoing supervision was nil, and once the Registrar identified a course with a W, and S, or a T, the identification remained, and new faculty were not always trained to the meaning of the emphasis of the courses to which they were assigned.

These problems, and others, can be laid in part to the original concept, but largely to the failure to supervise. Once the Freshman Studies Committee dissolved in 1986 or 1987, there was no interdisciplinary academic unit to oversee the operational functioning of the curriculum. Individual departments were the sole superintendents, and they took ownership solely of their individual curriculums. The University’s Educational Policies Committee and Curriculum Committee were responsible for examining and recommending changes to any aspect of the curriculum, but once changes were approved, they took no responsibility for insuring that any curricular mandates remained functional.

The Presidency of Niara Sudarkasa

February 1987-October 1998

Dr. Sudarkasa

Dr. Sudarkasa (1938-) became the first woman President of Lincoln University in February 1987. She was, like Dr. Branson, a scholar of some distinction. Born Gloria Albertha Marshall, she was an anthropologist who did her field work in West Africa, and adopted an African name (pronounced Soo-DAR-kah-sah) in the 1970s. She came to Lincoln with a strong commitment to academic excellence.

Perhaps her greatest impact at Lincoln lay in her development of the university's historic connection with Africa. She arranged for the addition of many Africans to the faculty, many with outstanding credentials, and she pursued academic links especially to West and South Africa. In 1998 she supervised the "First Annual Nnamdi Azikiwe Symposium," which brought international scholars to the campus. More broadly, she championed the globalization of the curriculum.

Continuing Dr. Branson's focus on Lincoln's precarious finances, Dr. Sudarkasa could claim significant success: by the end of her Presidency, Lincoln was balancing its budget, the endowment ("once \$3 million") had risen to \$14 million, and alumni giving had risen from \$100,000 a year to \$214,000 in 1997 (O'Neill). And with this, her administration presided over a significant raise in faculty compensation.

From Dr. Branson, Dr. Sudarkasa inherited a faculty mistrustful of the administration, and while faculty compensation improved significantly during her Presidency (O'Neill), what the faculty (and staff) saw as her high-handed manner did nothing to diminish the mistrust. While faculty meetings were less ritualistically antagonistic, there soon developed new rifts. Dr. Sudarkasa loved ceremony, and she demanded respect.²⁸ A 1993 article reported that "some students" referred to Dr. Sudarkasa "affectionately as 'Madame President' (Burgess), but a 1998 article noted that Dr. Sudarkasa had "endured two student protests over living conditions that shut down the rural campus.... Some students complained that she was aloof and inaccessible" and cited Dr. James DeBoy: "You wouldn't characterize her as a warm and fuzzy type, and to some students and faculty, that's a real stumbling block for her" (O'Neill).²⁹ By the final year of

²⁸ Extensive remodeling and new construction at the President's house, totaling "about \$500,000" (according to Henson; "over \$530,000 according to O'Neill), however justified, became a much talked-about topic on a campus where financial stringency was always being imposed in most areas.

The President's House faces on Maple Drive, which was, until 2014, the main entrance to the University. For a brief period, stop signs halted traffic in either direction on Maple Drive in order to accord the right-of-way to the president's driveway. This too caused comment; within a few weeks the normal right-of-way was restored, and the presidential limousine was again required to stop before entering the Drive.

²⁹ I never heard students refer to Dr. Sudarkasa as "Madame President," affectionately or not; I *did* hear faculty and alumni refer to her as "Madame President," and never with affection. My own longest exchange with Dr. Sudarkasa concerned a directive I received as Acting Chair of the English Department from the Provost during her first year at Lincoln. The Provost instructed me to assign a faculty member a 11-credit teaching load in the spring to compensate for the 13-credit load the member had been assigned

her presidency she was the victim of a scurrilous campaign by anonymous detractors, who placed a series of mocking (and probably slanderous) newsletters under windshield wipers in faculty parking lots.

Dr. Sudarkasa's Presidency & Three Academic "Centers"

In an effort to both elevate academic standards and to globalize the university's focus, Dr. Sudarkasa oversaw the creation of three "Centers." The Centers were associated with, but independent of academic departments. Their mandates reflected the President's own priorities, which did aim to advance the Humanities (and to some degree, the Social Sciences). They were admirable in conception, but largely ineffectual in execution. They brought some outstanding personalities to the campus, and these may have impacted the few students who had direct contact with them; the faculty and the student body as a whole saw little tangible benefit.

The Center for Public Policy and Diplomacy. Dr. William Gaymon, a retired diplomat who worked for the U.S. Peace Corps and the United Nations, was brought in to head this center, serving until 1993. It certainly aligned itself with Dr. Sudarkasa's emphasis upon global studies, but it achieved nothing memorable or permanent.

The Center for the Comparative Study of the Humanities. Dr. Oluropo Sekoni was brought in to head this center. It too aligned itself with the global studies emphasis; it too achieved nothing memorable or permanent, although Dr. Sekoni, an eminent scholar of Yoruba and English literature, did remain as an active senior professor in the English Department until his retirement in the early 2000s.

The Center for the Study of Critical Languages. The Director of this Center was Dr. Joseph Rodgers, the long-time head of the Department of Foreign Languages. Again there was the alignment with the global studies emphasis, and there was, for a time, a substantial impact on the campus. The "Critical" languages were those that the U.S. government saw as essential in the geopolitical world of the 1990s. Russian, Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic were the essentials, and Lincoln hired two new full-time faculty, one to teach Russian and one to teach Chinese. Russian, especially, became a popular course. Japanese and Arabic (like Yoruba) would be taught on an ad hoc basis by adjunct faculty. But both full-time positions were eliminated when Russian and Chinese ceased to be offered in the 2000s. (Chinese was reinstated as a minor in 2013, but without a full-time faculty instructor.)

The Centers did not long survive Dr. Sudarkasa's departure.³⁰

in the fall, thus avoiding the necessity to pay for an overload. I explained that with the exception of one 4-credit English course, all English courses in the spring would carry three credits, and therefore arithmetic prevented me from executing the directive. I could only offer 10 credits (3+3+4), 12 credits (3+3+3+3), or 13 credits (3+3+3+4). Arithmetic was not persuasive to the Provost, and I appealed to the President. Her response was a page of instruction on the proper tact faculty should use when addressing a university president. It was not helpful to the occasion, but it did make clear the voice to employ when addressing Madame President.

³⁰ Aside from the genuine contribution made by the Russian and Chinese majors, which distinguished Lincoln among HBCUs (and among all schools its size), I am not aware of any lasting benefit to the Centers. I believe that the Center for the Comparative Humanities may have sponsored a colloquium and I assume that the Center for Public Policy and Diplomacy did so as well. Even at the time, they seemed to be well-intentioned but ineffectual constructions that brought some eminent scholars onto the Lincoln

Dr. Sudarkasa's Presidency & the Barnes Foundation

In 1989, as a result of deaths and resignations, Lincoln University finally achieved full control of the 4 seats (of a total of five; the fifth was allotted to Girard Bank) on the Board of Trustees of the Barnes Foundation that Dr. Barnes assigned to Lincoln in his will. Dr. Sudarkasa herself joined the Board, and the Board's Presidency was assigned to Richard H. Glanton, a lawyer and a member of Lincoln's Board of Trustees. In 1992, as President of the Barnes's Board, Glanton was proposing radical innovations that unsettled many long-time fans of the Barnes. Facing serious financial (and other) issues, Glanton first attempted, unsuccessfully, to de-accession artworks (worth some \$15-\$18 million) and then, successfully, to send artworks from the collection on a world tour, both actions apparently interdicted by Dr. Barnes's will. The controversies finally led to Glanton's resignation in March 1998. After Dr. Sudarkasa's resignation in September of the same year, she filed a lawsuit against her former ally in which she claimed "that Glanton was a close friend and legal adviser who set out to have her fired after she declined to support his re-election to the Barnes, the Lower Merion foundation of which she was vice president" (Loviglio).³¹

Dr. Sudarkasa's resignation was requested by Lincoln's Board of Trustees following a State report on irregularities in the offices of Fiscal Affairs and Physical Plant.

The auditor general's summary report — released September 9, after an eight-month investigation — concludes that the university engaged in a pattern of mismanagement and waste in the department of physical plant; inadequate financial management, planning, and oversight in the renovation of the presidential residence; and poor judgment, and a disregard for sound business practices and university policies in a 1997 real estate transaction. ("Sudarkasa resigns")

The problem was exacerbated by Dr. Sudarkasa's early decision to appoint her husband, John L. Clark as the Director of Physical Plant. As a result, Clark would be implicated in some of the accusations. Specifically, he was accused "of steering more than \$400,000 in school contracts to vendors who were 'close' to him" (Daughen).³² Other charges, including the hiring of Dr. Sudarkasa's son, Michael Sudarkasa, "to set up a conference on African business development," were also cited in the Auditor General's report.

Dr. Sudarkasa herself blamed her difficulties in part upon her gender:

payroll, but did not provide them with opportunities commensurate to their abilities as researchers and teachers.

³¹ Dr. Sudarkasa's lawsuit contained some interesting revelations. Her suit was filed against Richard Glanton (\$5 million), Glanton's law firm (\$1 million) and Eugene L. Cliett, her Vice President for Fiscal Affairs (\$1 million). She accused Glanton of forcing her from her \$150,000 a year presidency. She said Lincoln had paid Glanton's firm about \$2.5 million between 1986 and 1998. When, in 1997, she informed Glanton that she wanted to replace him as President of the Barnes foundation, she said he began a campaign to discredit her (Daughen).

³² In August 1998, as the Auditor General's report was being discussed, and two months before being forced to retire, Dr. Sudarkasa called Department Chairs to a special meeting in the Vail Hall board room. She defended her own integrity, but especially moving was her defense of John Clark. In an interview in 1998, Dr. Sudarkasa offered this defense of her husband: He "is a builder, an inventor. He is not a college-educated engineer or anything like that. I think that part of the fact was that he was not credentialed in the traditional way [raised many people's eyebrows]" (Fields).

A lot of what I have confronted at Lincoln has to do with the fact that I'm a woman heading what was considered to be an all-male institution — what was, and is still perceived by some people, as being appropriately male dominated. And I'm not a woman who deals with men by inferiorizing myself, or making myself feel diminished — be diminished — in order to lift them up.... People do not necessarily want to show you the same kind of courtesies or the same kind of respect that they would show male presidents without even questioning it. Now I think that the atmosphere has gotten better at Lincoln — far, far, far better.... And I think that [of] the alumni, particularly of certain generations, some of them have come around to having a female president. [But] there are others whom I think would just never accept it. That's the reason I said that I would guarantee you that the next president will be a male — and probably an alumnus. (Fields)

As it happened, the next President would indeed be a male, though not an alumnus.

Dr. Sudarkasa's Presidency & the Physical Plant

Despite the troubles with the Physical Plant that contributed to her resignation, Dr. Sudarkasa's Presidency saw two notable additions to the University's campus.

Dickey Hall. Completed in 1991, Dickey Hall originated as part of a 1983 \$11.5 million Enhancement appropriation from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It would house the Social Sciences, the Math Department, the Religion and Philosophy Departments, IT, and the Writing, Reading, and Math Labs. Faculty meetings were held in its auditorium. Not a particularly handsome building, its working spaces were often found to be disappointing. Within a couple of years the external doors were warping. In 2013 it had deteriorated to the point that it had to be removed from use; an extension had to be built to properly house the IT equipment, and in 2016 the main building still awaits the beginning of its renovation.

Thurgood Marshall Living Learning Center. Lincoln needed additional dormitory capacity, but, it was reported, state funds could not be used to build dormitories. State funds *could* be used to build academic or mixed buildings, so in 1996 Lincoln built a "mixed" building that contained a couple of computer labs, a cafeteria, guest housing (which has now reverted to dorm rooms) and mostly dorm rooms. It is not a distinguished structure, but neither is it an ugly or ill-designed one.

The Acting Presidency of James Ashley Donaldson, October 1998-August 1999

When Dr. Sudarkasa's Presidency was abruptly terminated in fall 1998, Dr. Donaldson (1941), a Lincoln alumnus and Vice President of the Board of Trustees, took over the position during the search for a successor. His brief term was characterized by wisdom and intelligence.³³

³³ I will repeat an anecdote I have perhaps too often told. I happened to be acting chair of the English Department during Dr. Donaldson's Presidency. One of his first actions was to call department chairs in groups of three to the Board Room in Vail Hall. He asked us what we thought the university needed. I said that the Langston Hughes Memorial Library was underfunded and that even for a college of Lincoln's size, the collection was overfilled with books purchased in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A couple of weeks later, I happened to be talking to the staff at the library's circulation desk when Mr. Wimbish, the head librarian rushed over. "Dr. Van Dover," he exclaimed. "What did you do? Dr. Donaldson has just increased our acquisitions budget!" Not all Presidents listen to faculty; Dr. Donaldson listened and acted. Dr. Donaldson's one-year Presidency could serve as a tutorial in excellent Presidentialism.

The Presidency of Ivory V. Nelson

August 1999-November 2011

Dr. Nelson

Dr. Nelson (1934-) became President in August 1999 and served until his replacement had been identified in November 2011. Dr. Nelson was trained as a chemist, but by the early 1980s he moved into university administration, eventually serving as President of Central Washington University from 1992 to 1999.

Dr. Nelson's Presidency was most notable for two related achievements. His administration negotiated the controversial terms under which Lincoln's control of the Board of the Barnes Foundation was altered and the Foundation's physical location was changed, and it was also during his administration that the physical plant of the university was radically improved, with major reconstruction of existing academic and non-academic buildings and with the addition of important new academic and non-academic buildings. The improvements totaled a remarkable \$325 million (Holmes).

The second achievement, more relevant to the liberal arts was the significant modification of the core curriculum, with the aim of reducing requirements and facilitating internships and academic minors.

Dr. Nelson's Presidency & the Faculty

Like both of his predecessors, Dr. Nelson discovered upon his arrival a faculty disposed to doubt his good intentions. The reflexive opposition of a vocal section of the faculty was felt at most faculty meetings. Abdulalim A. Shabazz (Lincoln '49), Distinguished Professor of Mathematics, regularly rose to denounce what he saw as "the lowering of University standards," especially in mathematics. In his open letter of resignation, Shabazz declared that Dr. Nelson's leadership had "produced an inhumane ineffective mathematics teaching and learning environment" (Shabazz).

In November 2003, the faculty engaged in a 3-day strike against the university. As in 1984, pay and benefits were the principal issue. At the strike's end, the administration announced that students would be assumed to have received a full semester of instruction, but that the instructors would be assumed not to have taught a full semester of instruction and would have their salaries reduced by a specified percentage.

