The Educational Policies Committee met on Friday, February 23rd at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were: Mildred Hubbard, Martha Erskine, Jane Pitts, Nancy Lee Keith, Dotha Seaverns, Faith Richardson, and Mary Eddison.

Absent: Caroline Gerber - on non-resident leave.

Nomination of EPC members

The chairman reviewed the procedure of nominating EPC members, and urged the members of the committee to get nominations from their respective faculty chairmen as soon as possible so that they might be considered by the EPC as a whole before being presented to the students of each major for their consideration. The date for EPC elections will be set by the Community Council at its next meeting. When the EPC is notified of the date, meetings of the majors can be arranged.

Survey of Courses

The chairman mentioned that although a committee consisting of the Social Studies subcommittee had been appointed to study the form of questionnaire used last term for the survey of classes, no report had been made to the EPC. The secretary reported that the committee had drawn up a new form of questionnaire calculated to avoid the deficiencies of the old form, but that time had not allowed for serious consideration of the problem. It was felt that this problem might well be handed on to the next EPC as well as the suggested example form for the reports to the faculty on the success of their classes. If there is sufficient time before the next EPC takes office these questions may be dealt with.

Annual report

The annual report for the year just ending was read by the chairman. It was suggested that certain additions be made and a few minor changes effected. These were to be done at the chairman's discretion. For final copy of the annual report see page . The report was accepted by the committee.

Evening meetings

The survey of evening meetings made at the end of last term was summarized in a report which was read by the chairman. The report will be found on pages III-IV of last term's minutes. The report was approved.

Association meetings

The action taken by the EPC with regard to the graduate Associations was briefly reviewed. It was felt that Mr. Leigh ought to be consulted before any report were made to whomever it concerns officially. It was decided to invite him to the next meeting.

Community reorganization

The minutes of the faculty meeting attended by EFC and Community Council members in connection with the community disorganization were read and discussed by the Council representative. It was felt this could be more effectively discussed next week after the Council has met.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30. Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Eddison, secretary.
The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday February 28th at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee Dining room. Present were Mr. Leigh, Mildred Hubbard, Jane Pitts, Nancy Lee Keith, Martha Erskine, Dotha Seaverne, Faith Richardson, and Mary Eddison.

Absent: Caroline Gerber.

Community Council

All members of the EPC were asked to be present at the Community Council meeting on Friday March 1, at 2:20 pm in the Committee dining room when the Committee on Reorganization will report to the Community Council.

Elections

The Community Council representative reported that elections for the new EPC would take place on Tuesday, March 12, in the store as usual. On Tuesday, March 5th, meetings of the majors will be held in the houses for the purpose of discussing nominations to the EPC. By decision of the Community Council, the EPC elections come second, succeeding those of the Community Council.

Association Meetings

The chairman reported that she and the secretary had met with Mr. Leigh to discuss the action taken by the EPC in connection with Associations of the graduates. She said that she felt that the decisions reached by the EPC should be reconsidered in the light of the fact that much of the data about and the background of the Association set-up was completely missing and unavailable at the time of our discussions. Mr. Leigh was then asked to state the ideas behind the structure of the present association organization. He stated that from experience he felt that it would not be sound to have one large association instead of the present federated set-up. He felt that any inclusive organization of the graduates should, at least for some time, represent a federation of the Associations of the Major fields. In the past the majors' meetings seem to have had more vitality than the general meeting of all the graduates. He felt that there was a tendency of general Alumnae Associations to hinder the colleges' growth by sentimental hankerings. He felt that leadership in a general organization was too often taken by "joiners" or persons who were not best fitted to contribute to the college in terms of experience. Mr. Leigh said that although very young alumnae do not make major meetings necessarily stimulating because of the paucity of their experience outside of College, it would be wiser on account of the youth of the Alumnae group so far to continue with the present Trustee-approved set-up until 1942 when the question will again be raised. He felt that in the long run the present set-up would be most efficacious, but that there was no reason why experiments could not well be made within that framework.

The second EPC suggestion that graduates return and Association meetings be held at some time other than commencement, in fact preferably in the autumn, met with more enthusiasm from Mr. Leigh. It seemed that because of the nature of Commencement - because of its simplicity and because of the fact that it is a senior show as it were - it would be far wiser to have Graduates return when the day or weekend would be theirs, and the College would be in normal action. He felt that the problem of the Alumnae should be considered by faculty and staff as well as students or specifically the EPC. However he saw no objection to the action of the EPC in considering the problem or in eventually having an
important part in planning the graduates' weekend. The two aims of the Associations as they are now set up is to get the most valuable contributions from the graduates specifically in their field of interest and to keep the Alumnae interested in and informed of changes in the college.

Mr. Leigh also concurred with the EPC in feeling that it was most essential to keep complete records of the Association meetings, joint action, and informal suggestions. It would be advisable to make a complete record of the history of the Association organization giving the arguments that were involved in reaching the various stages and solutions.

The chairman summarized the discussion of Associations by stating the four points considered: 1) the time when graduates should return and Association meetings be held, 2) the form that the organization of the Associations could ultimately take, 3) the relationship of graduates and the Associations to the College, and 4) the mechanism of organization of the Associations - the planning of meetings, selections of chairman etc. It was suggested that the EPC might concern itself with formulating some suggestions concerning the first and fourth points, but that the other two were at present not its province. Conceivably the May Bulletin might be used to publicise the proposals the EPC might make for minor changes within the present structure.

Public Relations

It was suggested that the present EPC might pass on to its successors the problem of College publicity. Mr. Leigh emphasized that at this time in its career the EPC was tending to become over ambitious and that it would be far wiser for it to concern itself more properly with the problems more closely associated with student-faculty relations.

