

BENNINGTON COLLEGE
PRESIDENT (Parker)

Equal Opportunity Policy
Affirmative Action Program

October 1973

Attached is the Equal Opportunity Policy and Affirmative Action Program of Bennington College which reflects both the commitment of the College and the planning for realizing that commitment.

All of us, as members of the College community, share in the responsibility for making equal opportunity an actual, functioning condition of life at this College. To insure the effectiveness of the Affirmative Action Program I am taking personal responsibility for its management and will work closely with the Vice-President and the Dean of Faculty explaining and monitoring the procedures pertinent to the requirements of the program.

The procedural guarantees outlined in the following pages should insure that our recruitment processes will yield first-rate candidates, and that our review processes are conducted with a scrupulous regard for quality. An Affirmative Action Program which is put forth in a narrowly compensatory spirit will surely fulfill the dire prophecies of those who fear quotas and reverse discrimination. In contrast, the trustees of Bennington College conceive of this plan as one way of bringing the College closer to realizing its longstanding ideals of excellence, among them the ideal of an excellent diversity.

Gail Thain Parker
President

October 2, 1973

BENNINGTON COLLEGE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Bennington College that no discrimination because of race, age, color, religion, sex, or national origin, will exist in any area of the College. The College's policy includes, but is not limited to, the requirements of Federal Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, as amended, and of the State of Vermont's Fair Employment Practice Code (21 VSA, Section 495-495C). Bennington College will provide equal opportunity for all qualified and qualifiable persons, and will promote the realization of equal opportunity through positive, continuing programs.

The policy applies throughout the College organization and is the responsibility of all departments and personnel, supervisory and non-supervisory. The particular methods by which Bennington College will seek to implement its equal opportunity policy are outlined in the College's Affirmative Action Program.

BENNINGTON COLLEGE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM

Bennington College's Affirmative Action Program is a positive plan designed to provide equal opportunity and an atmosphere of nondiscrimination with respect to female and minority group personnel. Minority group people are defined in Executive Order 11246 as including Negro, Spanish-surnamed, American Indian, and Oriental Americans. The program is designed to increase materially the utilization of minority group persons and women in the College's work force, and the work forces of those with whom it contracts.

The Affirmative Action Plan provides for the prompt, fair, and impartial consideration of all complaints of discrimination in Bennington College, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin. Procedures for Consideration of complaints are established in supplements to the College's Faculty and Staff Handbooks. (Appendix A) Bennington College will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin. This College will take affirmative action to insure that all applicants receive fair consideration for employment, and that employees are treated fairly during employment, without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin. Such affirmative action will apply, but not be limited to, employment, upgrading, demotion, transfer, recruitment advertising, lay-off, termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeships. Notices of nondiscrimination will be posted in conspicuous places to be viewed by all employees.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

The final responsibility for administering the Affirmative Action Program is accepted by the President. The responsibility for assuring the success of Affirmative Action rests in the hands of each member of the Bennington community.

The Dean of the Faculty and the Vice President will be in charge of the reporting, communicating, and auditing systems of the program. Statistical reports designed to establish and maintain a flow of accurate information about recruiting and employment in general, and of minority persons and women in particular, will be prepared on a regular basis. Each person who is vested with responsibility to interview applicants for employment will be supplied proper forms to insure accurate record keeping and information flow to the Personnel Office and, in the case of faculty, to the Dean of Faculty's office.

Periodic "Progress Reports" will be filed with the President and Board of Trustees.

BENNINGTON COLLEGE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM
for
TRUSTEE AND NON-TRUSTEE APPOINTED PERSONNEL

The College's goal is to achieve a diverse faculty, staff, and Board of Trustees, capable of providing for excellence in the education of its students and for the enrichment of the College community. In seeking to fill openings, every effort will be made to recruit in such a way that women and individuals from minority groups will have an equal opportunity to be considered and appointed to these positions.