Dr. Nelson was the only president frequently seen walking the campus. Wearing his blue baseball cap, he might be observed on a sidewalk early in the morning or throughout the day.³⁴

³⁴ He was the only president to roam the halls of the academic buildings. I was sitting late one afternoon in my office in corner of the third floor of University Hall. The secretary had left, and the building seemed deserted. I heard footsteps in the corridor, and Dr. Nelson appeared in the doorway. He began an inconsequential conversation, but when an English Department colleague joined us, he remained for a half-hour discussion of the status of the various elements of the

Dr. Nelson's Presidency & the 2006 Curriculum

In the second half of his Presidency, Dr. Nelson turned to the revision of the 1988 core curriculum. If the guiding principles of the 1988 curriculum had been the “Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts,” with an emphasis upon interdisciplinary and across-the-curriculum studies, the guiding principle for the new core curriculum established for 2006 was reduction in the size of the core curriculum. The “Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts” were retained as the underlying principles, and the phrase “liberal arts” was restored to the University’s self-definition—“a premier, Historically Black University...[with]... a liberal arts and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum”—but to make room for the major and, especially, to provide an opportunity for students to declare a minor or have space for internships and independent study, the new curriculum reduced the core curriculum’s portion of the 120 credits required for graduation to a minimum of 45 credits, down from the 58 to 66 required by the 1986 curriculum.

Although it diminished the **breadth** of the undergraduate education, it did expand the **choice**, or at least it might have. The administration’s actual intention was to open space for vocationally useful internships. The 1990s saw internships rise to the attention of university administrators around the country; they were regarded—correctly no doubt—as possessing a cash value in the post-graduation job market. But the newly open space might equally well be exploited by those students who retained the luxury of regarding an undergraduate education as the occasion for self-discovery. In the event, however, both **breadth** and **choice** were diminished, and **depth**—in the form of expanded requirements in many majors—quickly occupied the liberated space in the curriculum.

(A full analysis of the 2006 core curriculum appears in Appendix 4.)

The new curriculum meant a reduction of required credits in the following areas:

From the integrative aspect of the core curriculum, a 3 credit reduction:

1988’s University Seminars I and II were dropped; their six credits were replaced by the 3-credit First Year Experience (FYE).

From Health and Physical Education, a possible 1 credit reduction

HPR agreed to make its “Lifetime Sports,” now “Fitness Walking/Conditioning,” an option, depending upon the perceived need of the student.

From the Humanities, a 5 credit reduction

The World Literature requirement was reduced from two courses to one (from six credits to three credits).

The Religion/Philosophy/Art/Music requirement was reduced from eight credits to six.

Two 3-credit courses, one in either Religion or Philosophy and one in either Art or Music replaced the four 2-credit courses prescribed in 1988.

From the Natural Sciences, 1 credit reduction

university, and though the conversation was not uncritical of some of the prevailing practices, he never exercised his prerogative to end the discussion. On two or three other occasions I had extended conversations about the state of the university with Dr. Nelson, and always found him open to challenge (though, I believe, also always unpersuaded by my arguments).

Formerly both science courses were required to be 4-credit lab courses. Now one science course could be a 3-credit non-lab course.

From the Social Sciences, a 3 credit reduction

Four courses in three different departments now became one specified course (African American Experience) and two courses in two different departments.

As a result of these changes, the BS core curriculum could now require as few as 45 credits; A BA candidate with a high Body Mass Index could require as many as 57. This represents a reduction of 13 credits for the Bachelor of Science degree, and of 9 credits for the Bachelor of Arts degree.

Dr. Nelson's Presidency & Three Liberal Arts Initiatives

Pre-law

In the early 2000s, Dr. Judy Thomas, Dean of the School of Social Work, working with administrators from Villanova Law School and with members of the Chester County legal community, convened a meeting of relevant department chairs (among them English, Political Science, Philosophy, and History) to work toward improving the success rate of Lincoln students applying to law schools. The result was a four-course program: a philosophy course (Critical Thinking), an English course (Legal Writing), a Political Science course (Legal Problem Solving), and fourth course selected from a short menu. (When offering Legal Problem Solving became difficult, it was moved to the short menu, and a different Political Science course (Race and American Law) was substituted.)

(If law represents one of the elite professions that the Humanities portion of a liberal arts education prepares students for, I should, in fairness, also present the special efforts made by the Science portion of the liberal arts education to prepare students for the elite profession of medicine. I know the efforts exist, and in recent years have reason to know how remarkably successful they have been. But someone from the relevant departments can best describe the history of these efforts.)

Dr. Grant Venerable, during his long service as Vice President for Academic Affairs, made a significant contribution to the advancement of the liberal arts by committing Lincoln to two innovative programs.

Faculty Resource Network

New York University operates The Faculty Resource Network as a consortium of colleges and universities (primarily HBCUS, Hispanic-serving universities (especially Puerto Rican) New York area community) that sponsors a number of activities. The primary activity exploited by Lincoln faculty were the week-long faculty enrichment summer seminars led usually by NYU faculty with topics such as Entrepreneurship and the Business Curriculum, Ethnicity and Media Experiences in Innovative Thinking Practices, How to Write Successful Grant Proposals, The Allure of Ancient Greek Athletics, The Narrative Poetics and Cultural Politics of Toni Morrison. Every June two or three Lincoln faculty would have the opportunity to enrich their knowledge of a particular topic, and engage in conversations with a range of faculty who were teaching comparable cohorts at their home institutions.

Association for Core Texts and Courses

The ACTC is perhaps the academic organization most explicitly dedicated to the sustaining of the traditional liberal arts education, with its emphasis upon the study of master texts. The notion of “core texts” has a conservative heritage, recalling the University of Chicago’s promotion of 54 classic texts under Robert Hutchins and Mortimer Adler. ACTC happily retains the liberal arts bias, but opens the canon. Its annual conferences feature panels entitled “Aristotle’s Philosophy of Human Affairs” and “Shakespeare On the Nature and Problems of Democracy,” and “Dialogue on the Aims of Liberal Education,” but also “Brining Africana Women Writers into the Core,” “The Role of the Slave Narrative as Core Western Literature,” and “Designing Core Courses and Curricula for Diversity.”

Dr. Nelson’s Presidency & Technological Innovation

On-Line Education

In 2002, Lincoln sent a team of faculty to a conference hosted by the new internet platform, WebCT. The following year, the WebCt platform was inaugurated on the campus, with one representative from each of the Schools given a release time to mentor other faculty in the uses of the platform to enhance classroom learning. Over the course of the next dozen years, the platform would change—from WebCT to Desire2Learn to Moodle—and the potential uses of digital learning expanded. Lincoln faculty has, as of 2016, resisted authorizing fully on-line courses, but “hybrid” courses, requiring some work to be done in the classroom and some work to be done on-line were inaugurated in the 2010s. A standing faculty committee on Distance Learning was established to define protocols for on-line course work.³⁵

Smartboards

When Dr. Nelson undertook the renovation of the academic buildings (see below, “Dr. Nelson’s Presidency and the Physical Plant”), he made what seems to have been a personal executive decision that all classrooms be equipped with smartboards, a new technology that greatly expanded the possibilities for instruction. Faculty and students could use the technology

³⁵ The impact of the digital revolution upon classroom teaching and upon “distance learning” has been enormous. That it has brought enormous benefits is demonstrable. I believe my own classroom in 2016 is a vast improvement over the world of chalkboards, overhead projectors, and ditto machines that I entered in 1978. But I am not sure all learners play on an equal field in the brave new world. Some learners—often the underprepared learners—need the discipline and the encouragement of the physical classroom and the physical presence of the instructor.

One clearly deleterious dimension of the digital revolution has nothing to do with styles of learning: almost every student in 2016 possesses a smartphone, and almost every student who possesses a smartphone regards the information displayed on that device as at least comparable in importance to any information being displayed by the professor at the front of the room, even when the professor is, in desperation, displaying that information with as many digital bells and whistles as he or she can master. The smart classroom may, for this reason, now on average be conveying less information reciprocally between the professor and the students than did the chalkboard classroom. That other exchange of information—between the student and an infinity of personal and public sources available on the smartphone—may mean a democratization of the exchange of information, but that democratization may not lead to superior education.

to project video and audio from computer (or flash drive) files, from the internet, and from cd-roms. Several rooms were equipped for digital conferencing, and it became possible for scholars to speak to (and respond to) students in classes and to scholars at conferences. Lincoln was at the time ahead of some much larger universities in the ubiquity of this technology, and it doubtless is still well in advance of many of its peer institutions.

Dr. Nelson's Presidency and the Barnes Foundation

The full complex and dramatic history of Lincoln University and the Barnes Foundation is told elsewhere. Dr. Nelson arrived after the debacle which saw Dr. Sudarkasa lead a successful effort to oust Richard Glanton from the presidency of the Barnes Foundation and then, according to Dr. Sudarkasa's lawsuit, Glanton at least contributed to a successful effort to oust Dr. Sudarkasa from the presidency of Lincoln University. The Foundation's problems remained, and a group of Philadelphia foundations, working with former Philadelphia mayor, current Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell, proposed to move the Barnes's collection from the Merion building in which his will had stipulated it would remain in perpetuity, to a new building constructed on the Franklin Parkway in central Philadelphia. \$150 million in private and public funds would facilitate the move.

Lincoln was encouraged to permit the Barnes foundations Board of Trustees to be expanded from 5 to 15, with the new members not nominated by Lincoln University. A key element of the encouragement was a promise from the Governor to "ramp up" state aid to Lincoln: "Rendell took a leading role in the school's capital campaign. Rendell has always insisted that there was never a 'quid pro quo'" (Panero). The state's funding of the many capital projects through which Dr. Nelson transformed the campus was, presumably, the coincidental sequel to the non quid pro quo.

Dr. Nelson's Presidency and the Physical Plant

It would be difficult to overstate Dr. Nelson's transformation of the campus. Not only did he oversee the addition of major new additions to the academic, service, and residential plant, he oversaw the radical renovation of all of the existing academic buildings. And whereas additions in the prior two decades had been architecturally adequate (The Thurgood Marshall Living and Learning Center) or inadequate (Dickey Hall), all of the additions and renovations undertaken during Dr. Nelson's presidency were at least handsome. Classrooms filled with ancient chalkboards and the same oak desks that Langston Hughes and Thurgood Marshall had sat at, with surfaces covered with decades-worth of graffiti, were replaced by 21st century smartboards and solid new desks.

With the exception of the Apartment Style Living, the improvements were funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

New Buildings

Apartment Style Living. 2005. A 406-bed "residential community."

Ivory Nelson Center for the Sciences. 2008. A \$40.5 million, four-story, 150,000-square-foot science and technology building, it serves the biology, chemistry, physics and math departments.

International Cultural Center. 2009. \$26.1 million. 1,040 seat auditorium. Containing the offices of the President and the Board of Trustees, it enabled those officers to remove themselves from the center of the campus in Vail Hall to the far periphery. Its auditorium is excellent and, like all of the building and rebuilding undertaken by Dr. Nelson, it is overall an impressive structure.

Health and Wellness Center. 2012. It contains basketball courts, locker rooms, classrooms, three-lane track, rock-climbing wall, health clinic and healthy eating café.

Football Stadium. 2012. Facilities include ticket booth, concession stands, press box, a VIP suite, a separate locker room, and storage facilities as well as added a separate practice field. The return of football to Lincoln was debated throughout the decades 1978-2010; Dr. Nelson made it happen

Renovated

University Hall. 2007.

Ware Center. 2007 [?]

Langston Hughes Memorial Library. 2008. Although it is sad to see a 4-story library with just one floor of books (plus half of a floor of special collections), the renovations are impressive.

The Student Union Building (SUB). 2009. A once unimpressive building now contains the bookstore, café, two new television studios, and a radio studio, postal services, and multipurpose rooms.

Grim Hall. 2010 [?]

Dr. Nelson's Presidency & Accreditation

In 2008, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education made its decennial review of Lincoln University and found it wanting in regard to Standard 14, Assess of Student Learning Outcomes. The university had not been unaware of the deficiency. Assessment had been a concern in the prior review, and efforts had been made to polish the record in the 2008 Comprehensive Self-Study that precedes every Middle States Review. On June 26, 2008, Middle States acted to reaffirm Lincoln's accreditation, but to "request a monitoring report due by April 1, 2010 documenting (1) the implementation of an organized, sustained assessment process to evaluate and improve student learning, including assessment of the attainment of learning goals at the course and program level and providing evidence that student learning assessment information is used to improve teaching and learning and (2) evidence of institutional support for assessment activities." Lincoln went in a convulsion of assessment mania. A Director of Assessment was hired in summer 2008, but confusion prevailed.³⁶ Assessment tools

³⁶ A directive received one afternoon required me to revise the English Department Assessment report, changing all Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) into Student Learning Outcome Goals (SLOGs). Shortly thereafter another directive required me to change the SLOGs back into SLOs. And there was a brief debate about the "L": Student *Learner* Outcomes, or Student *Learning*

were developed, and administered, and revised, and re-administered. At different times different departments would be held up as models for imitation. Department meetings, School meetings, and faculty meetings would invariably include assessment on their agendas. In addition, there would also be frequent ad hoc assessment meetings. In November 2010 the Director of Assessment presented a report to Middle States, enumerating the progress made in assessing student performance by the various academic units.

The results were not, to Middle States, satisfactory. On 18 November 2010, Lincoln was warned that its assessment regime still did not meet expectations (the institution's "accreditation may be in jeopardy because of a lack of evidence that the institution is currently in compliance with Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning)." On 23 June, Lincoln was placed on "Warning" of potential loss of accreditation. More meetings were held, more files were assembled and uploaded and edited and revised. The Vice President for Academic Affairs retired, and the recently hired Director of Assessment "left Lincoln University" (Lincoln University Faculty 2). The madness culminated on 1 December 2011 when Middle States sent a small team to the campus. Dr. Howard Ishiyama met with the chairs of three selected departments (English, Education, and Economics and Business Administration) and collected from them evidence of Student Assessment. The Visitors concluded that Lincoln had, finally, met Middle States' expectations and the Warning was removed.

Outcomes. (A decade or so earlier, the acronym had been TPOs—Terminal Performance Objectives, with their subordinate Enabling Performance Objectives. The time spent devising these phrases might better have been spent sleeping.)

The Presidency of Robert R. Jennings

January 2012-November 2014

Dr. Jennings

Dr. Jennings took office in January 2012. His Presidency was abruptly terminated on 24 November 2014, when awkwardly phrased advice to a convocation of the women of the campus was taken by many on campus and in the wider world to imply that allegations of sexual assault might be the fabrications of disappointed women.