Community reorganization

Since this problem is to be thoroughly discussed at the Community Council meeting on Friday, the only point to emphasize at present was the need for more inter-committee cooperation. Mr. Leigh agreed to this emphatically.

Continuity with the next EPC

Mr. Leigh stated that he was peculiarly impressed with the fact that it takes nearly a term for a new committee to function effectively and constructively. He felt that a sort of manual ought to be devised by the present EPC to pass on to their successors stating very fully the background for the actions taken and the field for thought and activity. He felt that some document might be composed to alleviate the waste of time and energy that each new committee expends. The EPC agreed to work on this but no further action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Eddison, secretary.
The Educational Policies Committee met on Tuesday, March 5th at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Mildred Hubbard, Faith Richardson, Jane Pitta, Nancy Lee Keith, Martha Erskine, Dotha Seaverne, and Mary Eddison.

Nominations

Each member read to the committee the nominations which she and the faculty in her major had made for EPC member from her major for the coming year.

Art
- Helen Keeler
- Sarah Knapp
- Elizabeth Plimpton
- Katherine Wyman

Literature
- Antoinette Larrabee
- Nancy Fahnestock
- Jean Davidson
- Katrine VanTassel

Science
- Sylvia Thayer
- Barbara Heywood
- Margaret Brush
- Hilda Wheelwright

Drama
- Vida Ginsberg
- Katherine Henry
- Nancy Lee Keith
- Barbara Ellis

Music
- Sidney Peloubet
- Diana Marvin
- Carol Haines
- Phoebe Arnold

Dance
- Gloria Eksergian

The chairman reviewed the procedure of election, (to be found in the front of the minutes book.) She emphasized that faculty consent should be obtained on any nomination from the floor not specifically approved by them. Meetings of the majors will be held this evening to discuss nominations. The above names were passed on by the EPC as a whole.

Education Series

The secretary reported several changes advised by the General Meetings committee in both the schedule and personnel for the education series. It was reported that Mr. Lawrence Frank of the Macy Foundation cannot come. It was then suggested that Dr. Zachry who represents much the same point of view be asked in his stead. The meetings Committee approved this. Mr. Leigh pointed out that the program as arranged so far omitted a very important and probably much more prevalent educational plan than would be discussed by either Mr. Scott Buchanan or Dr. Zachry. This was mass state-supported education such as is witnessed by the middle western state universities. Dr. Learned of Harvard and, as second choice, Ordway Tead of the Board of Education of New York were suggested to fill this need, and approved. As Mr. Leigh's name was not on the panel, it was felt that he should play a
different part in the discussion and perhaps present a summary of the points of view expressed in the first three meetings at the beginning of the panel discussion at the fourth meeting. It was also suggested that there was a conspicuous absence of psychologists on the panel. Although it was mentioned that the panel was already somewhat unwieldy in size and that although the students on it were not specialists but there to get experience and therefore filling vacancies in some of the fields not covered by faculty members, it was advised that Dr. Chassell and Mr. Chapman be asked to sit on the panel at one or more of the meetings, where challenges from their field would be most significant. It would be wise to weight the panel according to the speaker. This suggestion was also approved by the Meetings Committee. The EPC also registered its approval on all the above suggestions.

Problems within Majors

The Drama representative presented a problem which she felt deserved the attention and consideration of the EPC. She stated that what is counted as an Acting quarter in planning work, and which should represent approximately an average of ten hours work per week, takes from twenty to thirty hours of work each week. Included in this Acting quarter are classes in Acting Technique, Rhythms, two hours of Dance, Dance Seminars, make-up, Voice for stage, and one production a year. It was felt that Drama students following such a schedule had to slight their outside work or carry more than was advisable from the health standpoint. The Drama representative felt that specific suggestions such as eliminating workshop scenes or some other work for freshmen particularly would be advisable.

The Music representative stated that in her major a quarter for an instrument major is worth about 21 hours or eleven more than the average allowed on schedules. She felt that it would be unwise to bring this matter up at this time in the Music Major. It had been thoroughly discussed last year and certain arrangements were now being tried.

This evidence seems relevant to a report from some faculty members at a faculty meeting last fall that work in certain majors was being slighted by non-majors taking courses in them. It was felt that the matter bore further investigation. The Drama major representative will see the faculty head of her major to discuss it and will then see Mr. Leigh, or the EPC will send a memo to the Executive Committee.

Continuity with the Next EPC

The secretary reported that in connection with the manual of EPC functions, activities and perennial problems, two reports written by EPC members in 1938 had been found and might serve as a background and form to improve upon and amend for the benefit of the next EPC.

Group Leadership

Mr. Leigh's suggestion that ex-committee heads lead the Group Leadership discussions among this year's committee heads was met with much discussion and some disagreement. It was felt that the matter might best be discussed with the new committees when elected to office.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Eddison, sec'y
The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, March 6th at 6:00 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Mrs. Robert Lynd of the Sarah Lawrence College faculty, Mildred Hubbard, Jane Pitts, Martha Erskine, Nancy Lee Keith, Dotha Seaverns, Faith Richardson, and Mary Eddison.

Mrs. Lynd of "Middletown" and "Middletown in Transition" fame, (along with her husband,) is now at Bennington studying our curriculum and educational practices to compare and contrast with Sarah Lawrence College. She expressed a desire to meet with the EPC to discuss the sort of problems dealt with by this committee and to discuss certain educational problems or practices that she had met with at Sarah Lawrence and hoped to study here at Bennington. For simplification in reviewing the EPC's discussion they fall under the following headings but will be grouped together since so little was said on each subject which was very briefly touched on: Survey of Classes; Over specialization; increasing rigidity of course content, especially in introductory courses in Literature at Bennington; Student Teachers; Counselor functions; Evening meetings; Freshman follow-up meetings, (orientation); the problem of lectures on sex.