Goals and Programs to Attain Goals

Recruitment

In order for Bennington College to achieve the goals of its Affirmative Action Program to insure Equal Employment Opportunity, special effort will be made to structure and implement -- on a continuous basis -- programs designed to recruit, select, place and train qualified and qualifiable minority group members and women within all segments of its work force.

- a. The College's orientation program for new employees will include copies of the Affirmative Action Program. Discussion will be aimed at making new employees aware of their obligations (Appendix B).
- b. An orientation program will be established to make Division Secretaries and Department Heads aware of procedures, problems, and techniques involved in achieving the goals of the Affirmative Action Program and fulfilling its procedural requirements.
- c. All recruitment sources and advertising sources will be informed of the College's policy which requires discrimination-free recruitment and hiring practices. The College will request that each of the sources submit a letter informing it of policy and practice relative to equal employment opportunity for all. (Such information will determine those businesses, advertising media, employment agencies, etc. with which the College will have interaction and those with which it will not deal.)
- d. Letters will be sent to all recruitment sources and community action groups that may refer applicants for employment. This will be followed up by either a visit or a telephone call requesting specifically that they refer women and minority applicants for all job classifications.
- e. Other methods of recruiting minority group members will be explored. They will include, but not be limited to: direct contact with faculty members at predominately black colleges.

e. continued

Direct contact with associates and friends at various schools and those professionally active in the visual and performing arts. Direct contact with former undergraduates who may know of black or other minority graduate students who are about to complete their work, or of blacks or other minority professionals in the visual and performing arts. Direct contact with groups specifically oriented to and concerned with minority groups, including professional caucuses and associations and community organizations.

f. Other methods of recruiting women will be explored. They will include, but not be limited to: direct contact with associates and friends at various schools and those active in the visual and performing arts. Direct contact with former undergraduates who may know of women graduate students who are about to complete their work or of women professionals in the visual and performing arts. Direct contact with women's caucuses and other professional groups as well as community organizations and agencies which serve the interests and needs of women.

g. The College will broaden the use of newspapers and professional publications to ensure that our needs reach the minority population as well as an increased number of women. The words "Bennington College as an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer" will be included in all advertisements, manuals, pamphlets, and other published material.

Awareness

The College will periodically communicate information to employees designed to improve awareness of problems pertinent to minority persons and women.

Underutilization of Skills

The College will see that all staff members have opportunity for upward mobility within the organization. The College will develop procedures to see that where possible upgrading of the current staff is attempted before a position is filled from the outside.

- a. Periodic reviews under the direction of the Vice-President will be established to ensure that each employee, including minority persons and women, is given full opportunity for promotion, and to ensure that employees' skills are fully utilized. When a woman or a minority group employee is passed over in a promotion, justification will be required.
- b. A more thorough job posting system will be developed and implemented to ensure that all current employees are aware of and have the opportunity to apply for job openings within the College.

- c. Personnel records will include the history of service in the College in particular positions.
- d. The College will continue to have consistency and fairness in wages for employees in each job classification while reflecting individual variations in experience, skill, and performance.

Personnel Policies and Procedures

The College will publish clear and definitive statements of policies and procedures, and will ensure that Division Secretaries and Department Heads are aware of and operating within these policy guidelines.

Policy and procedure publications will include, but not be limited to, detailed information on aspects and functions of the College community which would affect and/or interest the employee, such as:

Reaffirmation of the College's Equal Employment Opportunity policy

Description of the College's benefit program for employees

Clearly defined grievance procedure

Procedure for promotion and transfer

Construction Vendors and Suppliers

Bennington College will include equal employment opportunity provisions in its construction contracts. These provisions reflect both the specific requirements and the principles of Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 as they relate to nondiscrimination.

Bennington College will affix to its purchase orders a general statement regarding the seller's responsibility for compliance with the non-discrimination clauses of Executive Orders 11246 and 11375. An effort will be made to identify minority businesses that might supply the needs of the College. Major contractors will be required to certify the existence of their Affirmative Action Program.