Dr. Jennings had had a varied career prior to his selection as 13th President of Lincoln University. He earned a Doctorate Degree in Higher Education Administration and Policy Studies from Atlanta University, and held a number of positions in government prior to becoming Vice Chancellor for Development and University Relations at North Carolina A&T State University, Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer for Future Focus 2020, Babcock Graduate School of Management at Wake Forest University, and then, from 2005-2008, as President/CEO of Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University. There he raised \$4 million for a scholarship fund, but, in April 2008 he was fired by the University's Board of Trustees. The charges included hiring an unqualified assistant, and approving payments to that assistant for weeks when the assistant was absent from campus. Dr. Jennings filed suit against the university, but in June 2010 by a 5-0 vote, the Alabama Supreme Court affirmed a lower court dismissal of his lawsuit (Lowery). Dr. Jennings then moved into the field of child and elder care, serving as Administrator for Gems, Inc., in Union City, Georgia, a licensed learning academy serving children aged 6 weeks to 12 years and operating personal care homes serving adults including seniors with special needs.³⁷

Dr. Jennings enjoyed at least a superficial rapprochement with the faculty. Faculty meetings were rarely contentious. In order to facilitate his desire to have weekly convocations of the entire university body, Dr. Jennings blocked out two-hour periods from 11:00 to 1:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.³⁸ The Tuesday faculty meetings were shifted from 4:00pm to 11:00, and the first 20 to 40 minutes would be devoted to remarks from the President. Although some

³⁷ It is beyond the brief of this history to account for the reasoning behind the selection of Dr. Jennings. But fairness requires an acknowledgement that the decision to break with the tradition of Scholar Presidents—Drs. Branson, Sudarkasa, and Nelson were by training, respectively, a physicist, an anthropologist, and a chemist—and hiring an “Administrator” for a child and elder care business was evidently based upon the belief that however well or badly Lincoln had been run as a university, it now needed to be run as a business. “New president vows to run Lincoln University as a business” was, in fact, the headline of a *Philly.com* interview with Dr. Jennings in January 2012 (Holmes).

³⁸ Teaching faculty could not be pleased with this shift. Given their nocturnal customs, college students have always found 8:00 classes unappetizing, and in the 21st century, even 9:00 classes seem too demanding. 1:00 and 2:00 are devoted more to digesting lunch than digesting lessons, and by 3:00 attention has shifted to the evening activities. So 11:00 is the sweet spot in the academic day; and Dr. Jennings's innovation removed 50% of the 11:00 classes from the schedule.

discontent was voiced sub rosa, Dr. Jennings did not face the predictable challenges from the floor that his three predecessors had regularly encountered.³⁹

During his brief tenure, Dr. Jennings sought to remake (and to “rebrand”) the university. As of 2013, the institution would be known as “The Lincoln University,”⁴⁰ and The Lincoln University would not be “*a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a liberal arts and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs* to meet the needs of those living in a highly technological and global society.” Instead, it would be “*a nurturing and stimulating environment* for learning, teaching, research, creative expression and public service for a diverse student body, faculty and workforce.” “Historically Black” became the less precise “diverse.” The “University” became an “environment.” It would be an environment filled not with students, but—as Dr. Jennings repeatedly advised the faculty—with “customers.” Unlike students, whose primary pursuit is, by definition, education, customers pursue satisfaction, and the institution would now dedicate itself to nurturing and stimulating its customers.

Dr. Jennings’s Presidency & the Structure of Studies

In August 2013, faculty returned to campus to find that their schools, departments, and department chairs had undergone a sea change. The “Schools” had become “Colleges,” though neither administrative structure nor physical facilities was altered. The Colleges were organized on principles hitherto unknown in American higher education. The intelligible disciplinary division between the methodologies and subject matters of the Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences was replaced by three new categories: an amphibious College of Humanities & Social Sciences, a more or less traditional College of Natural Sciences, and an unprecedented College of Graduate, Professional and Extended Studies. Graduate colleges (more commonly, “graduate schools”) were, of course, a commonplace in American universities. Professional colleges (again, more commonly, “professional schools”), however, usually referred to units dedicated to advanced professional degrees in certain fields, e.g. medical schools, law schools, pharmacy schools, engineering schools, etc. “Extended Studies,” to the extent it has any academic meaning, has usually referred to enrichment programs, usually non-credit, that some universities have offered to non-matriculated students in an effort at outreach in their community.

The impulse to hodgepodge the academic structure reached downward into the departments. (A full commentary on the departmental level changes is provided in Appendix 6). American community colleges do provide some precedent for this erasure of the traditional liberal arts disciplines. If an institution centers itself upon vocational training, then all departments in the Humanities (and some departments in the Social Sciences) will be regarded as service units, existing primarily to provide all students with the necessary minimum of

³⁹ My own experience, talking to perhaps two dozen other faculty members during the Jennings Presidency, was nearly unanimous unhappiness with his administration. The single notable exception therefore deserves mention: a faculty member who had on occasion been critical of Dr. Nelson told me of Dr. Jennings passing by a group of workers moving furniture into a dormitory at the last minute in August. Dr. Jennings immediately rolled up his sleeves and assisted in the move.

⁴⁰ The rebranding was quietly undone in 2015-16, and the institution is once again Lincoln University.

communication skills and cultural awareness, and secondarily to provide some students with the option of broadening their horizons beyond that minimum.⁴¹

The incoherence is, presumably, a transitional stage in an evolution toward the community college model, where the academic structure is clearly oriented toward immediately useful studies. Delaware County Community College, with which Lincoln under Dr. Jennings developed several joint programs, requires no Divisions, Schools, or Colleges. It offers five departments: Allied Health, Emergency Services & Nursing; Business, Computing & Social Science; Communications; Arts & Humanities, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math; and Workforce Development & Community Education. The structure is clearly organized around vocational themes (though it might be noticed that even a community college recognizes a separation of Social Science from Arts & Humanities).

Dr. Jennings's Presidency & the End of the "Core Curriculum"

Another development initiated under Dr. Jennings and ratified immediately after his departure was the replacement of the phrase "Core Curriculum" with the phrase "General Education." The change was apparently a belated by-product of the hegemony of Assessment. Assessors are more comfortable with atomized and quantifiable units, and "General Education" better describes a menu of assessable courses than does a conceptually integrated sequence of essential courses. In practice, nothing changed: the new Gen Ed requirements are, for the moment, exactly those of the old Core Curriculum. But the underlying principles of a General Education are Institutional Learning Outcomes—quantifiable performance measures, whereas the Core Curriculum was built upon Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts.

"Core Curriculum" presumes that there is an essential center—a core—to the education that an undergraduate receives and, at Lincoln, it meant that all students needed to be exposed to what, by the mid-twentieth century, was widely regarded in America as the necessary culture of college-educated persons—Communication Skills, Critical Thinking, Moral Values, Scientific Method, Quantitative Reasoning, Multiculturalism, Historical Perspective, and Aesthetic Appreciation. The merit of each of these was advocated in the old-fashioned rhetoric of The Eight Integrative Themes. General Education's Institutional Learning Outcomes duplicate some of the Core Curriculum's Integrative Themes (Communication Skills, Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility [= Values], Numeracy, Multiculturalism), omit some (Scientific Method, Historical Perspective, Aesthetic Appreciation), and introduce some new ones ("Institutional Fidelity," "Integrative and Life-Long Learning"). (A full comparison appears in Appendix 5).

The omissions seem significant. The old Core assumed that some exposure to science, history, and art were essential experiences that all undergraduates should share; they were, in a sense, at least an eighth of what every student should acquire in the core of his or her college experience. The two new ILOs—two eighths of what Lincoln declares its graduates should universally experience—are Institutional Fidelity and Integrative and Life-Long Learning. The first of these is remarkable: every American university hopes to instill Institutional Fidelity in its graduates. But to make this one of the university's eight "Learning Objectives" is a novel

⁴¹ As a result, for example, Lincoln University, which was founded to produce liberally educated ministers of God now found itself without even a Department of Religion. To be sure, the new "Department of History, Political Science & Philosophy" offered a major in religion.

innovation. And it is surprising in a format that takes assessment to be a sine qua non to find “Life Long Learning”—accurately assessable only by a scientific polling of recently dead alumni—as an Institutional Learning Outcome. (Presumably polling of nearly-dead alumni would suffice, but even that seems a difficult.)

Dr. Jennings’s Presidency & the Physical Plant

Inheriting the massive renewal of the campus that had been achieved under Dr. Nelson, Dr. Jennings announced to the faculty that his priority would be funding the operational expenses of the new plant.

Danjuma African Art Center. 2014. Established through a generous \$1 million gift from retired General Theophilus Y. Danjuma, a Nigerian Jukun soldier, politician and businessman, houses select installations of the university’s extensive collection of African art and artifacts. In 2016, the Center is not open to the public.

Dr. Jennings’s Presidency & Three Liberal Arts Initiatives

1. The Humanities Conference; The Humanities Journal

In April 2013, the School of Humanities under Dean Cheryl Gooch inaugurated a Humanities Conference—a one-day conference with a keynote address and a series of panels in which scholars from within Lincoln University and from other universities (including international institutions) presented papers on art, music, literature, religion, and philosophy. Dr. Abbes Maazaoui, Professor of French, undertook to manage the conference; he then took on the task of editing a refereed journal: *LHJ: The Lincoln Humanities Journal*, which appeared in both print and digital form. Unlike prior efforts like The Langston Hughes Arts Festival and the First Annual Nnamdi Azikiwe Symposium, Dr. Maazaoui has persevered, and in April 2016, a 4th conference was held, and a 4th volume of the journal will be published in fall 2016.

2. The Liberal Studies Program

The academic year 2013-14 saw the inauguration of a “Liberal Studies” major within the “College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences” (AHSS). It was designed as an interdisciplinary major that permitted students to sample courses in a variety of Humanities and Social Science disciplines. It was very specific about the samples. There were four “Tracks” to choose from: “Arabic & Islamic Studies,” “American Cultural Communities,” “Professional Communication,” and “Interdisciplinary Studies.” Each track specified 15-16 credits. Students were obliged to complete two tracks and, in addition, to take a 3-credit course in Ethics and a 3-6 credit “Study Abroad, Co-op Education/Internship, Independent Study, or Capstone” course.

The specificity might be criticized, both the specificity of three of the four chosen tracks and of the short menu of courses deemed eligible for each of those three tracks. To be sure, the fourth “Interdisciplinary” track is as non-specific as possible—two 200-level AHSS courses, two 300-level AHSS courses, and one AHSS independent study.

3. Lincoln’s Global Heritage and Legacy

In January 2012 Lincoln received a 2-year, \$100,000 grant to research and to celebrate the University's unique heritage. The grant was written by Dr. Marilyn Button of the Languages and Literature Department and the librarian Susan Pevar. It was directed by Dr. Button and Dr. Chieke Ihejirika from the History and Political Science Department. A number of faculty, students, and outsiders (including Dr. Philip J. Merrill) participated in the research. In March 2014 there was a symposium to present the results, and in March 2016 a large format paperbound book (with an accompanying DVD) entitled *The Lincoln University Global Heritage and Legacy: A Teaching Resource*, was published. Like Dr. Maazaoui, Dr. Button persevered, and in 2015-16, she initiated a "Treasure to Treasure" project, in which students researched the historical links between Lincoln University and West Baltimore. Additional developments related to Lincoln's unique legacy are planned.

The Acting Presidency of Valerie Harrison November 2014-June 2015

Dr. Harrison

Dr. Harrison, Lincoln University's General Counsel, assumed the Presidency in the wake of Dr. Jennings's departure in November 2014. She served through the spring semester 2015.

Dr. Harrison's Presidency & Curricular Changes

The principal curricular change approved under the brief Presidency of Ms. Harrison was the radical elimination of developmental courses in reading, speaking, and writing. In 1990 there had been 11 development credits in the Education Department: EDU100 Developmental Reading and Study Skills (4 credits), EDU101 Critical Reading Skills (3), and EDU102 Oral Communications (3). The English Department had offered two 3-credit developmental courses: ENG100 Basic Writing Skills I and ENG101 Basic Writing Skills II (this would be renumbered ENG089 and ENG099). None of the 17 credits counted toward graduation. In Spring 2015 the faculty voted to consolidate these 17 credits into one 3-credit English course, ENG099 Integrated Writing and Reading. The change was driven by several factors. The Education Department had been abolished at the undergraduate level; some faculty had remained to finish the degree requirements for students well-advanced in the major, but these faculty would now be gone. And students taking up to 17 credits—a full semester's worth of credits—that did not count toward graduation had always been a problem, especially in terms of qualifying students for financial aid. The hope was that a single course (supplemented by work in the new Writing and Reading Center, which was replacing the old Writing Lab and Reading Lab) would suffice to bring underprepared students up to college level performance.

For most of the period 1978-2016, an average in the neighborhood of 70% of Lincoln University's entering students have placed in one or more developmental courses. Most placed in more than one, though few required all 20 developmental credits (17 in writing, reading and oral communications, plus 3 in math [MAT095]). Although no evidence has been presented to prove the case, it is possible that Lincoln University in 2015-16 has suddenly begun to recruit dramatically better prepared students who enter with the near-college-level reading and writing skills that their predecessors between 1978 and 2015 had not possessed. If so, Lincoln may be finally fulfilling the mandate that Drs. Branson, Sudarkasa, and Nelson sought to meet. It would mark a giant step toward returning to the Lincoln of Hughes and Marshall, Nkrumah and Azikiwe. But it will also have lost its more recent (1978-2015) distinction: there is, surely, honor in accepting students who do need multiple developmental courses—students whose local school systems have failed them—and providing them with those developmental courses and propelling them into the college education that they are now prepared to exploit.

The Interim Presidency of Richard Green July 2015-

Dr. Green

Dr. Green, like Dr. Nelson, was a trained chemist who moved into university administration, serving as assistant to the president at SUNY Buffalo and president of Jefferson Community College in Kentucky. He was selected to serve as Interim President until a search for permanent President could be undertaken. As of May 2016, the search has not been inaugurated.

Whither the Legacy?

During the process of preparing for what turned out to be a troublesome 2010 Middle States Review, Dr. Nelson called a meeting in Vail Hall of interested persons. One item discussed was the phrasing of a new motto. “Advancing the Legacy” was the result. Sometime later, “of Excellence” would be added. The addition is, I suppose, innocuous. “Excellence” (or a synonym) can be inserted into virtually any academic slogan; what school ever aspires to less? But I wonder if there isn’t an unusually dangerous significance to the cliché in Lincoln’s case.