The first point of discussion centered around the functions of the EPC, and its practices. Mrs. Lynd was interested in the survey of classes conducted each year by the Committee. The general trend of the survey of classes was discussed, and the potential benefits that accrue from the survey. It was questioned as to whether the most valued points in the classes were brought out on this survey.

The next point discussed was faculty differences of opinion on teaching method, necessary background for advanced work, assignments, emphasis on theory in different classes etc. Apparently the Sarah Lawrence faculty seems to be much more conscious of running into teaching ruts, always using the same material year by year etc. than does some of the Bennington faculty, especially in the Literature major here. This might be investigated by the next EPC.

The question of over-specialization and excess professionalism in some majors particularly Music and Drama seems to be a problem both at Bennington and Sarah Lawrence. Breadth and scope of background outside of these majors are sacrificed for excellence within them. It was emphasized that some more light is needed on this problem. Another job for next year's EPC.

In discussing problems dealt with by the EPC, student teaching was mentioned as a small accomplishment. Apparently at Sarah Lawrence the student teaching plan is further expanded than at Bennington, and students are now conducting employee classes in such subjects as Literature, Psychology, Economic, etc. This sounds like a reasonable field for Bennington student experience. Perhaps it could be considered by the EPC.

The function of Counselor here is similar and yet different from that practiced at Sarah Lawrence. There a freshman has only three courses her freshman year. Two of these are group courses. One is an exploratory, orienting conference with her counselor who is not necessarily in her major or field of interest. This plan might well merit further study because of the light it may throw on some of the counselling problems that continually arise here.

Mrs. Lynd questioned the role of the EPC as far as evening meetings
were concerned. The chairman outlined our advisory function in this matter and gave a short outline of the Education Series as planned by the EPC. The part played by the EPC in the study and suggestion of proposed changes in the General meetings program was also described.

Mrs. Lynd also expressed interest in the part played by students, and the EPC in specific in the freshman orientation to the College and to their work. The chairman briefly described the activities of last and past falls in follow up meetings with freshmen as well as activities cooperatively participated in by the Community Council and the EPC which seemed to be somewhat successful this past year. Mrs. Lynd then examined and questioned the agendas used in each case.

There was some discussion of the relationship between the counselor of each student and the student government, in this case the Central Committee was implied. The potential relationship in cases of irresponsible or negligent students was then outlined.

There was some discussion of Dr. Chassell's lectures on sex. Mrs. Lynd felt that Sarah Lawrence had a more sensible, and educational set-up in this connection. There, sex is set in the context of the "family". Four or more faculty may participate in these lectures, and the psychological, economic, governmental, and sociological aspects of the problem as well as the biological and physiological aspects are dealt with. After the series at Sarah Lawrence, each attending student may meet with any one or more of the faculty giving the course for conference or suggestions for further study. Here is where the succeeding EPC might make inquiry and valuable suggestions to the health committee of the executive committee. At Sarah Lawrence the course is followed up by a questionnaire asking for comments and suggestions. Perhaps much might be gained from such here.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Eddison, secretary.
Before reporting on the activities of the Educational Policies Committee during the last year, I should like to reiterate briefly the position of the E.P.C. at Bennington. As you undoubtedly know, this committee is composed of a member from each of the seven majors, and the chairman of the Community Council ex-officio. The function of the E.P.C. is to represent the student body in any matter relating to direct educational issues, and to act as link between faculty and students in matters of educational policy. The committee functions in a purely advisory capacity. A more specific outline of its activities will emerge, I hope, from this report of the last year.

Many of the activities of this committee have been the annual routine functions of the E.P.C. These activities include mainly surveys and meetings. In the fall semester, the E.P.C. conducted the formal survey of classes. Although no radical changes were made in the form of the questionnaire at that time, the committee now feels that the existing questionnaire form is inadequate; that the questions are most pertinent to discussion classes; that they do not evoke satisfactory information from classes in science, art or the performing arts. For this reason the E.P.C. appointed a committee to design a questionnaire which will be passed on for the consideration of the next committee. Furthermore, we offer two suggestions: first, that copies of the questionnaire of classes be available at any time during the year for faculty members who wish to gather information from their classes; and second, that the written form of the questionnaire results, as they are handed in to the members of the faculty, be standardised from one year to another.

Two other surveys which the E.P.C. made last year are theoretically arbitrary, but have become a general practise. These are; first, an oral survey in the spring term of all classes which did not exist in the fall term, and of
classes which had been reported less successful in the formal fall survey. Secondly, the committee issued a questionnaire to all members of the graduating class last May, requesting a general evaluation of their college experience, and any suggestions concerning the Pennington educational system. No criticisms or suggestions were made by a significant majority.

The meetings which constitute the remaining annual functions of the E.P.C. were conducted as follows by that committee. Last April, the E.P.C. held meetings by majors with the 2nd year students for the purpose of discussing the distinction between the Junior and Senior divisions, and the standards required for entrance into the Senior division. In November, meetings of all the majors were called for the purpose of discussing the winter field period. Last fall, the E.P.C. also assisted in the Freshman orientation program. The committee held follow-up meetings in cooperation with the Community Council, and separate Freshman meetings by majors. As a result of these discussions on the Pennington system of education, came the idea of a series of lectures on the general subject of Higher Education for Women, for the benefit and interest of the whole community. This series will be held in April.

