

SEPC Meeting  
March 13, 1996

**Members Present:** James Simon, Social Sciences, Jason Fridley, Sciences, Rebekah Pym, Music; Michelle Dorvillier, Music; Willa Carroll, Dance.

**Curriculum:**

**James:** Our first issue is the curriculum. The Curriculum committee is going to meet next Wednesday to discuss how the curriculum will be arranged. As it stands, courses are grouped in divisions which we don't have. Any thoughts about improvement?

**Michelle:** Why do we need any divisions in the curriculum at all since we have no divisions at Bennington? Although, divisions exist no matter what since there will always be groupings of classes.

**James:** Should the curriculum be separated by program groups? If we list courses solely alphabetically would that be easier to navigate than it is presently?

**Michelle:** My idea would be to give each faculty a page and have each give background on themselves, their interests and then list classes they are giving with descriptions.

**Rebekah:** That might confuse students more if it was listed by faculty since not all students know every faculty member.

**Michelle:** I like the idea of having background on faculty so we could explore and find teachers whose classes we find interesting. This could help us get a better idea of who to study with. For new students an index of classes would be helpful.

**Students' role in educational policy**

**James:** Along with improving SEPC, we need to take a look at the students roll in educational policy decision. SEPC's roll?

**Jason:** SEPC serves a mechanical role, making sure that everything goes okay and should serve as mediators in problems.

**James:** Should we set policy?

**Jason:** No, we should simply address issues and initiate and guide situations to solutions.

**James:** What should students roll be in the case of a contract renewal? How should students evaluate the faculty member and what kind of weight should student evaluations have?

**Willa:** A considerable amount since the student is the one who deals directly with the teachers. Perhaps a form to fill out rather than simply writing a letter.

**Michelle:** There was a form in the past, but none now. If there was a form it would make it easier to fit into students busy schedules.

**James:** What kinds of areas would you use evaluate someone?? Criteria?

**Rebekah:** I would look at my relationship with them, and the person's effect on my education. Also, whether it was worthwhile having a class with them.

**Jason:** The extent that faculty takes the initiative with students. Involving students in research. Presence in class and being a teacher practitioner are important. Teacher practitioners need to inform students about what developments in the field. However, we need the teachers to teach us during the semester.

**Michelle:** I like faculty who can be a leader and a mentor to students.

**James:** What do you think about students' relationship to faculty in terms of giving feedback on performance, how should we interact on a day to day basis?

**Rebekah:** Open office hours are important. Students should be able to approach faculty without difficulty.

**James:** Should students feel comfortable telling faculty they are not being approachable?

**All:** agreed

**Michelle:** I Would like faculty to be around more, but when they are paid by the hour it is difficult to ask them to be around more. If you can't speak directly to your faculty members then SEPC should be able help with that. Students like to have faith in teacher being able to teach and know.

**James:** Reminders: Next Wednesday we will review last fall to see what worked and what did not work (in terms of the "NO" box). Talk to student in your discipline and see what other people in your discipline thought about it. Discuss other issues involving teacher evaluations and finding other avenues to discuss personal issues.