Equal Opportunities in Housing and Community Relations

The College will administer and inform faculty members of vacancies in College housing without regard to race, color, age, sex, religion, or national origin.

The College will encourage the involvement of faculty and staff, particularly members of minority groups and women, in community affairs.

Dissemination of Policy

It is vital that each member of the Bennington Community be aware of the Bennington College Affirmative Action Plan. Distribution, to all personnel and students, will be made of information about the College's Affirmative Action Program. An Affirmative Action activity file has been established and will be maintained and information about the Bennington Affirmative Action Program will be released periodically. In addition, briefing sessions will be held regularly with all persons involved in supervisory capacities to discuss current employment problems pertaining particularly to minority groups and women. Detailed information about both the complaint procedures and the positive procedural guarantees pertaining to employment at the College will be included in faculty and staff handbooks. The College's Equal Employment Opportunity statement will be posted on permanent bulletin boards throughout the College and Equal Employment Opportunity posters and other pertinent government sponsored posters will be displayed in areas of the College community where employees are likely to see them.

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ANALYSIS, GOALS, AND TIMETABLES

	<u>1970-71</u>	<u>71-72</u>	<u>72-73</u>	<u>73-74</u>
Number of regular faculty members	73	73	78	81
Number of women faculty members	14	16	18	22
Number of minority faculty members	2	4	2	7*
Number of teaching associates & assistants	11	14	19	22
Number of women associates & assistants	7	11	15	11
Number of minority associates & assistants	0	0	0	0

* Of this number one is a Spanish surnamed American male, one an Oriental woman, one a Negro woman, four Negro males.

The Recruitment of Women Faculty Members

The percentage of women on the Bennington College faculty has risen steadily in recent years to 27 per cent. We are helped in recruiting women by a number of factors, including a longstanding willingness to hire faculty members on a part-time basis with all the benefits and contractual guarantees of full-time faculty. The fact that a significant proportion of our instructors are not in traditional academic disciplines where the Ph.D (completed or virtually completed) has in recent years been a criterion for employment, but are instead in the visual and performing arts, should make it somewhat easier for us to find qualified women candidates than those institutions with narrower curriculums. Nearly 46 per cent of our faculty members are in the arts if the proportion is calculated in terms of the number of instructors. The proportion of full-time faculty "slots" in the arts is considerably lower because so many of these faculty members choose to teach part-time (e.g. one full-time position in music can be filled by two half-time faculty members). Nevertheless, while it may be more difficult to document discrimination against women in the arts than in graduate school an analysis of who gets the kind of professional training and professional recognition in the arts requisite for employment at Bennington College would almost certainly provide evidence of discrimination on the basis of sex.

A major disadvantage in recruiting women has been location. Bennington has not had an anti-nepotism rule for many years, on the other hand it has never had enough openings in any given year to make it easy to recruit academic couples. For professionals in the arts, the College's distance from a major metropolitan center is a drawback which may be an insuperable obstacle if family obligations have to be considered.

By a vigorous use of professional caucuses and personal contacts, we hope steadily to increase the proportion of women faculty at the College. Efforts

to discover employment opportunities within commuting distance for husbands, inexpensive and convenient living arrangements for part-time faculty coming from beyond easy commuting distance, a College run day-care center, all are presently provided and will continue to be provided.

The Recruitment of Minority Faculty Members

The number of minority faculty members at Bennington increased this year with the expansion of the Black Music program. Our ability to recruit minority faculty members, particularly those in the arts, is helped by our policy of according regular faculty status to part-time faculty members, making it possible for active professionals to commute to the College. But our ability to recruit minority academics, whatever their field, is seriously limited by our location. According to the 1970 census there were only thirty-three school age children classified as Negro in all of Bennington County with only six of these children enrolled in the town of Bennington. A black candidate for a faculty position might reasonably hesitate to relocate a family in southwestern Vermont. Our overwhelmingly white student body is another factor in discouraging minority candidates, although this is a situation that we are committed to improving. A copy of the trustee approved suggestions for aiding in the recruitment of minority students is attached. (Appendix C)