Now to report on activities other than those of a routine nature, which the E.P.C. has undertaken this last year.

When the committee first came into office, the members pooled all questions which they felt existed in their majors, in an attempt to sort out common problems which could be constructively discussed by the committee as a whole. The questions raised boiled down to four in number. They were; (1) the diversified problems connected with student-teaching, (2) the professional standards in some majors, and the consequent degree of specialisation. (3) Extemporaneous discussion as a lost art, and (4) the function of the Counselor for students who do not count their Conference as a numerical part
of their program. Discussion of these questions led to positive results only in the case of the first, student-teaching. The E.P.C. first set out to estimate the amount of student-teaching, then the benefits derived from the experience both for the teacher and her students. The committee presented their information, plus a list of the practical problems involved, to a faculty committee on student-teaching. The question is now entirely in the hands of the faculty committee, until the E.P.C. can be of further assistance.

Another topic which has come to the attention of this committee is the Graduate Associations. As you probably know, the Alumnae of Bennington College join the six Graduate Associations which are made up by Majors, instead of one all-inclusive Alumnae Association. These Associations have made a practise of meeting once a year at graduation week-end, for the purpose of discussing the college and the various activities of its graduates. This year the Social Studies Association met in November. At this meeting, the whole question of Association meetings was raised, and later taken up by the E.P.C. This committee recommends that all the Associations meet at a time when college is regularly in session, and not on the busy graduation week-end. There are two reasons for this, (I) the Alumnae will have a closer touch with the various activities within the college, and (2) the students will have more opportunity to meet with the Alumnae. Perhaps one of the student committees could take part in planning the week-end.

Another recommendation which the E.P.C. made this year concerns the type-writing course. The committee feels that this is a valuable tool, and suggests that facilities for it be extended.

During the fall semester the E.P.C. made changes in the by-laws and in the procedures of their election. These changes were read in community meeting at that time.

There remain two meetings on which I should like to report. In
September, the committee received as guests members of the New England Federation of Women's Clubs, and gave them a brief description of Bennington College. In October, the E.P.C. was invited to meet with the College Trustees; discussion took place on general topics of educational policy.

The final activity which I should like to mention is a questionnaire survey of afternoon and evening meetings made by the E.P.C. last December. The results of this were, briefly, that a large majority of students and faculty are in favor of the plan followed last semester of specialised afternoon meetings, and evening meetings of general interest. The comments most generally made were, that afternoon meetings had not been specialised enough, and that the question periods had been very unsatisfactory. Several constructive suggestions were made on both points, and have been submitted for trial to the Committee on evening meetings.

In closing, I should like to speak for all the members of this committee in thanking the faculty and staff for their encouragement and cooperation, which is so essential to the Educational Policies Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Mildred Hubbard, chairman
Elections were held in the Store on March 12th for the purpose of selecting next year's Educational Policies Committee. The following were elected to membership:

Art ............ Elizabeth Plimpton
Dance ............ Gloria Ekerian
Drama ............ Vida Ginsberg
Literature ............ Antionnette Larrabee
Music ............ Phoebe Arnold
Science ............ Sylvia Thayer
Social Studies ........... Margaret Dudley

For the purpose of record, and in the event of resignations, those who came second are recorded:

Art ............ Barbara Kirchmaier
Drama ............ Nancy Lee Keith
Literature ............ Katrina VanTassell
Music ............ Sydney Peloubet
Science ............ Barbara Heywood
Social Studies ........... Helen Cummings

Statistics of voting:

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Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Eddison, sec'y
The Educational Policies Committees, new and retiring, met on Wednesday March 13th at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were: Mildred Hubbard, Jane Pitts, Nancy Lee Keith, Jessie Anne Nelson (for music), Dotha Seaverms, Faith Richardson, Elizabeth Plimpton, Vida Ginsberg, Antoinette Larrabee, Phoebe Arnold, Sylvia Thayer, Margaret Dudley, Mary Berna (new chairman of the Community Council), and Mary Eddison.

Absent: Martha Brakins, Caroline Gerber, and Gloria Eksersian.

Elections of Officers

Mildred Hubbard, chairman of the retiring committee listed the duties, responsibilities and qualifications for chairman of the EPC. Among these were: sense of responsibility, initiative, judgment, thoroughness, awareness of what Bennington is driving at, scope and interest in problems of majors, ability to summarize and direct discussion.

Nominations for Chairman were:
Margaret Dudley
Vida Ginsberg
Antoinette Larrabee
Phoebe Arnold

The new chairman, elected by secret ballot, was Vida Ginsberg.

The retiring secretary stated the duties and responsibilities of the EPC secretary. In addition to qualifications mentioned in connection with the chairmanship, orderliness, foresight, ability to typewrite and such were mentioned.

Nominations for Secretary were:
Margaret Dudley
Phoebe Arnold
Elizabeth Plimpton
Margaret Dudley was elected secretary.

Group Leadership

Mr. Leigh's suggestion that the retired officers of the various committees take over the function of teaching the elements of group leadership, as put forth in Mr. Leigh's own book by that name, was brought up. It was suggested that the new EPC consider the suggestion after one or two meetings when its members would be better able to decide the best route to take.

Procedures

It was suggested that the head of the faculty of every major be sent a copy of the EPC procedures in order to help them familiarize themselves with the system of elections.

