

Academic Advances, Adaptable Curriculum



A student and faculty member work on a collaborative research project, above. Such projects have been a formal part of Skidmore's curriculum since 1988. At upper right, biology students embark on a field trip during January term, part of the 4-1-4 curriculum from 1968 to 1985. The University Without Walls program (lower right) began in 1971.

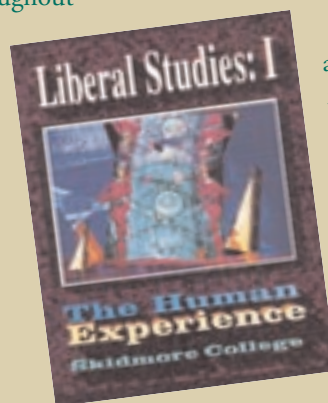
Skidmore's evolution from a small vocational school to a nationally ranked liberal arts college has been guided by its founding commitment to both theoretical and practical learning and highlighted by a spirit of creativity and a willingness to adapt the curriculum to changing student needs.

While the roots of Skidmore's liberal arts curriculum date to its earliest days as a baccalaureate institution, it was the new liberal studies curriculum in the 1980s that launched Skidmore's signature interdisciplinary course, Liberal Studies I. This collegewide collaborative learning experience, team-taught to the entire freshman class by faculty from throughout the disciplines, introduced a common core of knowledge opening the path to further study. Twenty years and several adjustments later, Liberal Studies 1: Human Dilemmas remains at the heart of a curriculum designed to afford students broad exposure to the worlds of ideas through an interdisciplinary approach to the liberal arts.

Another consistent hallmark of a Skidmore education is the close working relationships between faculty and students—never more apparent than in the Collaborative Research Program, begun in 1988. Over a ten-week



period each summer, teams of faculty and students pursue in-depth research projects closely related to the faculty member's curricular, pedagogical, scholarly, or creative interests.



In keeping with Skidmore's growing academic reputation, the College began inducting students into its new Honors Forum in 1997. Designed as a supportive intellectual community, the forum celebrates academic accomplishment through special events, lectures, and honors course sections that are open to all highly motivated students. Honors Forum members comprise a leadership core for the larger community. Along with members of the

Periclean Honor Society, they have been prime movers in planning the annual spring Academic Festival, which debuted in 1999. ■