Lincoln once embodied an extraordinary excellence, an excellence that haunts it in the litany Hughes and Marshall, Nkrumah and Azikiwe. Beneath those four names comes a list of leaders in many fields—college presidents, lawyers, doctors, poets, churchmen, and civil rights leaders—who graduated from Lincoln University between 1854 and 1974 (Rear Admiral Lillian Fishburne, ’71, is usually the final name cited). It is a formidable list, and an astonishing one for such a small institution. And every President from 1978 to 2012 has committed him or herself to restoring that excellence. Each has sought to raise the GPAs and SAT scores of the entering freshman. Each has sought to make Lincoln once again the Black Princeton.

But there is another excellence that is a legacy that derives from the beginning of Lincoln’s second century: since 1954, Lincoln has achieved the excellence of admitting underprepared students and providing them with the support, the guidance, and the instruction to enable them to earn a bachelor’s degree in six (or five, or even four) years. Langston Hughes came to Lincoln as a published poet who had studied at Columbia University, travelled to Africa and France, and worked for Carter G. Woodson. Thurgood Marshall had graduated early from high school; Kwame Nkrumah had graduated from the Government Training College (Achimota School) and had worked as teacher and headmaster; Nnamdi Azikiwe had studied at Howard University. These men were marked for excellence before they came to Lincoln; Lincoln’s contribution was to provide them a challenging education that pressed them to develop their abilities and to expand their ambitions.

That is still a mission for Lincoln University. It still matriculates young men and women marked for excellence; it still graduates men and women marked for leadership. And to serve these men and women, Lincoln needs to provide them with a challenging curriculum—a curriculum of **breadth, depth, and choice**. The heart of that challenging curriculum needs to be a liberal arts education—a core curriculum of arts and sciences. Drs. Sudarkasa and Nelson tried to go beyond the departmental structure to achieve this with supra-departmental “Centers”—Dr. Nelson called them “Centers of Excellence.” In both Presidencies, the Centers’ successes were qualified, and the Centers did not last. Lincoln’s Honors Program, which should provide a key element of the challenging curriculum, has a mixed history.⁴² But it will be the quality of quotidian classroom instruction in English and Mathematics, in Philosophy and Biology, in Art

⁴² At one time Honors appeared to be defined principally by foreign languages; Dr. Joseph Rodgers, Shair of the Foreign Languages Department fought strenuously to sustain this. In 1985 there were four distinct honors programs (LASER, for aerospace and engineering; HNS for the Natural and Social Sciences; MARC, for biomedical research; and “General Honors”); Honors has sometimes involved the academic departments (requiring “Honors Points” in classes in the major), and sometimes not. At one time, a combined SAT score of 800 marked eligibility for Honors. I believe that its current iteration may be moving in the right direction. The Honors program needs to secure the investment of the various departments.

and Sociology, in History and Economics that will insure the sort of excellence that the often-invoked ghost named “Hughes-Marshall-Nkrumah-Azikiwe” represents. Lincoln needs to restore its core academic departments.⁴³

And then there is the excellence of remediation. Lincoln needs to embrace that excellence, to celebrate it and not to be embarrassed by it.⁴⁴ And in order to promote this second type of excellence, Lincoln needs to attend to insure that the liberal arts core curriculum not only challenges the well-prepared student, but that it also provides a sufficient safety net for the under-prepared student. This can be achieved in the first place by providing a sufficient regime of remedial/developmental/basic/success courses, but it must also be built into the college-level courses. Higher level courses in all liberal arts disciplines must be aware of the particular skills introduced in the lower level courses, and reinforce them. The “Across-the-Curriculum” structure built into the 1988 core curriculum failed in practice, but in principle remains essential. The protocols of higher order academic performance—critical thinking, research, and written and oral communication—become natural only through repetition across the curriculum.

If the core curriculum courses are to serve both excellences—to challenge the well-prepared students and, at the same time, to foster the emerging skills of the underprepared—at least two things are required. The first is a faculty willing to expend the extra effort inside the classroom and outside the classroom needed to assist the weaker students and to push the stronger ones. I think we still have a faculty of that character. The second thing required is an ongoing and active oversight of the core curriculum, especially of the first-year courses. All of the core courses need to be aware of what the other core courses are doing, and this cannot just be a one-time matter of approving a list of performance objectives or learning objectives (or of whatever new adjective the educational establishment chooses to place in front of “objectives”).⁴⁵ A faculty committed to excellence needs a forum to continuously debate how to sustain that excellence. One important forum is the department (a strong argument for meaningful disciplinary departments), but there needs to be an interdepartmental forum as well. The Freshman Studies Committee served this purpose in the 1980s. Representatives of the academic units (departments, labs, etc) involved in teaching the liberal arts courses of the core

⁴³ The coagulated “departments” produced by the restructuring imposed in summer 2013 are, I think, an impediment to excellence. The academic disciplines are not the result of a conspiracy of mercenary professors seeking to drain university resources by extorting release time for chairs or sinecures for secretaries. Rather, they enable like-minded, like-educated faculty to exchange ideas and techniques built upon a disciplinary vocabulary of concepts. A Department of Languages and Literature is a fine thing for a community college whose vocational mission requires no excellence in those fields. Indeed, a Department of Languages, Literature, Religion, Philosophy, Art, Music, Political Science and History—a Department of Humanities—would serve as well. But it would not be a department likely to challenge the Hugheses, Marshalls, Nkrumahs, or Azikiwes of today.

⁴⁴ Some of my proudest moments have been seeing students I had in Basic English I (ENG100; now ENG098)—students who, in August of their first semester could not produce two consecutive sentences of flawless English; who wrote in paragraphs of two or three lines; who, having read Frederick Douglass’s 90-page *Narrative*, told me after class that this was the first time they had ever read a book cover to cover—seeing those students walk across the stage at commencement, and knowing that they were not being given a bachelor’s degree; they had earned a bachelor’s degree.

⁴⁵ The feedback loop that assessment promises is not useless; it may occasionally provide insight to talented teachers, and it can be a persuasive stick with which to club less talented teachers and administrators. But because I believe most teachers who stay teachers are, in actual fact, talented, it seems to me that far more useful is dialogue between teachers.

curriculum met, and met often, and debated vigorously when they met. Such a forum for sharing information and problems and solutions is still, I think, the best way to secure a core curriculum that serves the needs of the full range of students that Lincoln attracts in the 21st century.

Lincoln University has survived vicissitudes of 1978-2016; it has survived greater vicissitudes in the past. Whether it recovers its identity as a “four-year college of liberal arts” or faces the future as a “nurturing and stimulating environment, it will endure. My own hope, it should be clear, is for recovery, but Lincoln’s contribution to the education of African Americans (and others) will surely continue.

Bibliography

- Burgess, Marjorie. "Sudarkasa, Niara 1938-." *Contemporary Black Biography*. 1993. *Encyclopedia.com*. 22 Apr. 2016 <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>>.
- "C. James TROTMAN, Mary Farrell, Andrew Murray, Virginia Gunn, Thomas Jones, Julius Bellone, Deforest Rudd, Peter F. Hoffer, Donald Pierce, Richard Winchester, William T. Johnson, Edward B. Groff, and Leland Smucker, Appellants, v. BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF LINCOLN UNIVERSITY of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education, Lincoln University of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education, and Herman Branson, individually and as President of Lincoln University." United States Court of Appeals, Third Circuit. Argued June 10, 1980. Decided Nov. 25, 1980. <http://openjurist.org/635/f2d/216/trotman-v-board-of-trustees-of-lincoln-university>
- Daughen, Joseph R. "Sudarkasa Files \$7 Million Suit." *Philly.com*. 2 October 1998. Web. 25 March 2016. http://articles.philly.com/1998-10-02/news/25762423_1_casey-richard-glanton-law-firm
- DeBoy, James L. "Shared Governance At Lincoln University: An Elusive Quarry. *The Clute Institute. Contemporary Issues In Education Research*. 8.4 (2015): 235-239. Web. 14 March 2016. www.cluteinstitute.com
- Fields, Cheryl D. "Sudarkasa's epilogue—Niara Sudarkasa, Lincoln University—Interview. *Diverseeducation.com*. 15 July 2007. Web. 8 May 2016. <http://diverseeducation.com/article/8587/>
- Henson, Rich. "Pa. Auditors Probe Allegations Of Irregularities At Lincoln Sources Say University President Niara Sudarkasa Is One Focus Of Investigators. An Emergency Board Meeting Is Set For Today." *Philly.com*. July 18, 1998. Web. 20 March 2016. http://articles.philly.com/1998-07-18/news/25736667_1_lincoln-funds-school-employees-state-investigators
- Holmes, Kristin E. "Ivory V. Nelson, Lincoln University president, announces retirement." 6 Jan. 2011. Web. 14 March 2016. http://articles.philly.com/2011-01-06/news/27012888_1_nelson-higher-education-school.
- Johnson, W.T.M. Letter to the Editor. *The Lincolnian*. 1 Nov. 1978: 2-3. Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections. Web. 23 February 2016. <<http://idnc.library.illinois.edu/cgi-bin/illinois?a=d&d=LCN19781101.2.6#>>
- Lincoln University Bulletins/Catalogs:
- Lincoln University Bulletin 1975-76*
1979-81 Lincoln University Bulletin
Lincoln University Bulletin 1982-84
Lincoln University 1985-87 Catalogue and Calendar
Lincoln University 1988-90 Catalogue and Calendar

Lincoln University Bulletin 1991-94
Lincoln University Bulletin 1995-98
Lincoln University 1999-2003 Bulletin
Lincoln University 2003-06 Bulletin
Lincoln University 2006-07 Bulletin
Lincoln University Catalog 2008-11
Lincoln University Catalog 2012
Lincoln University Catalog 2013
Lincoln University 2014 Catalog
Lincoln University 2015 Academic Catalog

Lincoln University Faculty and Staff. *Monitoring Report on Assessment of Student Learning*. November 2011.

Lowery, Bob. "State Supreme Court affirms dismissal of ex-Alabama A&M president's lawsuit." *The Huntsville Times* 18 June 2010 Web. 15 March 2016.
http://blog.al.com/breaking/2010/06/state_supreme_court_refuses_to.html

Loviglio, Joann. "Sudarkasa sues Glanton." *Daily Local News*. July 10, 2001. Web. 20 March 2016. <http://www.dailylocal.com/article/DL/20010710/TMP01/307109973>

Lucas, Christopher. *American Higher Education: A History*. New York: St, Martin's, 1994.

Morter, Bonnie. "Lincoln still pushing for land grant status." 13 May 1983. Web. 18 March 2016. http://www.colegian.psu.edu/archives/article_a61789e9-1046-59b7-635de8f21f73.html

O'Neill, James M. "Lincoln Chief Has Ruffled Feathers But Made Headway." *Philly.com*. Feb. 13, 1998. Web. 22 April 2016. <http://articles.philly.com/1998-02-13/news/25753291_1_students-protests-niara-sudarkasa-campus>

Panero, James. "Outsmarting Albert Barnes." *Philanthropy Magazine*. Summer 2011. Web. 25 March 2016.
http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/topic/donor_intent/outsmarting_albert_barnes

Shabazz, Abdulalim A. "Open Letter of Resignation." *DrAAS.info*. 10 Aug 2007. Web. 14 May 2016. <http://draas.info/resign.htm>

"Sudarkasa resigns in wake of state's audit report – Lincoln University." *DiverseEducation.com* Web. 20 March 2016. <http://diverseeducation.com/article/8586/>

"William T. M. Johnson, Appellant, v. Lincoln University of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education, and Herman Branson, individually and as President of Lincoln University et al." Argued Sept 12, 1985. Decided Nov. 6, 1985.
<http://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/F2/776/443/443221/>

“U.S. Code § 304 - Investment of proceeds of sale of land or scrip.” Cornell University Law School. Web. 25 February 2016. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/7/304>

Van Doren, Mark. *Liberal Education*. Boston: Beacon, 1959.

Willis, Gladys. “Exam Raises Questions.” *The Lincolnian*. 28 March 1980: 1.

_____. *Faith Against the Odds: A Memoir of My Journey from Mississippi to the Ivy League and Beyond*. Bloomington, IN: Westbow Press, 2014.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Lincoln University's Declared Identity, 1976-2016

Appendix 2: The 1978 Curriculum

Appendix 3: The 1988 Curriculum

Appendix 4: The 2006 Curriculum

Appendix 5: Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts (Core Curriculum 1988) & Eight Institutional Learning Outcomes (General Education 2015)

Appendix 6: The 2013 Reconfiguration of the Academic Structure

Appendix 7: The SECURE "core values"

Appendix 8: The Graduate Programs

Appendix 1

Lincoln University's Declared Identity, 1976-2016

(In all cases, I have added italics and bold to highlight the crucial identity phrase, and bold type to identify reference to the liberal arts.)

1975

“Introduction to Lincoln University”:

Lincoln University is *a nonsectarian, coeducational, state related four-year college of liberal arts.*

The University's “Purpose”:

It is Lincoln University's purpose to offer a thorough grounding in the **liberal arts** through a curriculum which, incorporating the heritage of the past, stresses the relevance of all knowledge to the problems of the present. The liberal arts, which encompass the sciences and mathematics, are the recognized preparation for the learned professions, for business and for public service, and best equip the student to play a useful role in an increasingly complex yet unitary world. From this premise and from the aims of the several divisions of study the objectives of the college are derived.

Lincoln University Bulletin 1975-76 p. 5

1979

No changes; Lincoln is still “*a nonsectarian, coeducational, state related four-year college of liberal arts.*”

Lincoln University Bulletin 1979-81 p. 5

1982

There is a significant change. The “Introduction to Lincoln University” now replaces “four-year college of **liberal arts**” with “*nonsectarian, coeducational, multi-purpose, state related four-year college*”:

Lincoln University is *a nonsectarian, coeducational, multi-purpose, state related four-year college*, providing undergraduate and graduate study serving the academic, cultural, and vocational needs of students who present a wide range of academic preparation and definiteness of purpose. Degree programs are offered in the Arts and Sciences, Business, Music and other fields as the demand arises. Although primarily a degree-granting institution, Lincoln will also provide programs for students who desire specialization in fields that may or may not lead to a degree.

The initial paragraph of “The University’s Purpose” remains the same; “a thorough grounding in the **liberal arts**” is still the university’s “Purpose.” But the six “Objectives” that follow have been rewritten to replace the high-minded rhetorical statements of 1976 with more practical edu-speak descriptions. Thus 1976’s

First, to cultivate an inquiring and critical mind; to direct it toward the apprehension of truth; and to arm it with those skills essential for effective oral and written communication.

becomes in 1982:

1. To provide quality undergraduate programs in the arts, sciences, education, business, and a variety of professional and pre-professional areas leading to the baccalaureate degree.