Continuity With Next EPC

The chairman reported that the retiring EPC was handing on to the incoming EPC a report of the functions and perennial duties of the EPC, a new form of questionnaire for discussion and reconstruction, a set of forms for reports to the faculty on surveys of classes, a body of discussion on graduate associations, and a suggestion that the inclusion on the subcommittees of retiring members be put in the procedures.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary C. Eddison, secretary.
The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, March 20 at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg, Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Gloria Eksergian, Mary Berna, and Margaret Dudley.

Meetings Committee

A memorandum concerning the functions of the student member of the Meetings Committee was presented and the secretary was instructed to append it to the minutes. On the recommendation of Mr. Leigh it was decided to include in the EPC procedures that the student member of the Meetings Committee be appointed at the same time as are other student officers, thus lending continuity to the committee.

Four nominations for this position were made and a preferential ballot taken. The following list was given to Miss Hendricks:

Katrina Voorhees
Nancy Fahnestock
Helen Levine
Barbara Kirchmaier

Questionnaire Committee

Antoinette Larrabee was appointed to the Questionnaire Committee as EPC representative.

Committee Coordination

The chairman proposed that every effort be made this year to increase coordination between the various committees of the community through joint meetings and discussion of common problems. Mary Berna, speaking for the Community Council, concurred in this proposal and suggested that the council and the EPC investigate faculty-student relations jointly.

Faculty-Student Relations

The chairman suggested that the EPC subcommittees be utilized to foster good faculty-student relations on an inter-divisional basis. She asked that the EPC members instruct their subcommittees to hold this problem in mind and try to use informal social methods to solve it. Antoinette Larrabee described the series of informal seminars which the Literature Major is planning to have this term under her leadership. They will take the form of intellectual-social meetings to which faculty members of several majors will be invited. The committee agreed to consider the feasibility of similar programs in the other Majors.

Over Specialization

The chairman led discussion on the problem of over specialization in the Majors, particularly in the Drama Major. She told the committee that the Drama and Social Studies faculty were working on the problem
now but that we should keep it in mind and it may become our problem
after the faculty report.

Survey of Classes

In view of the committee's interest in the over specialization
problem it was suggested that the question concerning whether differences
in individuals impeded the progress of the class be included in this
year's survey of classes. This question has been asked before in various
forms, and a comparison could be made over a period of several years.

Procedures

It was suggested and unanimously approved that the following be
included in the EPC procedures: "The retiring members of the EPC shall
automatically serve for the new members' first term on the subcommittees."

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Margaret Dudley, secretary
MEMORANDUM: Re student member of Meetings Committee

TO: EPC as nominating body and Meetings Committee

FROM: Margaret Dudley, student member of Meetings Committee, Fall Term, 1939

The following is a list of the functions of the student member of the Meetings Committee, prepared as an aid to the EPC in making nominations, and to the member in performing her duties.

1. The student shall keep in touch with all requests from student groups, committees, and councils. This means that she should make known her function to all of these groups by attending their meetings, talking with their chairmen, etc. at the beginning of her term of office. She should then continue to discuss their ideas and plans for meetings with them, outline committee policies to them, and carry their suggestions and requests to the committee whenever called upon to do so.

2. The student shall keep in touch with representative student opinion by inquiries in house meetings and informal methods, gathering criticism and suggestions for presentation to the committee.

3. The student shall familiarize herself with the past meetings programs, history, and policy of the committee by reference to Miss Hendricks' records.

4. The student shall bring to the committee ability and ideas for the planning of a well-rounded meetings program.
Bennington College  
March 27, 1940

The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, March 27 at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg, Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Gloria Eksergian, Mary Berna, and Margaret Dudley.

Education Series

The Education Series which is to take place April 8 - 11 was discussed. It was suggested and approved that the EPC hold meetings in the houses the week before the Series to arouse interest in educational problems, and particularly to encourage serious thought about the Bennington method. It was decided to discuss the procedure for these meetings in greater detail at the next meeting.

The secretary was instructed to ask Mary Eddison, former Social Studies EPC representative, to attend the next meeting for discussion on this subject with the committee.

The secretary was also instructed to send a memorandum to Mr. Leigh asking for clarification of the position of the faculty on the Series in relation to academic work. The EPC recommends that students be encouraged to feel that the Series is of equal importance to work. (See p. 19).

Problems within Majors

The Social Studies representative reported that the faculty of her major, at a meeting on March 25 with the Senior Division students of the major, had evinced great enthusiasm for more contact with students in an intellectual-social way. Plans were begun for a meeting to be held at the Joneses next week. It was made very evident that the faculty of this major welcome the opportunity for cordial relations with their students on a social basis, in the sense of getting away from the teacher-pupil relationship.

At this same meeting the question was brought up by a member of the faculty of whether or not the curriculum in this major has solidified to an undesirable degree. It appears that substantially the same selection of courses has been offered for the past three years. Does this indicate that the students are not requesting courses, but are accepting what is offered without question? Are the present students taking what the Senior Division in 1935 wanted? Have students lost the idea that they can request courses? Or are the needs of 1935 actually the same as those of students today? Further investigation of this question will be made. One suggestion made in the EPC meeting was that the Senior Division Students decide in the Spring, with the faculty, what courses they want offered the following year.

The representatives of the other majors felt that this may be a problem to them as well, and are going to investigate it.

The Literature representative reported that her discussion groups and seminars were in progress. She is having difficulty in getting complete cooperation from the faculty of her major, but hopes that if the meetings are successful that they will eventually participate. At the suggestion of the chairman, she agreed to report on the success of her projects at a later date.

The chairman announced that the Drama major was undergoing a reorganization process, and that the policy and method were being redefined. Nothing has been settled definitely yet, and she will report when it has been.
Problems within Majors Cont.

The chairman reported that she had heard criticism of the standards of the Art major. She requested the Art representative to talk with her faculty on that point and clarify the standards to the EPC so that they can be interpreted correctly to students in the other majors.

The Science representative said that a minor problem which had come to her attention was the tendency on the part of a few students to be late to class. It was recommended that the Central Committee deal with offenders if it becomes a serious problem, but that the EPC representatives refer particular cases to the students' counselors.

Community Reorganization

Mary Berna gave an informal preliminary report on the progress of the Reorganization Committee, presenting certain questions within the sphere of the EPC. It was agreed that the governmental end of reorganization should be handled by the Community Council, but the problem of faculty-student relations is bound up with the Council's policy. The crux of the matter at this time is whether or not the ideal concept of the faculty as an integral part of the community life and government should be retained when in practice they do not fit this picture. It was agreed to continue our work in bettering faculty-student relations informally until the Reorganization Committee report is ready. At that time the problem will be reconsidered in the light of the Council's plans.

Winter Period Experiences Meeting

The plans for the evening meeting to be held March 27 on Winter Period experiences were reported by the chairman and secretary. A student from each major is to speak for five or ten minutes each on what she did and its value to her.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Dudley, secretary
Memorandum

TO: Mr. Leigh

FROM: Margaret Dudley, Secretary EPO

RE: Education Series

The EPO would like to know if the faculty will sanction the following announcement to students about the Education Series: Since the Series has an educational value to the community as a whole, it will be regarded as of equal importance to academic, and full participation in it should not be foregone due to the pressure of regular work.

This practice was accepted, we believe, in the case of the Art Series and others. Perhaps you could bring this up in the Faculty Meeting next week and report the result to the EPO. We ask that this point be clarified so that both faculty and students have the same understanding of it.

Memorandum

TO: Margaret Dudley, Secretary EPO

FROM: Dorothea Hendricks, Secretary to the President

At the meeting on April 2nd, the faculty considered your memorandum of March 28th. It was agreed that this was a matter of counseling and that no student should count the Education Series as a larger part of her college work than she and her counselor agree. Normally counselors would take account of the series, of course.
Bennington College  
April 3, 1940

The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, April 3 at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg, Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Gloria Eksergian, Mary Berna, Mr. Park, Prof. Pilly of Wellesley College, and Margaret Dudley.

Problems within Majors

The chairman explained to Mr. Park that the EPC had invited him to come to this meeting in order to answer questions about the standards of the Art major. She asked him to clarify the basis for admission from the Junior Division to the Senior Division.

Mr. Park emphasized that the Art major is not wholly concerned simply with training artists, pointing out that that is the function of the art school. To study art well does not necessarily mean being an artist. Students are here to learn a method of learning, apart from a technique or skill. Creative ability cannot be measured, so it is useless to attempt to use it as a standard. Students are promoted to the Senior Division on the basis of total personality development. When a student has achieved a reasonable amount of self-reliance and capacity for independent work in a conscious direction, she is qualified for promotion. Mr. Park illustrated the consideration given to individual differences and the attempt which is made to turn out a student who is well-rounded in the field. A student who has talent in painting but is not particularly intellectual is required to work at improving her grasp of art through development of the critical faculty. On the other hand, there are students who are very perceptive but untalented in the studio, and they are required to become familiar at least with the various media in order to deepen their understanding of the field.

Education Series

Mary Eddison, a member of the Panel for the Education Series, and four other members of the preceding EPC came to the meeting at 7:00. The chairman asked Mary Eddison to give suggestions to the group for leading discussions in house meetings on the Series. Each of the twelve leaders was given a mimeographed information sheet prepared by the Panel, which told how the Series is to operate and included a suggested reading list. The emphasis in the house meetings, it was stressed, should be that the students should participate as much as possible in the series, and should feel that it constitutes a challenge to re-examination of our own point of view on education.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Dudley, secretary
During next week, April 5th through 11th, there will be a series of four evening meetings devoted to the subject of education.

The idea behind this series of evening meetings originated in a joint meeting of the Community Council and the ASC last fall when the opinion was expressed that few of the students had any idea of what was going on in the field of education outside of Bennington. It was felt that too few were aware of such prominent or widely advocated systems as the state universities or the University of Chicago.

Since that meeting the ASC and the General Meetings Committee devised a plan. There are to be three speakers: Dr. Caroline S. Zachry of the Progressive Education Association, on Tuesday; Mr. Ordway Tead, chairman of the New York City Board of Education, on Monday; and Dean Scott Buchanan, head of Saint John's College, Annapolis, on Wednesday. The Thursday meeting will be conducted by a faculty-student panel.

Mr. Tead's chief interest is in education for social participation. As chairman of the New York City Board, he deals with problems of mass, tax-supported education, with faculty—see LIFE on Bertrand Russell, and with Democracy. It is hoped that he will present these aspects in his lecture.

Dr. Zachry is more preoccupied with the "biological" side of education, and is interested in educating women in accordance with what she feels to be their basic needs. She is a psychologist and psychiatrist and has done much work at Columbia and elsewhere with adolescents in the field of mental health.

Dr. Buchanan of the One-Hundred-Structures school of thought is dean of Saint John's College, Annapolis. The point of view which he expresses, like Hutchins's of the University of Chicago, bases modern education on the classics. See LIFE article on Saint John's.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights there will be a forty minute talk followed by a discussion period led by a faculty-student panel. On Thursday, the panel will attempt to summarize the conflicting points of view and bring them up for discussion. The panel includes:

Mr. Jones, chairman
Mr. Leigh
Mr. Chassell
Mr. De Gray
Mr. Ferguson
Mrs. Jones
Mr. Lundberg
Miss Latterson
Miss Shelley
Mr. Troy
Mr. Goodworth
and five students

The members were conscripted with a view toward challenging or supporting the points of view that might be expressed by the speakers.