1976’s

Second, to acquaint the student with the cultural aspects of civilization as expressed in languages, literature, art, music, religion, and philosophy; and to cultivate an appreciation of the role they play in the enrichment of human life.

becomes in 1982:

2. To provide enrichment experiences to enable incoming students with superior academic abilities to obtain specialized instruction in specific academic areas.

Lincoln University Bulletin 1982-84 p. 7

1985

1982’s “nonsectarian, coeducational, multi-purpose, state related four-year college” becomes a “general, multi-purpose, state-related, coeducational institution of higher education.” Not only has “**liberal arts**” vanished, so has “college.”

Lincoln University is a general, multi-purpose, state-related, coeducational institution of higher education, providing undergraduate and graduate study serving the academic, cultural, and vocational needs of students who present a wide-range of academic preparedness and definiteness of purpose. Degree programs are offered in the arts and sciences, business, music, and other fields as the demand arises. Although primarily a degree-granting institution, Lincoln will also provide programs for graduates who desire specialization in fields that may or may not lead to a degree.

1985 “Statement of Purpose”

The initial paragraph remains the same as it has been since 1976; “a thorough grounding in the **liberal arts**” is still the university’s “purpose. The six “objectives” are the edu-speak objectives introduced in 1982.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1985-87, pp. 10-11, emphases added

1988

“General,” Multi-purpose,” and “higher education” as well as “**liberal arts**” are now omitted. What had been a “college” in 1976, and an “institution of higher education” in 1985, is now reduced to an “institution.” Only non-discrimination on the basis of gender and the financing by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania identifies the university’s character:

Lincoln University is a *coeducational, state-related institution* within Pennsylvania's Commonwealth System of Higher Education. It offers baccalaureate degrees in the arts and sciences and in selected pre-professional fields. It also offers a master's degree in Human Services.

The “Statement of Purpose” is now “Mission and Goals,” and “Liberal Arts” is deleted entirely, replaced by “the classic concept of a university”—a high-minded but indefinite phrase. At the same time, the edu-speak elaborations of 1982 and 1985 is also dropped. There are now six unnumbered “Goals” derived from the “Mission,” and several speak to traditional liberal arts values”

Lincoln embraces the classic concept of a university in that its faculty, students, administration, and trustees recognize the primacy of the institution's three historic purposes: (1) to teach honestly, and without fear of censure, what humankind has painfully and persistently learned about the environment and people; (2) to preserve this knowledge for the future; and (3) to add to this store of knowledge.

- cultivate an inquiring and critical mind capable of discerning the emotional, logical, and quantitative implications of persuasive discourse and of pursuing truth and meaning as a capstone of the human experience;
- develop appreciation of the scientific method and of the significance of science and technology in modern society;
- nourish sensitivity to the artistic and philosophical values of the humanities;
- promote an understanding of contemporary societies and cultures which is rooted in an appreciation of the past and which inspires a vision of the future;
- qualify the student for successful graduate or professional study;
- develop a healthy and balanced perspective on personal as well as professional relationships, and on the value of leisure as well as work.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1988-90, pp. 11-12

1991

No change from 1988. The introduction retains “Lincoln University is a *coeducational, state-related institution* within Pennsylvania's Commonwealth System of Higher Education.” The “Mission and Goals” reiterate “the classic concept of a university.”

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1991-94, pp. 6-7

1995

Lincoln is still “*a coeducational, state-related institution* within Pennsylvania's Commonwealth System of Higher Education.” The “Introduction” does add that the Master’s Programs have expanded and will be expanding further: “It also offers Masters' Degrees in Human Services, Reading, and Administration with plans to develop a Master of Arts in Teaching.” Under its “Mission and Goals,” it still “embraces the classic concept of a university.” The six goals remain as in 1988 and 1991.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1995-98, pp. 9, 11

1999

The “Introduction” is replaced by “A Message from the President,” Ivory V. Nelson. There is no longer a succinct statement of identity. Dr. Nelson’s third paragraph describes where he sees Lincoln located in academic history.

Lincoln University is an ancient enterprise, refined and proven through over 145 years. While we do not need a vastly different university, Lincoln has dedicated itself to the development of a better university that is relevant for this new millennium. A better and relevant university will accept no substitute for quality and no excuse for mediocrity; recognizes that in a knowledge-based, innovation-driven society, adaptation and change are necessary to remain alive, relevant and vibrant; has the students’ highest good as its paramount concern; has learning as an active process, not a passive one; and has the maintenance and tenets of historically Black colleges and universities as a cornerstone of the educational experience.

He follows this with five bullets:

At Lincoln we are committed to making certain that the Lincoln story will be magnified and extended well into the next millennium.

- We are challenged to accomplish the quality preparation of our graduates.
- We hold high a vision of *a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs* to meet the needs of those living in a highly technological and global society.
- We embody a commitment to uphold a mission to guarantee the fulfillment of the institution’s purposes.
- We have as a whole, reviewed and examined the reasons for our being, and have made a conscious decision to work together to preserve Lincoln’s distinction as an intellectual and cultural resource for this region.
- We have embarked on a path that has culminated in the achievement of a defined set of goals that blanket all areas of the University - from learning in the classroom to effective management of University resources. These goals ensure that our physical plant is capable of supporting all areas of teaching and social development.

It is the second bullet that provides a definition that will be repeated for more than a decade:

*a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs.*⁴⁶

“The University Mission Statement” repeats the “**liberal arts** and sciences-based” phrase: Lincoln University offers a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum and selected professional and graduate programs in an environment marked by small classes, quality instruction and a demonstrated concern for each student as an individual.

“The University Vision Statement” also repeats the “**liberal arts** and sciences-based” phrase: Lincoln University is a premier, historically Black University that combines the best elements of a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs to meet the needs of those living in a highly technological and global society.

There is also a 7-point “University Philosophy Statements” and a 13-point “The Goals of Lincoln University.” The proliferation of points in part reflects a new commitment to thinking about all of the academic and social challenges Lincoln needed to confront as it entered the new millennium, and partly to the inescapable infiltration of the education establishment’s affinity for enumerations.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1999-2003, pp. 8-9, 13-15

2003

Dr. Nelson’s “A Message From the President” remains the same; the self-definition,

*a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs*

remains. “University Mission Statement,” “University Vision Statement,” “University Philosophy Statements” and a “The Goals of Lincoln University” all remain in place.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 2003-06, pp. 1-2, 8-9

⁴⁶ It is a definition that seems incomplete. A University’s academic work can be divided into undergraduate and graduate studies. “Selected” says little about the graduate programs (the separation of the graduate programs may be meant to imply—if so, correctly—they are not in the arts and sciences; they are, in fact, in professional fields related to human services, education, and administration. Undergraduate academic work also divides into three categories: core curriculum (**breadth**), departmental majors (**depth**), and electives (**choice**). The definition speaks only to the core curriculum, but it does, for the first time since 1985, reaffirm the liberal arts as the essential character of this half of Lincoln’s undergraduate education. The phrase, “and science-based,” is odd. A “science-based core curriculum” may mean that the constituent elements of the curriculum have been scientifically determined, which is not the case. It may mean that the sciences—presumably the Natural Sciences, but possibly including the Social Science—are the foundational basis for the curriculum, which is also not the case. It may mean that the sciences as well as the arts are included in the core curriculum, which is the case, but which is in any event presumed in the phrase “liberal arts,” which has always meant arts and sciences.

2006

Again, no changes to the “Message from the President” or any of the statements. Lincoln remains

*a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs.*

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 2006-07, pp. 1-2, 8-9

2008

Lincoln remains

*a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs.*

A 14th bullet added to “The Goals of Lincoln University” is an indication of the trivialization of “Goals” mandated by the educational establishment’s mania for quantification:

14. The University will work to attain an 85% freshman to sophomore retention rate, a 48% graduation rate, and rank among the top 10 HBCUs by 2010.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 2008-11, pp.11-12, 17-18

2012

“A Message from the President” is now signed by Robert R. Jennings, Ed.D. He declares that

my vision is that Lincoln shall be known as *a progressive growing institution* with an expert workforce that delivers aggressive and comprehensive programs marked by effective support systems, efficient operating principles and sound fiscal practices. (12)

In “The History of Lincoln University,” the “*progressive growing institution*” is described as offering

undergraduate programs of study in the humanities, the natural sciences, mathematics, and computer science, and the social sciences. Lincoln also offers graduate programs in human services, reading, education, mathematics, and administration at its facility in Philadelphia. (13)

“The Mission of Lincoln University” retains the 1999 identity (“*a premier, Historically Black University that combines the best elements of a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum, and selected graduate programs*”), with some revision:

Lincoln University offers a **liberal arts** and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum and selected professional and graduate programs in an environment marked by small classes, quality instruction and a demonstrated concern for each student as an individual. (17)

“The Philosophy Statements” and “Goals” remain the same.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 2012, 12-13, 17-18, emphases added

2013

Lincoln University is now “re-branded” as “The Lincoln University,” and “The Mission of The Lincoln University” is rewritten. “*A liberal arts and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum*” is replaced by

maintaining a nurturing and stimulating environment for learning, teaching, research, creative expression and public service for a diverse student body, faculty and workforce.”

The acronym SECURE is used to elaborate what the “*nurturing and stimulating environment*” means: Students, Excellence, Care, Understanding, Respect, Ethics (see Appendix 7). There is no connection to the liberal arts.

Though rewritten, the “University Philosophy Statements” stay at 7; “The Goals of The Lincoln University” drop from 14 to 5.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 2013, pp. 4-7, emphases added

2014

No significant changes

2015

‘A Message from the President’ is now signed by Richard Green, Ph.D. The rebranding is de-branded, and the institution is again identified as “Lincoln University,” not “The Lincoln University.” Otherwise the Mission, Vision, Philosophy, and Goals remain those of 2013.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 2015, pp. 4-7, emphases added

Appendix 2

The 1978 Curriculum

1978 “Requirements for Graduation”

Students were required to complete 32 4-credit courses, for a total of 128 credits.⁴⁷ The requirements for graduation were as follows.

A. DISTRIBUTIONAL COURSES

- 1. Humanities: Four terms of a prescribed course in the humanities conceived as interdisciplinary in nature.*
- 2. Social Science: Three courses in three separate disciplines in the Social Science Division. An interdisciplinary course may serve as one option in meeting this requirement.*
- 3. Foreign Language: Satisfactory completion of the course requirements of each department for the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. The Student shall consult the department chairperson in his major regarding this requirement.*
- 4. Natural Sciences: A minimum of three full courses in the Division of Natural Science. Two of the three full courses must be in laboratory science, the third must be in mathematics.*
- 5. Physical Education: Two terms of physical education activities.*

B. MAJOR FIELD: a major field of study in which 8 to 10 courses have been completed with a grade average of C or better.

C. ELECTIVES: The completion of 9 to 13 elective courses.

II. The satisfactory completion of a proficiency examination in English.

III. Participation in the Undergraduate Assessment Program for Counselling and Evaluation.

⁴⁷ “Starting with the entering Freshman Class of 1976 (i.e. Class of 1980) completion of 32 academic courses (not including developmental courses Eng. 100, Ed. 100 and Math. 100) with a minimum grade average of 2.00 (C) will be required. Upon the satisfactory completion of 32 courses as stated below, the student will be recommended by the Faculty to the Board of Trustees for the degree of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science.” (*Lincoln University Bulletin 1979-80*, p. 50)

(*Lincoln University Bulletin 1979-80*, pp. 50-51)

The “Distributional Courses” constituted the Core Curriculum. They allowed for a good deal of discretion on the part of students.

1978—DISTRIBUTIONAL COURSES (The Core Curriculum)

The **Humanities** requirement consisted of two 4-credit courses, Humanities 101 and 102. This was Lincoln’s version of Freshman English. (ENG100 was the developmental course, with its 4 credits counting toward financial aid, but not toward graduation.⁴⁸) Both Humanities courses were taught by English faculty. Texts included a traditional English Composition handbook with an accompanying workbook (both published by Harbrace), and a large format paperback reader that had been published specifically for Lincoln by two former Lincoln professors: *Perspectives: An Anthology*, edited by Marianne H. Russo and Edward B. Groff (Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1976). *Perspectives* tried to cover art and music as well as literature, and it emphasized African American texts. The second two 4-credit courses in the Humanities were the “Humanities Options,” offered by various departments in the Division. In English, Prof. Hawes’s ENG216 (Harlem Renaissance) was popular; ENG214 (Approaches to Literature) was also offered as an Option.

This requirement was radically revised and the “options” were eliminated when the entire curriculum shifted to a 3-credit basis in 1982. The 8 credits assigned to Humanities 101 and 102 became two 3-credit courses, ENG101 and ENG102 (with ENG100 remaining the developmental course), retaining the *Harbrace Handbook* and *Workbook*, but with a new syllabus and a new reader produced by a national publisher.⁴⁹ The 8 credits assigned to Humanities Options became two new 3-credit World Literature courses and four new 2-credit “Introductions” to Art, Music, Philosophy, and Religion. The net result was an increase in the Humanities Requirement from 16 credits to 18 credits.

The revised Humanities requirement may have been administratively awkward—2-credit courses could disrupt a student’s class schedule, but it was an intellectually coherent project, and it survived intact when the core curriculum was reformed in 1988. What it could not survive was the drive in 2006 to reduce the size of the core.

⁴⁸ The problem of giving college credit for explicitly pre-college remedial courses led, at least briefly to an inventive solution. 128 credits were required for graduation. Credits for developmental courses would count toward graduation, thus satisfying the demand from the federal government that its support (through Pell Grants and other awards) support only college courses. But students who placed into developmental courses would have their graduation requirement increased to 132 credits if placed in one developmental course, 136 credits if placed into two developmental courses, and so on.

⁴⁹ Under the new structure, the three composition courses (ENG100, ENG101, and ENG102 remained a 4-credit course (and so posed a constant problem in allotting full-time faculty 12-credit teaching schedules). All other courses were reduced to 3 credits. Within a few years, ENG101 and ENG102 were dropped to 3-credits; ENG100 remained a 4-credit course until the mid-1980s, when it was decided to replace it with two 3-credit courses—ENG100 and ENG101. This required the standard freshman courses to be renumbered ENG102 and ENG103, an anomaly that persisted until the early 2000s, when the two developmental courses were renumbered ENG098 and ENG099, allowing freshman composition to assume the numbers it holds in most American universities: ENG101 and 102. The latest change came in Fall 2016, when ENG098 was eliminated and developmental English, which had once claimed 4 credits and then 6 credits was now reduced to 3 credits (and in addition was obligated to cover what had once been 6 developmental credits in reading [EDU100 and EDU101]).