It is not the purpose of the series to rationalize or reiterate the aims or objectives of Bennington, but rather to give students a perspective on the other experiments and ideas that are being worked out at the same time. It is hoped that every student who has a question will hand it in to any member of
The schedule is an arduous one, but it is understood that time spent in attending the meetings or reading in preparation for them will be counted as a part of the students' work.

The series is calculated to challenge some of the things that Bennington students are apt to take for granted or overlook, and to provide a more adequate background for opinion or study. Spontaneous questions, statements or objections from the floor are hoped for. The panel must be worked hard.

Below will be found a list of suggested books or articles which bear on the subject of the series or illustrate the points of view held by the speaker. These and other pertinent articles will be displayed in the library and reserved for this purpose during the series.

Ordway Tead - The Case For Democracy
Robert M. Hutchins - The Higher Learning In America
= No Friendly Voice
Dewey, John - How We Think
= Education and Social Change, Social Frontier My'37
Kilpatrick, William H. - The Art and Practice of Teaching
Adler, Mortimer - How To Read a Book
Foerster - The Future of the Liberal College
Ryan, Carson - Mental Health Through Education
The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, April 10 at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg, Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Gloria Eksergian, Mary Berna, and Margaret Dudley.

Meetings Committee

The secretary read the following memorandum from Dorothea Hendricks, Secretary of the Committee on General Meetings: "On recommendation of the EPC, the Committee on General Meetings has asked Katrina Voorhees to be student representative on the Committee, and Katrina has accepted."

Standards for Promotion to Senior Division

At the request of the chairman, informal reports were given regarding the standards of each major for promotion to Senior Division. There were differences of opinion as to (1) the uniformity of standards between the majors, and (2) whether or not too much importance was granted to the individual's personality growth rather than the quality of her work and her ability in the field.

It was agreed that a report summarizing the ideas which grew out of this discussion should be written and read to Mr. Leigh at a future meeting. Vida Ginsberg, Sylvia Thayer, and Margaret Dudley were asked to write the report.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Dudley, secretary
Bennington College
April 24, 1940

The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, April 24 at
6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg,
Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Gloria
Eksergian, Mary Berna, and Margaret Dudley.

Survey of Classes

There was discussion of the method of presenting reports on classes
to the faculty. The importance of careful, constructive, and tactful pre­
sentation was emphasized. The prestige of the EPC in the eyes of the
faculty rests largely on the value which these reports prove to have.

It was mentioned that while some majors have copies of past reports
going back several years, others do not. It was urged that copies of the
reports be kept by each representative in her notebook for future reference.

Senior Evaluation

The chairman asked the committee to determine in their own minds
how valuable they feel the Senior evaluations of their college experience
to be, and to be prepared to discuss the matter with Mr. Leigh at the next
meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20.

Respectfully submitted
Margaret Dudley, secretary
The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, May 1 at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg, Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Gloria Eksergian, Mary Berna, Mr. Leigh, and Margaret Dudley.

Standards for Promotion to Senior Division

The chairman read a report on standards prepared by herself, Sylvia Thayer, and Margaret Dudley. She explained to Mr. Leigh that the purpose in writing it had been to clarify, in the minds of the committee members, certain questions which had arisen.

Mr. Leigh answered the main question raised in the report by stating that the Student Personnel Committee definitely makes its decisions on a minimum requirement basis. He said that the factor of individual personal growth, which the report suggested might be over-emphasized, is a decisive element only in exceptional cases of individual personality difficulties which hinder achievement.

Mr. Leigh then raised the question of how long should the EPC investigate problems such as this without evidence? He pointed out that the most substantial evidence the committee had used was faculty opinion, which in matters of this sort is scarcely more reliable, as a rule, than student rumor. Mr. Leigh said that he personally feels that one of the most sterile discussions in college education is that of standards, and he made it clear that the EPC is probably the least qualified group to embark profitably on such a discussion, especially if it does so solely on its own power without the guidance of quantitative evidence and authoritative opinion.

As pertinent to the question of promotion to Senior Division, Mr. Leigh described the study which Mrs. Garrett has made of the sixty-six cases where the Student Personnel Committee has postponed the decision for various reasons. It was found that one third of the students so advised return to college, enter Senior Division a term or two later, and graduate successfully. Forty-seven percent do not come back to college, and twenty percent come back but do not graduate, often because of illness or other non-academic reasons.

The Student Personnel Committee, on the basis of this study, feels that the delayed promotion device is very satisfactory. One of its best features is the psychological value obtainable under it of allowing girls to make their own decisions whether or not to come back, without feeling that they are "fired". Mr. Leigh pointed out that this study is relevant to what the EPC has been thinking about, and suggested that closer contact with the Administration would save the committee from wasting its time.

Senior Evaluation

The chairman asked for discussion on the subject of the Senior evaluations of their college experience which have been obtained for the past two years. The value of the survey was questioned at the last meeting. It was pointed out that Seniors are not well qualified to give constructive criticism or objective appraisal of their college experience while they are still in the midst of it. Also, the graduate "worksheets" which are sent to all graduates and former students annually get the same type of information in a more valid form. Mr. Leigh added that that
Senior Evaluation, Cont.

Evaluation Study being carried on under Dr. Eurich's direction is also covering this point, and in a far more thorough way than the EPC could hope to do. It was agreed to discontinue this survey.

Mr. Leigh described a method which he has used since the college started of obtaining opinion about the faculty from graduates and former students. The fall following graduation that are asked to submit a confidential report on all of the faculty, rating them as "should be retained at all costs," "satisfactory but not outstanding," or "unsatisfactory." This information is especially useful when faculty come up for long term contracts. The response to the questionnaire has been exceptionally good; one year it was one hundred per cent.

Graduate Associations

Since the EPC went into the problem of the Associations last year and has always had contact with them, the chairman asked Mr. Leigh to explain the present situation. He said that while the original form of organization will remain in effect until 1942 by decision of the Trustees, a new plan for the New York region is being superimposed on the existing form. A group of graduates living in and around New York want an organization which would assume three functions, (1) employment service, (2) raising funds for reduced tuition and building, and (3) school relations.

The officers of the Associations are going to meet in the Fall and work out plans for the next Association meetings at the college. The EPC should be prepared to cooperate with them at that time.

Freshman Orientation

Mr. Leigh asked about the program of Freshman orientation used this year and the EPC's role in it. This was explained by the secretary. He suggested that it might be wise next Fall to try having a series of meetings sponsored by the EPC, beginning a week or two after the joint Administration, Community Council and EPC sponsored meetings of the first week. In this series there could be detailed discussion of the educational policies and methods at Bennington. For example, a psychologist might be invited to come and discuss the psychological validity of the college program. The meetings could be for the whole community.

Mary Berna suggested that the Community Council and the EPC work jointly on this proposal, since much of the responsibility for conducting the orientation program belongs to the Council as well as the EPC. It was agreed to begin work on this problem immediately.

EPC Functions

Before the meeting adjourned, Mr. Leigh emphasized the fact that the EPC should keep clearly in mind its purely advisory capacity, and urged the committee to concentrate on doing a successful job of its main functions. He said that the general exploratory expeditions into difficulties which arise out of rumors often end with a frustrated feeling because the problem can perhaps be defined, but that is all. It is good to know that student groups are aware of such problems, he said, but they should not be discouraged by them. Instead the EPC should fulfill its concrete duties as thoroughly and efficiently as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35.

Respectfully submitted
Margaret Dudley, sec'y
REPORT ON STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION TO SENIOR DIVISION

May 1, 1940

This report was provoked by a need to clarify the rumors, opinions, and facts about the redefining of purpose of several majors to fulfill new requirements caused by change in the number and kind of students, and what relation the students of each major had to the whole educational policy of Bennington; whether there was a discrepancy between practice and theory.

We started by having a statement from each major explaining its standards for promotion to the senior division. Each statement emphasized the development in personality of the student and a general familiarity in her major field as the basis for judgement. We felt that there was an omission here of a point listed in the Bulletin as a requirement for admission, which is the exhibiting of real ability in one or more fields. Incorporating this would necessitate an objective minimum standard of ability for promotion, as well as the growth of the individual.

The nature of the Bennington system depends on a student's interest in a specific field or several fields which leads her to a deeper concentration of interest. If this concept of growth has any validity it must have a starting point or the end result exhibited in obtaining a degree will have no actual meaning except in relation to the individual.

Vida Ginsberg
Sylvia Thayer
Margaret Dudley
The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, May 15 at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg, Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Mary Berna and Margaret Dudley. Absent: Gloria Eksergian.

Freshman Orientation

The chairman explained the tentative plans for the first week of college next fall which she and the chairman of the Community Council worked out with Mr. Leigh. The role of the EPC was discussed, and it was suggested that divisional meetings be held at the end of this term for discussion of upperclassmen responsibilities. The committee members agreed to bring tentative outlines for the discussions at these meetings to the next meeting.

Annual Reports

The reading of the Annual Reports of all the committees at the Community Meeting in the Spring term was discussed. It was felt that the reports are neither well written nor well read, as a general rule. The information that they convey is important for the community to know, but it would be well to improve the method of presentation. It was agreed that next year the recommendation be made that (1) the Council and Central Committee reports be amalgamated, (2) the Community Chest and Store Board reports be given at another time, or only the bare essentials presented orally, and (3) that the reports be read by competent readers.

Graduate Associations

The chairman requested that divisional meetings of the Seniors be held next week at times best suited to the majors for election of the representatives on the graduate associations.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Dudley, sec'y.
The Educational Policies Committee met on Wednesday, May 22 at 6:30 o'clock in the Committee dining room. Present were Vida Ginsberg, Phoebe Arnold, Antoinette Larrabee, Sylvia Thayer, Elizabeth Plimpton, Gloria Ekesergian, Mary Berna, and Margaret Dudley.

Graduate Associations

The following girls have been elected as their class representatives on the graduate associations:

Art
Dance - Drama
Literature
Music
Science
Social Studies

Beatrice Brease
Margaret Myers
Barbara Fuller
Martha Erskine
Jean Wood
Mary Eddison

Freshman Orientation

Phoebe Arnold read a report summarizing the past meetings of the EPC with the Freshmen (see p. 31). The chairman pointed out that there will be only thirty-eight Seniors next year, and large Freshman and Sophomore classes. This means that a large responsibility rests on the older girls to guide the new students. It was suggested that divisional meetings might profitably be held at the close of this term to remind the present students of this responsibility. The committee agreed to plan these meetings individually and talk it over at the next meeting.

Registration

Discussion was held on the problem of wasted time and energy in getting schedules made out during the first week of college each year. An outstanding inefficiency is the fact that the faculty have to explain each of their proposed courses dozens of times to individual students. It was agreed that the EPC should hold divisional meetings next year for the Senior Division students, find out what courses they want, and report all the information to the faculty.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Dudley, secretary