The **Social Sciences** requirement—“three courses in three separate disciplines”—might be justified as exposing students to a useful variety of intellectual approaches; it might also be justified as securing a useful constituency for the introductory courses in various Social Science departments. But it could also be viewed as the faculty in Social Science fields—relative newcomers to the academy with small claim to roots in the liberal arts—insuring viable teaching loads for the faculty in that Division. (On the other hand, the Social Science Division was consistently, from 1978 to its dismantling under Dr. Jennings, the Division with by far the majority of majors; it did not really need to claim so many credits in the core.

The **Foreign Language** requirement was, and has remained, a bone of contention. A proposal to offer a Bachelor of Science degree had been presented and withdrawn in 1976 (Faculty Minutes, March 30, 1970). When the B.S. degree was finally adopted, it came to be distinguished from the Bachelor of Arts degree by a single criterion: The B.A. degree required students to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language at the 202 level. The B.S. degree required only two semesters of a language (completing the 102 level), and as the importance of computer programming became clear, two semesters of a programming language (COBOL, Fortran, PASCAL, etc.) was accepted as satisfying the Foreign Language requirement. A succession of chairs of the Department of Foreign Languages struggled to defend the liberal arts value of a spoken foreign language, but majority of Lincoln students have preferred majors that granted the Bachelor of Science degree.

Given its charter’s description of Lincoln as “an institution of learning for the scientific, *classical* and theological education of colored youth of the male sex,” it is worth noting that elementary and intermediate Latin were still listed in the *Catalogue and Calendar* as late as 1988-90, though to my knowledge, it was never taught. (German was taught by Prof. Hoffman during the late 1970s and early 1980s.) Other listed languages in 1982-84 included Swahili, French, German, and Spanish; by 1985 Chinese and Russian would be added, and although the 1988-90 *Catalogue and Calendar* would drop German, it added Japanese.

The **Natural Sciences** portion of the Arts and Sciences core has remained relatively stable over the past 38 years. Two to four semesters (18-16 credits) of a lab science was a normal expectation in mid-20th century 4-year colleges. Dr. Nelson’s mandate to reduce the total number of credits in the Core Curriculum did lead to the reduction of the science requirement from 8 to 7 credits by permitting one of the two courses to be a non-lab science, and the numbering of the acceptable 3-credit course in Mathematics was revised. But the essential requirement has endured.

The **Physical Education** requirement reflected a time-honored commitment to *mens sana in corpora sano*—a sound mind in a sound body. Reinforced by the emerging hegemony of college athletics, physical activity was seen as a necessary adjunct to mental activity. Lincoln’s requirement—two 1-credit courses—was a normal expectation. Distinctively, HPER 101 was defined as a course in swimming and first aid; the second semester as a course in “lifetime sports” (“badminton, bowling, and concepts of physical education”). This requirement would be significantly altered (and expanded to three credits) in the mid-1980s, and then reduced again to two credits in the 2000s.

1978—MAJOR FIELD

The **Major Field** addresses the sixth of the stated objectives: “through intensive instruction in the area of the student’s special competence, to qualify him for successful graduate or professional study.” It is the major that has come to be the central focus of nearly all college

students (and of their parents). It defines the student. There is a certain innocence about the requirement that the major field be completed in 8 to 10 courses—even 8 to 10 4-credit courses. I'm not sure any major could be completed in 32-credits, and several majors over the past 38 years have required in excess of 60 credits from their students. Reining in these steroidal majors was a key purpose in Dr. Nelson's curricular reform.

1978—ELECTIVES

Electives have always been the orphans in the Lincoln curriculum. They have found few advocates.⁵⁰ While some remarkable students manage double majors, and a few more manage minors, most students cannot hope to select “9 to 13 elective courses.” Students undertaking majors that aim at vocational certification are especially limited. In 2015, for example, the Accounting, Finance, Information Technology, and Management majors all required 75 credits. (Some of the 75 are oxymoronically identified as “required electives.”) The new Music majors approved in 2015 required 69 credits. They leave little to no room for electives, and certainly no room for the 36-52 elective credits envisioned in 1978.

1978—A proficiency examination in English.

The **proficiency examination in English** was, for a long time, a contentious issue. In 1979 the faculty decided to reintroduce a Writing Proficiency Exam. It was first administered in February 1980, with an unhappy result: 26% of the 62 students taking the exam passed it; 74% failed (Willis). For decades afterward, the Writing Proficiency Exam remained troubling both in its format and in its effect. Once each semester, students could sit in an auditorium. They would be handed a bluebook and a mimeographed sheet with two prompts. The prompts usually set up topics relating to current events. (The prompts in the unhappy inaugural exam were typical: “Should the military draft be reinstated and, if so, should women be included” and “Because of Russia's invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter has called for a United States boycott of the 1980 Olympics in Russia. Do you support the United States' decision?”) The students would write 5-paragraph essays, and these would be graded by volunteers from the faculty. Although a creditable number of faculty did volunteer, a good deal of the grading was done by non-faculty instructors from the Writing Lab. Experts in rhetoric and composition argue that this sort of pressurized and artificial writing does not accurately represent a student's meaningful writing skills. Certainly there is a problem when the student has nothing to say about the topics for which he or she was never prepared.⁵¹

And failing the Writing Proficiency Exam meant not graduating. The second April faculty meeting was dedicated to reviewing the graduation list. It was a common experience to hear a Department Chair stand up to inquire why one of his or her majors had not made the list. All too often, the Registrar's response was, “Failed the WPE.”

By 1983, the English Department had responded to the problem of student writing by embracing the **Writing-Across-the-Curriculum** (WAC) vogue that was prevailing in American higher education.⁵² The Department faculty collaborated to produce “A Brief Guide to College

⁵⁰ I am one of the few. **Choice** seems to be the essential third leg of a true liberal arts education.

⁵¹ There was also a problem when a student composed an “incorrect” answer. I was present at a grading session in which one of the topics concerned capital punishment. A fellow grader held up a blue book and said, “Can you believe it? This student favors capital punishment!” and failed the bluebook.

⁵² It would prevail until the late 1990s, when a new vogue, “Writing-in-the-Disciplines,” replaced “Writing-Across-the-Curriculum.” Unlike too many academic vogues, there was meaningful content to

Writing,” a 28-page pamphlet distributed to all faculty with the hope of encouraging all courses to emphasize writing. It was a stillborn gesture.

1978—Participation in the Undergraduate Assessment Program for Counselling and Evaluation.

I am not sure what the final “Requirement for Graduation—**“Participation in the Undergraduate Assessment Program for Counselling and Evaluation”**—means. There *was* a requirement that seniors take a standardized test. In English during the early 1980s, we used an area exam produced by the College Board or some similar national test-maker. The point was, students were required to take the exam, not pass it. And our experience was that our seniors usually scored just above what random circle-filling would score. There were two explanations. One was that we emphasized African American literature, and, still in the early 1980s, national organizations did not. The other was: passing was not a requirement, so students emphasized speed at filling in the circles to correctness of the circles filled in. Eventually we tried to develop our own exit exam; I was assigned to assemble multiple-choice questions from each of the full-time faculty. The experience taught me that literature faculty are not, by nature, gifted with an aptitude for constructing useful multiple-choice questions. But as the results did not matter, we administered the exam a few times.

In any event, the results of the test were never used for “counseling” or for “evaluation.”

the new phrasing. The disciplines do have their own vocabularies and their own protocols. But the “Across-the-Curriculum” phrasing—it would be used in Critical-Thinking-Across-the Curriculum and Speaking-Across-the Curriculum—was a useful reminder that every department needs to reinforce these skills. It is fair to place the initial burden upon the English Department (or, now, the Department of Languages and Literature); it must for instill the essentials of academic English in its composition sequence. But writing skills need to be reinforced constantly or, studies have shown, they will diminish through disuse.

Appendix 3

The 1988 Curriculum

The structure of the new curriculum was as follows:

1. *Discipline or honors based three-credit freshman seminar*
[3 Integrative credits]
2. *Humanities: Two semesters of English Composition (ENG 102 and ENG 103), two semesters of World Literature (ENG 207 and ENG 208), and four two-credit courses in music, art, philosophy and religion (ART 201, MUS 201, PHL 101 and REL 201).*
[20 Humanities credits]
3. *Social Sciences: A minimum of twelve (12) hours in three different disciplines chosen from among the social sciences. An interdisciplinary course in the social sciences may serve as one option in meeting this requirement.*
[12 Social Science credits]
4. *Foreign Language: Satisfactory completion of the course requirements of the major department for the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. Students should consult the chairperson of their major department regarding this requirement. The equivalent of the second year (202) of language proficiency is required for the Bachelor of Arts degree.*
[8 Language credits for the BA; 16 Language credits for the BS]
5. *Natural Sciences: A minimum of three full courses in the Division of Natural Science. Two of these courses must be in the laboratory sciences and the third must be in mathematics.*
[11 Natural Science credits]
6. *Computers: A one-credit course on computer applications.*
[1 Computer credit]
7. *Health and Physical Education: A three-credit program of wellness and health fitness.*
[3 HPR credits]
8. *Emphasis Courses: A minimum of two courses with a speaking emphasis, two with a writing emphasis, and two with a critical thinking emphasis.*
9. *Upper Division Seminar: A 300 or 400 level course, taken in the junior or senior year, which is located outside of the student's major department.*
[3 Integrative credits]

10. Major Field: A concentration in a major course of study where eight to ten courses have been completed with a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or better.

11. Electives: The completion of from nine to thirteen elective courses.

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1988-90 (pp. 70-72)

The total core curriculum consumed for Bachelor of Science candidates 58 of the 120 credits required for graduation; for Bachelor of Arts candidates it consumed 66 credits.

Requirements #1 and #9 (**Discipline or honors freshman seminar; Upper Division Seminar**) were innovations. Both were designed to be interdisciplinary. University Seminar I (a 190 course in any department) was intended as combination of the 1 or 2 credit orientation-to-college course offered at many universities combined with some measure of disciplinary content. In its ambitious first incarnation, all of the 190 courses would meet together in a convocation at the end of the semester, and each would make a presentation to the rest. Within a few semesters the convocation was dropped. University Seminar II (a 390 course in any department other than the one the student was majoring in) was envisioned as a way for the exiting student to be compelled to move outside his or her major and make a connection with another subject matter and another mode of thinking. Both University Seminars were noble in conception, and often were noble in execution.

Requirement #2, **Humanities**, retained the structure adopted when the overall curriculum shifted from 4-credit courses to 3-credit courses. Students took a minimum of two-semester, six credits of composition (in fact, most took three or four semesters: up to three quarters of the matriculating students placed into development English (ENG100 or ENG101). The new World Literature courses and the two-credit introductions to Art, Music, Philosophy, and Religion remained in place.

The Social Science requirement (#3) was more thoughtful (and, as well, smaller) than it appeared. It was reduced from 12 to 9 credits (3 courses, not 4) and these were no longer random choices from a broad menu. One was a newly created course, SOS150 African American Experience, that was required of all students. Lincoln was, after all, an HBCU, and, with much to be proud of, a very proud HBCU. The other two courses were defined as an Empowerment course, and a Global Studies course. A short menu of appropriate courses from various departments in the Division could satisfy the requirements, but the requirement pressed students to understand themselves as change agents (“empowerment” and “change agent” had a great deal of currency in the 1980s) and to understand themselves as centered in a wider world.

The Foreign Language requirement (#4) simply repeated Lincoln’s long-time practice: the BA degree would require passing a language course at the 202 level; the BS degree would require two semesters of a language, which, to the frequently-expressed dismay of the Foreign Language department included computer languages.

The Natural Science requirement (#5) was unchanged. Students still had to master the content and the methodology of a laboratory science.

The one-credit **Computers** requirement (#6) spoke to its moment. It was essentially an introduction to word processing at a time when word processing was a novelty; most students came to college with little to no experience with computers, and laptops and tablets did not exist.

The **Health and Physical Education** requirement was innovative. The HPER Department now claimed 3 credits. The two-credit course would take the fashionable title of “Wellness,” and push the students toward principles of healthy living. The one-credit course, “Lifetime Sports,” would assume the traditional Phys. Ed. mandate to motivate the students to exercise their bodies.

The 8th requirement, **Emphasis Courses**, was noble idea and an administrative nightmare. The idea was to have the three emphasized skills—Writing, Thinking, and Speaking—reinforced across the curriculum. Writing-Across-the-Curriculum, at the time, was already an established model, with the argument that students might learn academic writing in their Composition courses, but that the evidence was that immediately thereafter, their writing skills declined. By requiring students to take six courses that explicitly valued (and graded) these skills, the hope was that they would be more strongly internalized.

But there were at least two fundamental problems. One was that once a course was certified as an emphasis course, it retained that certification, no matter who taught the course or how the syllabus changed. The other was that, given the limits of Lincoln’s information technology, the only way the Registrar could indicate an emphasis course was by making the third number of a course a letter. Thus, when ENG211 became a writing emphasis course, it appeared on transcripts as ENG21W. An outsider, checking the catalog, would have to guess whether the course was ENG210, ENG211, ENG213...ENG219. To compound the problem, ENG212 was also a writing emphasis course. Its number became ENG22W, and an outsider, running through the 220s, would be totally lost.

The **Major Field** (#10) was, as always, the principal concern of students (and of their parents). It was the entrée to the career for which the student endured college. The “eight to ten courses” that the curriculum specified was, as it always had been, laughable. All departments have always felt that their graduating majors needed more experience in their major. Some departments were more willing than others to compromise with the ideal that a liberally educated student should have opportunities to experiment in different areas of academics or even to minor in a field unrelated to their major. The number of required courses in majors continued to metastasize through the 1990s.

And as the majors expanded, necessarily the **Electives** (#11) contracted. Nine to thirteen elective courses was never a reality; lucky students might manage a few.

Appendix 4

The 2006 Curriculum

First Year Experience (FYE101)	3
African American Experience (SOS151)	3
The Social Sciences Select two (2)	6
ECO201 or 202, EDU201 or 202, HIS110, POL101, PSY101, SOC101	
Health and Physical Education	2-3
Dimensions of Wellness (HPR101) and Fitness Walking/Conditioning (HPR103)	
<i>All freshmen will be tested for BMI & cardiovascular fitness. Only those who do not meet minimum criteria will be required to complete HPR 103.</i>	
The Humanities	
English Composition ENG102, 103	
(later renumbered ENG101, 102)	6
ART201 or MUS200; REL101 or PHL101	6
World Literature I or II (ENG207 or ENG208)	3
The Natural Sciences	
Two science courses (One of which must include a lab)	7
BIO101/161 or higher, CHE 100/160 or higher, PHY 101/161 or higher, GSC 101/161 102/162	
Mathematics	3
MAT 105 or higher	
Languages or Computer Sciences	
Two (2) consecutive LAN courses or any two (2) CSC courses	6-8
(The BA degree continues to require the 202 level, so 16)	

This new curriculum meant that credits were reduced in the following areas:

From the integrative aspect of the core curriculum, a 3 credit reduction:

University Seminars I and II were dropped; their six credits were replaced by the 3-credit First Year Experience (FYE). (“First Year Experience” because in the 21st century, Freshman Experience seemed to express an outdated sexism.) The University Seminars had attempted to integrate specific substantive content from the disciplines of the departments who chose to offer them with a collective experience in college-level research, critical thinking, and communication (writing and speaking skills). FYE would focus solely upon the skills.

The “Across-the-Curriculum” requirements were dropped. The administration of the Writing-Across-the Curriculum, Speaking-Across-the Curriculum, and Critical Thinking-Across-the Curriculum had always presented problems. No authority monitored the content of the courses, not all departments offered enough Across-the-Curriculum courses, and the Registrar always had difficulties recording the completion of the requirements.

Also deleted were the Global Studies emphasis and the Empowerment emphasis. These had served in the 1986 core curriculum to focus student selections in the menu of Social Science requirements.

From Health and Physical Education, a possible 1 credit reduction

HPR agreed to make its “Lifetime Sports,” now “Fitness Walking/Conditioning,” an option, depending upon the perceived need of the student. Perceived need was to be measured by Body Mass Index: students found to be overweight would be required to walk; others not. Made with the best of intentions, the requirement led to student dissatisfaction and ultimately to charges, broadcast in regional media, that Lincoln would be denying degrees to fat students, and the requirement was rescinded at the December 2009 faculty meeting.

From the Humanities, a 5 credit reduction

The World Literature requirement was reduced from six credits to three credits. Students could now satisfy the requirement by taking either World Literature I (origins to 1650) or World Literature II (1650 to present). This inevitably diminished the student’s grasp of the full development of human culture, and removed one unit from the structure of reinforcement in writing and research skills that had been built into the English sequence ENG098, 099, 101, 102, 207, 208.

The requirement in Religion, Philosophy, Art, and Music was reduced from eight credits to six. Instead of four 2-credit introductory courses in each discipline, students now satisfied the requirement with one 3-credit introductory course in either Religion or Philosophy and one 3-credit course in either Art or Music. A small gain in **depth**—3-credit courses can provide a fuller introduction—compensated for the loss in **breadth**.

From the Natural Sciences, 1 credit reduction

Formerly both science courses were required to be 4-credit lab courses. Now one science course could be a 3-credit non-lab course.

From the Social Sciences, a 3 credit reduction

Four courses in three different departments now became one specified course (African American Experience) and two courses in two different departments. African American Experience spoke directly to the history of Lincoln University; centered in the Department of History and Political Science, it was explicitly an interdisciplinary course, and thus the single remnant of the Integrative vision that had underlain the 1986 curriculum. The menu concept persisted in the two-course requirement, on the principle that by choosing any two introductory courses in Economics, Education, History, Politics, Psychology, or Sociology a student would acquire a useful experience of social science ways of thinking.⁵³ The Sociology Department was given supervision of First Year Experience.

⁵³ Although menu facilitates **choice**, in this instance I think the choice is a disservice. I have always been of the mind that a liberally educated student needs a course in both the content and the methodology of history—either the history of the student’s own culture, or of human history more broadly; this I think should be mandatory (and is not satisfied by the wide purview of African American Experience). The second social science course could then be a choice of methodology/content in economics, psychology, or sociology, though even here eligibility for the menu should be based on liberal arts principles. The option of “Introduction to Education,” for example, has no merit at all in a liberal arts core curriculum; it is of

As a result of these changes, the BS core curriculum could now require as few as 45 credits; A BA candidate with a high Body Mass Index could, until the requirement was rescinded, expend as many as 57. This represents a reduction of 13 credits for the Bachelor of Science degree, and of 9 credits for the Bachelor of Arts degree.

Sadly, the liberty that these reductions represented was, for many majors, short-lived. Greedily eying the newly unfenced credits, some departments expanded the requirements for their majors. Some departments developed “required” minors within the departments, which their majors were compelled to complete. When it comes to departmental majors, the appetite for **Depth**, it seems, is insatiable, and will always consume **choice**.⁵⁴

necessity too narrowly vocational, but as the Education Department was erased from the undergraduate college, the point is moot.

⁵⁴ The departmental argument is always: our majors need the additional coursework. Of course, they need it. The English major requires 42 credits, and I am always embarrassed at how little our seniors have actually read. Another three or four courses would surely bring them to a respectable level of exposure. But I really do believe in choice. Departments can *offer* additional courses; students can *choose* to take those courses. And departments can try to persuade students that taking the courses will enhance their credentials in the field. But departments should not be allowed to require more than 42 (or 45 credits).

A second departmental argument is based on the demands of a professional accrediting agency. Accrediting agencies have no investment in the liberal arts; they are therefore unbound in their demands. And this is fair enough: students who choose a professional track are, in a sense, opting out of a full liberal arts major. They will receive a liberal arts **breadth** in their core curriculum, and a professional **depth** in their major. But here one must be careful. An anecdote from the early 1980s: the Chair of the Education Department rose at a faculty meeting to request approval of two additional required courses to the Education major. Another chair rose to question the need. The Pennsylvania Department of Education had mandated the courses, replied the chair of the Education Department. “In what document was that requirement specified,” asked the other chair. The chair of the Education Department named the document. “And it requires two courses?” “Yes, it does.” “Does it?” “Well,” the chair of the Education Department admitted, “it requires the content, and we believe that to deliver the content, we need two courses.” Two courses may indeed have been needed; two courses may indeed have been what PDE expected. But when it comes to departmental majors, the appetite for **Depth** will always consume **choice**.

Appendix 5

Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts (1985 “Core Curriculum”)

Lincoln University Catalogue and Calendar 1988-90 (pp. 70-72)

&

Institutional Learning Outcomes (2015 “General Education”)

<http://www.lincoln.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/president/institutional-learning-outcomes-definitions.pdf>

By 2016, edu-speak had replaced “Core Curriculum” with “General Education” (usually reduced to “Gen Ed”). “Core curriculum” seems to imply there is a set of courses central to the undergraduate education, and, as Lincoln’s Mission between 1999 and 2012 declared, these courses should represent “the best elements of a liberal arts and sciences-based undergraduate core curriculum.” “General Education,” it would seem, is broad in scope, whereas its complement, Specific Education focuses on one particular field of study. The difference between the two is perhaps little more than tone. Tone may matter.

1985: Core Curriculum— 1. Communication Skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking

A high level of competence in the communication skills of reading and writing can empower the student to overcome intellectual and social isolation. The liberally educated student must possess the skills to convey thoughts to others as well as to understand from them, and to experience the refinement of thinking that comes about as a function of the rigorous requirements of expression. The Lincoln University graduate must command language and its conventions, in the knowledge that it is through these conventions that we are able to influence the thinking of others and allow ourselves to change through the influence of the thoughts of others. Reading and listening must be developed as active processes, involving interaction between the sender and receiver of verbal messages.

2015: General Education— 1. Effective Communication

Effectively and clearly communicate through oral, written and visual means to increase knowledge and understanding or to promote change in a listener, reader or observer respectively

Outcome: Students will effectively communicate in oral, written and visual form

Core Curriculum speaks directly of “the liberally educated student” and explains why communication skills are important to such a student. General Education excises the

immeasurable “why,” and concentrates upon demonstrable “outcomes.” This shift in emphasis reflects the 21st century realization that assessment matters more than explanation; measurement of performance matters more than reason for learning.

1985: Core Curriculum— 2. Critical Thinking: Problem Solving

At the core of the critical thinking process is the evaluation of data, whether those be in the form of philosophical argument, numerical or scientific evidence, political or social claims, or artistic and literary expression. Passive receptivity and narrow, parochial perspectives are no less limits to freedom than the reduction of critical thought to a mere matter of opinion. The liberally educated student must appreciate the systematic nature of critical thought, the need to subject inert data to the incisive analysis of the mind, and the relationship of critical analysis to sound judgment.

2015: General Education— 5. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a comprehensive and systematic exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.

Outcome: Students will reason abstractly and think critically to make connections between ideas and experiences and to solve novel problems.

Core Curriculum asks the liberally educated student to “evaluate” data; General Education asks the student to “explore” issues. Core Curriculum places critical thinking second to communication; General Education places it fifth, below 2. Technology & Information Literacy, 3. Diversity Awareness/Cultural Awareness, and 4. Social Responsibility and Civic Engagement.

1985: Core Curriculum— 3. Values

The University must seek to foster in its students the ideals of free intellectual inquiry, respect for truth, a readiness to learn from and understand others, as well as a deep appreciation for the values of a democratic society. As human development can be viewed as a progression from solipsism toward outwardness, Lincoln's graduates should be equipped with a deep understanding of the limitations of human expressions of truth, and the extent to which our values are suffused with and frequently limited by our cultural and societal beliefs. Through a broad sampling of literature, history, philosophy, the arts, and the social and natural sciences, students can become wise and perceptive critics of social convention, seeking to contribute to the workings of a civilized and humane society.

2015: General Education— 4. Social Responsibility and Civic Engagement

Knowledge, skills, and values that promote making a difference in the civic life of a community. It encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of

personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community.

Outcome: Students will understand and utilize skills responsible for living as accountable, ethical and contributing world citizens

Core Curriculum prescribes the sorts of values the liberally educated student should examine—democracy, solipsism/outwardness, limited perspectives/broadened perspectives, social conventions; General Education advocates responsible “skills” that a citizen should be able to utilize.

1985: Core Curriculum— 4. Science and Technology

In a world so thoroughly infused with the results of scientific research, every educated student must have a clear understanding of the scientific method. At the same time, students should develop a deep appreciation for the role of human intelligence and creativity in scientific discovery and for the elegance of scientific theory, an elegance that may be the subject of aesthetic appreciation no less readily than a work of art. To be at ease with science is to understand as well the limitations inherent in scientific inquiry.

2015: General Education— no comparable outcome

Core Curriculum regards science as a fundamental theme; “Arts and Sciences” is, after all the common short-hand definition of the Liberal Arts education, and since at least the middle of the 19th century, science has been the hallmark of intellectual thinking in the West. Although General Education retains 7-8 credits of mandated science in its curriculum, it omits science from its ILOs.

1985: Core Curriculum— 5. Numerical Data/Computers

No liberal education can be complete without a thorough understanding of the rigors of mathematical thought and problem-solving and an appreciation for the precision and discipline imposed by mathematical studies. But the interpretation of numerical data requires sophistication as well as precision of thought. Students must understand that the interpretation of data is, at its very core, an inferential process characterized by weight of evidence rather than by certitude. This inferential nature can easily be masked by the seeming exactness of measurement. In much the same way that the advent of the computer age has led to tremendous advances in our capacity for data analysis, the Lincoln graduate's exposure to the computer should extend beyond the rudiments of numerical analysis and develop an appreciation for the computer as a tool for thinking with a broad range of applications that can help individuals to attain both personal and professional goals.

2015: General Education— 2. Computer and Digital Literacy

The ability to appropriately use technology and know how to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information.

Outcome: Students will use technology to identify, locate and effectively use information from various print and digital sources.

2015: General Education— 7. Financial and Quantitative Literacy

Financial literacy represents ideas, concepts, knowledge and skills that enable students to become wise and knowledgeable consumers, savers, investors, users of credit, money managers, and citizens of a global workforce and society. Quantitative Literacy (QL) represents the ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations.

Outcome: Students will implement and apply financial decision-making skills to become knowledgeable consumers, savers, investors, users of credit, money managers, and citizens. Student will be able to create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence and can clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate).

Core Curriculum combines two related competencies: mathematics as the essence of quantitative thinking, and computer literacy as the 20th century's ultimate usage of that sort of numerical thinking. General Education separates the competencies, and adds a practical skill in applying numerical thinking to financial decision-making.

1985: Core Curriculum— 6. Intercultural Experience

The liberally educated person must recognize the commonalities of the human experience that are inherent in the development of cultures and subcultures. This understanding should be rooted in the study of the ways in which our customs, values and social conventions are circumscribed by our experiences. Without this broader perspective, the student risks a narrow parochialism that limits freedom and inquiry. Every student should be given the opportunity to develop the deep appreciation of the effect of our own culture on ourselves, our society, and our values, an appreciation that may best be achieved by the study of a different culture.

2015: General Education— 3. Diversity Awareness/Cultural Awareness

Diversity & Cultural awareness represents a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of diverse contexts

Outcome: students will integrate cross-cultural understanding in the disciplines [sic] and develop an appreciation for music, art and other forms of cultural expression

As usual, Core Curriculum attempts to express certain values—commonalities between cultures, broad perspective vs. parochial, appreciation of one's own culture—that the liberally educated person should embrace. General Education talks in neutral edu-speak ("cognitive, affective and

behavioral”) and then wanders into a few of the media (“music, art and other forms of cultural expression”) in which students might “appreciate” diversity.

1985: Core Curriculum— 7. Historical Perspective

A refined historical perspective prepares the educated person to recognize complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty as intractable conditions of human society. The commonalities we share with the past and a perception of the continual struggle for truth shared by humanity allow the student to impose an intellectual order on what may initially appear to be an array of factual knowledge.

2015: General Education— no comparable outcome

Core Curriculum assigns a space for Historical perspective; General Education does not. Understanding continuity of cultural evolution has always been essential to a Humanistic perspective on mankind’s situation. Core Curriculum acknowledges this, although, unfortunately, Lincoln’s core curriculum has never made it a prescribed course in the curriculum. General Education is, therefore, more honest: it ignores history both as a principle and a practice.

Core Curriculum— 8. Art and Aesthetics

A knowledge of the language of the fine and performing arts enables the student to experience perceptions, emotions and empathies which he or she might not otherwise have experienced. Artistic expression must be viewed as a means of communicating some of humanity's deepest thoughts and aspirations and as a new avenue of truth and representation.

General Education— no comparable outcome

Core Curriculum values “the fine and performing arts” for their expression of “some of humanity's deepest thoughts and aspirations.” General Education accords the arts no special value, but it does, under “3. Diversity Awareness/Cultural Awareness,” suggest that an “appreciation” of “music, art and other forms of cultural expression,” if not an end in itself, is at least useful as means to appreciating human diversity.

1985: Core Curriculum— no comparable outcome

2015: General Education— 6. Institutional Fidelity

Institutional fidelity represents a characteristic attitude and set of behaviors that sustains the legacy of an institution.

Outcome: Students will engage in philanthropic endeavors on behalf of the institution.

Although securing alumni donations is, practically, one of the highest priorities in modern American universities, it would never occur to traditional scholars that one of the 8 central principles of a liberal arts education could be a special attachment to the institution that teaches those liberal arts. Such a narrow idea would seem alien to the high-mindedness that the liberal arts pretends to, and Core Curriculum omits it entirely. General Education, again more honest, is not too proud to stoop.

1985: Core Curriculum—no comparable outcome

2015: General Education— 8. Integrative & Life-Long Learning

Lifelong learning is an all-purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence. Lincoln University prepares students to be this type of learner by developing specific dispositions and skills while in school.

Outcome: Students will use skills that support life-long learning.

“Integrative” was the rubric under which all 8 of Core Curriculum’s “themes” were placed. General Education needs to add it as an ILO of its own, with the addition of “Life-Long Learning.” The content of this ILO is without discernible meaning.

Appendix 6

The 2013 Reconfiguration of the Academic Structure

In August 2013, the faculty returned to the campus to find that seemingly timeless divisions and departments had been reconfigured.

The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

This college contained all of what had been the School of Humanities and most of what had been the School of Social Sciences.

The former **English Department** and the former **Foreign Languages Department** were combined, evidently on the principle that they both taught words and texts. That one taught language and literature at the 13th-16th grade level and the other taught language and literature primarily at the 9th to 12th grade level might seem, to those who do not teach language and literature, quite comparable.⁵⁵ The new name was the **Department of Languages and Literature**.

The **Departments of Visual Arts** and the **Department of Performing Arts** (the latter once known as the **Music Department**) were combined into the **Department of Visual and Performing Arts**. This combination might be thought unwise—the two disciplines may require quite different resources and employ quite different pedagogies, but both *are* disciplines in the arts. In spring 2016, this new Department proposed the creation of a Museum Studies major and minor. The new field is, of course, not a visual art nor a performing art, nor any sort of art at all. It is, as the Dean of the College declared when presenting to the faculty of the College, about the management of institutions.

The former **History and Political Science Department** was combined with the former **Philosophy and Religion Department**, and renamed **The Department of History, Political Science & Philosophy**. This is difficult to justify.⁵⁶ No intelligible academic principle unites the four majors within the department. When, in the 1990s, it was proposed to combine the Department of Religion with the Department of Philosophy, the faculty in the two fields strenuously objected that their disciplines were distinct and should not be confused. They persuaded their colleagues in the Humanities Division, but Dr. Nelson's administration proceeded to execute the combination. Now two even less

⁵⁵ It even seems comparable to colleagues who teach at Lincoln: I was sharply corrected when, at an April 2015 meeting of the Department, I made this point without qualification. The Foreign Language faculty pointed out with energy and justice that they did teach literature, and that a Spanish course in Cervantes was just as 16th grade as an English course in Shakespeare. I was wrong, but at the risk of re-igniting the flames, I think my point stands. At least 90% of foreign languages courses at Lincoln are 4-credit introductory and intermediate courses; 0% of English courses are. Even the English developmental courses assume fluent (though imperfect) mastery of English. The language department teaches 90% of its courses with different methodologies, in different kinds of laboratories, in a different building.

⁵⁶ Fiscally, it may be defended: it saves the university at least a portion of the salary of an administrative assistant, and one chair receiving a release-time costs half as much as two chairs each receiving a release time. Nonsense *is* cheaper.

cognate disciplines from the former School of Social Sciences were merged into the combination. And the balance of Humanities and Social Sciences was upset by the elimination of “Religion” from the Department’s new name. The discipline which had been the University’s original *raison d’être* declined from a department, to half of a department, to the invisible fourth of a department.

The Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice replaced the former **Sociology and Anthropology Department**. “Anthropology” may be a respected social science, but “Criminal Justice” points directly to careers after graduation. The change allowed the department to emphasize the vocational opportunities in one of the university’s most popular majors. Human Services, a vocational major which had been inserted into the department in 2008-11, was extracted from Sociology and Anthropology and now was combined with the Psychology Department in the new College of Graduate, Professional and Extended Studies

The Department of Mass Communications, although a department seeking professional accreditation, and therefore logically belonging to the College of Professional, Graduate, and Extended Studies, remained in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

College of Graduate, Professional and Extended Studies

This college took over what had been the graduate school half of the former School of Humanities and Graduate Studies and combined it with undergraduate academic departments formerly in the School of Social Sciences. “Professional,” which had once referred to careers in medicine, law, academics and engineering, and more broadly might refer to careers in fields such as nursing or communications, here apparently refers to careers in psychology and human services. “Extended Studies,” meaningless in itself, would cover what once was known as Business Administration.

The Department of Business and Entrepreneurial Studies (BES) was the newest incarnation of what had been the “**Center of Excellence in Business & Entrepreneurial Studies**” in the School of Social Sciences (and, in the distant past of 1978, as the **Department of Economics and Business Administration** in the Division of Social Sciences. It now was evidently being marketed as either a Professional Study or an Extended Study.

The former **Psychology Department** was combined with the Human Services portion of the former **Department of Sociology and Anthropology** to produce the new **Department of Psychology and Human Services**. A special Bachelor of Human Services (BHS-FLEX) Program was also included in the new College. This was an “accelerated” Bachelor’s degree that permitted students to acquire more than half the normal 120 credit requirement through “previous academic studies, life-learning experiences, and professional experience.”

All **Graduate Programs**, formerly housed in the School of Humanities and Graduate Studies, were consolidated in the new College. This made clear sense. All of Lincoln’s Master’s degrees were in the field of the social sciences. All, with the exception of the graduate degrees in Education, were linked to parallel undergraduate degrees in the same College: Master of Science in Business Program, the Master of Arts in Human Services Administration, the Master of Arts in Human Services Delivery, the Master of Science in

Counseling. The Graduate Programs in Education might also have been linked to the corresponding undergraduate major, had the Education Department not been abolished at the undergraduate level.⁵⁷

The College of Science and Technology

Although “Technology” was a new addition to what had been the School of Natural Sciences, the major change was the College’s acquisition of the new Nursing Program and what had formerly been the College of Social Sciences’ Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

The Department of Biology. No change

The Department of Chemistry and Physics combined what had been separate departments.

The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science. No change.

The Department of Nursing and Health Science. The new Nursing Program, which, offering as it does an accredited professional degree, might naturally have been assigned to the College of Graduate, Professional and Extended Studies. Nonetheless it fits plausibly as a science. The department that in 1978 had been known as “**Physical Education and Athletics**” had, over the decades, developed into a field that justified the broader title of “**Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Athletics.**” Replacing “Physical Education, Recreation, and Athletics” with “Science” may well betray the original point of *mens sana in corpora sano* but is not entirely inaccurate.

The core curriculum was retitled “General Education” and the Eight Integrative Themes in the Liberal Arts were rethought and renamed “Institutional Learning Outcomes.”

⁵⁷ Given Lincoln’s historic mission as a producer of missionary educators, the abolition of the undergraduate major in education is regrettable. During my 38 years at Lincoln, I saw the undergraduate Education Department face difficulties of various sorts. The decisive factor in its elimination seems to have been the imposition of specified standards—maintaining minimum GPAs and passing exams such as PRAXIS—that were greatly reducing the number of majors in the department’s final years. One wants to believe that all avenues of revitalizing the department were considered before it was abolished.

Appendix 7

The SECURE “Core Values,” 2015

The SECURE “core values” of the “nurturing and stimulating environment for learning, teaching, research, creative expression and public service for a diverse student body, faculty and workforce”:

The core values of the institution are SECURE:

*The University prepares its **students** to use their gifts and resources to advance the wellbeing of its community and to meet the challenges of a global economy.*

*The University strives for **excellence** in its academic, social, technological, economic, environmental, and spiritual pursuits.*

*The University cultivates a culture of **care** and service among its community, which ultimately benefits the world at large.*

*The University fosters **understanding** and mutual respect for the contributions and perspectives of its diverse student body, faculty, staff, alumni, surrounding and global communities.*

*The University **respects** its traditions and reveres its storied past.*

*Integrity and sound **ethical** values guide the University’s identity and its work.*

“Mission of Lincoln University,” 2015 *Lincoln University Bulletin*, p. 6.

Through there is a strain to justify the acronym, and though “security” has never been a liberal arts core value, SECURE does make sense if the institution is an “environment” designed for customers.⁵⁸ Students today often focus on safety—both physical and emotional (e.g. “trigger warnings”)—and many American universities are now going to great lengths to insure that their students feel safe on their campuses and do not encounter provocations or harassment.

The repetition of “community”/“communities” emphasizes cooperation over competition. “Well-being,” “culture of care and service,” “understanding and mutual respect” all signify the

⁵⁸ A recent development emphasizes the importance of security. Under Dr. Nelson, an ornamental, four-foot high fence was erected around the perimeter of the campus. Although only the very shortest of malefactors would be deterred from crossing the miles of unpatrolled fence, the University has closed all gates but one (a second guarded gate is opened weekdays 8am to 4:30pm). It adds little to the actual security of the campus, but Americans since 9/11 have come to associate inconvenience with enhanced security, and so the restriction does make students and parents feel more secure.

prioritizing of the “nurturing” aspect of the academic environment. The institution both preaches and practices concern for others as a core value.

“Excellence” appears in the second place. Academic “excellence” naturally comes first (“Advancing the Legacy of Excellence”). And, thanks to Dr. Nelson’s commitment to Smartboards and Distance Learning and to a hard-working Information Technology unit, the institution can claim technological excellence. But what the institution’s “social” excellence would consist of seems harder to define. The “economic” excellence is also ambiguous. It could mean maintaining an excellent endowment, or maintaining excellent wages, or maintaining excellent (i.e. low) tuition. The institution’s environmental excellence presumably refers to the increased use of recycling and renewable energy sources, though progress in these matters has not yet been widely celebrated. How an institution excels in spiritual pursuits is an open question. Striving to achieve six types of excellence does distinguish “a nurturing and stimulating environment” from the narrowest definition of a university, which strives simply (almost tautologically) to achieve academic excellence. That narrowly defined university, if it ever did exist, certainly could not appeal to customers today. But academic excellence nonetheless might be something more than first among equals.

The six SECURE “core values” of the 2015 environment might be compared with a brief résumé of the six “Objectives” of the 1976 university. Dr. Branson’s institution grounded itself explicitly in the “liberal arts, which encompass the sciences and mathematics.” Its values were

to cultivate an inquiring and critical mind;
to acquaint the student with the cultural aspects of civilization
to enable the student to cope with the quantitative aspects of life,
to promote understanding of contemporary societies and culture
to develop recreational skills and to encourage participation in all areas of life that
 promote the health
to qualify students] for successful graduate or professional study.

(see the full elaboration of these values above, p. 18)

The “Objectives” relate directly—and solely—to the academic curriculum: to the composition sequence, to the “Humanities Options,” to the math and science requirement, to the social science requirement, to the Health, Physical Education & Recreation requirement, and to the departmental major. On the one hand, the “Objectives,” by remaining focused on the academic function of the university neglect the social, technological, economic, environmental, and spiritual excellences that SECURE elaborates. They omit SECURE’S promotion of communal goods and reverence for Lincoln’s “storied past.” On the other hand, by making academic excellence one-sixth of one-sixth of its “core values,” SECURE risks misleading its customers awareness of the fundamental purpose of the institution.

Appendix 8

The Graduate Programs

I have said nothing about Lincoln's graduate programs in part because none of the degrees it awards are liberal arts degrees, and in part I am largely ignorant of its operations. Still, it should not be omitted entirely.

The Master's Program that was inaugurated in 1977 comprised a significant extension of Lincoln University's educational mission. It was designed to serve a specific need: many experienced and competent professionals in the field of Human Services found their career progress stalled for lack of a credentialing degree. Lincoln's program was designed to provide them with the necessary credential. It enabled the working professionals to come to the campus one day a week (and to meet in evening classes at various locations) and to earn an M.H.S. degree that would make them eligible for advancement in their profession. The majority of the students would be African American, but the percentage of non-African American students would be much higher than that of the undergraduate campus.

The distinctive virtue of the program was that it did not require candidates for the Master's degree to first have earned a Bachelor's degree. Because the students could enter with an underdeveloped academic background, there was an intensive Pre-Masters course of study that promised to polish such fundamentals as writing skills.⁵⁹ In response to criticism from various agencies, the Human Services program initiated a Bachelor in Human Services degree (BHS-FLEX) that awarded college credits for "professional experience" and "life-learning experience," and thus insured that all graduates with a Master's degree also had a Bachelor's degree. A second criticism concerned the staffing of the graduate program. Lincoln's 2007 Self-Study Report noted that 85% of MHS credits were offered by adjunct faculty (48). On the one hand, these adjuncts bring professional experience to their classroom; on the other hand, academic oversight and consistency may suffer.

The most important date in the history of the program may have been 1997, when Lincoln University acquired its Urban Center near Amtrak's 30th Street Station in Philadelphia and moved all graduate programs to that location. Though obviously more accessible to a wider populations (students from New York City used to commute to the main campus by boarding a bus as early as 5am), there was some sentiment that the program might lose its esprit de corps in the shift (and also some suspicion that having accepted the donation of the facility, Lincoln was searching post facto for legitimate uses of the building). Ultimately esprit de corps proved not to matter as the original Master of Human Services degree was phased out in 2014.

⁵⁹ There is a problem with awarding graduate degrees to individuals who do not have prerequisite undergraduate degrees, however noble the motive. I myself have doubted its legitimacy (though not its nobility): I have no difficulty believing that there is often a higher level of competence at the non-credentialed staff of an organization than at the credentialed level, but a Master's degree does presume that a prior Bachelor's degree has meaningfully prepared the student. My view was altered after my wife spent several years teaching in the pre-Master's program. Hearing her take long late-night phone calls from students totally committed to improving their skills made me realize that the program did not compromise its standards; its students did have the relevant preparation, and its graduates could, in all respects, claim the mastery that students in traditional Master's programs could claim.

It had been supplement over time by other professional degrees in social services, education, and business. In 2016 these included: a Master of Arts in Human Services Administration and in Human Services Delivery; a Master of Education in Early Childhood Education PreK-4/Special Education Dual Certification Program, in Early Childhood Education, and in Educational Leadership; and a Master of Science in Business and in Counseling. All are clearly outside the purview of the liberal arts.