Associates and Assistants

With the exception of four language assistants who must be native speakers and who are recruited directly from overseas, the assistants and associates are clustered in the visual and performing arts where they give invaluable assistance to the regular faculty by taking responsibility for technical backup and/or by assisting in the actual instruction of students. Because these positions are created (and abolished) on the basis of specific need, they are most often filled by people who are already in the Bennington area. This is not invariably the case, however, and members of minority groups might reasonably be recruited to fill one or more of these positions. It would be extremely difficult to fix goals with timetables for a group that is redefined each year, expanding and contracting depending on student enrollment in specific areas. (See Appendix D for a definition of the teaching associate and assistant positions.)

Goals and Timetables

Bennington College's long range goal is to insure that the percentage of minority faculty members and the percentage of women faculty members is in line with the percentage of minority individuals and women in the official United States census figures. In other words, if 11.5 per cent of the population is black, we would hope in the future to have approximately eight regular faculty members who are black. At this time, of the seven minority faculty members at Bennington, five are black. Using the same reasoning, we would hope that the number of women on the faculty would gradually

rise to approximately forty. In neither case are these goals to be construed to mean upper limits. Because of the time of year we are submitting this proposal (October, 1973) our December, 1973 goals are represented by the progress we have made since academic year 1972-73.

number of women on faculty + 4

number of minority faculty + 5

In seeing goals for December, 1974, we have to be realistic about expected openings. The gradual increase in faculty size since 1970 reflects a slowly increasing student enrollment. It has been the plan of the trustees to increase the student enrollment to no more than six hundred. We have now reached that limit. Therefore, we cannot expect to establish new faculty positions with the support of new tuition monies, and must think solely in terms of replacements, although, of course, positions may be redefined while holding the total number of faculty members firm. This year the contracts of twenty-two regular faculty members are up for review. Of this number four already have presumptive tenure which is defined at Bennington as a series of five-year contracts. These faculty members are thoroughly reviewed every five years (the procedures are outlined in the faculty handbook, Appendix A) and the results of that review are conveyed to them. In the years that the College has operated with a presumptive tenure system, no one has failed to receive another five year contract. On the basis of past experience, our best estimate is that one or perhaps two of those without tenure and under review will not have their contract renewed. However, because each person who is not renewed is allowed one full year of employment after the year of his/her review, we cannot count on having these positions for 1974-75. We can count on one opening for 1974-75 as the result of a review conducted in the spring of 1973.

In addition to regular openings it is possible to estimate openings for one term or one year replacements. It is the policy of the College to replace those faculty members who are on leave (as distinguished from those on sabbatical), and although it is too early to have a precise count of those faculty who will request leaves for next year, a responsible estimate would be one. Moreover, one of those faculty members who has a regularly scheduled sabbatical next year will in fact have to be replaced for that term in the interest of the curriculum. This means that we can probably count on one or two openings for regular faculty members, and one or two openings for replacement (one term or one year) instructors with full faculty status.

Our goals for next year will be as follows. On the assumption that there will be two openings for academic year 1974-75 to be filled by faculty with initial three year contracts, our goal will be to hire at least one new minority faculty member and one new woman faculty member. Similarly, on the assumption of two openings in the category of replacement faculty our goal will be to hire at least one new minority faculty member and one new woman faculty member. If there are more openings than anticipated we

will try to do proportionately better, constantly keeping our long range goals in mind.

We realize that our short term goals inevitably raise the spectre of reverse discrimination, and therefore at this juncture we wish to reaffirm our commitment to excellence. If diversity among faculty members is to enrich the College community, that diversity cannot be achieved by sacrificing professional standards. It would be unconscionable for us to hire new faculty members for reasons which we could not honor in subsequent contract reviews.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
President		X
Vice-President	X	
Assistant to the President		X
Director of Alumni Giving & Alumni Services		X
Assistant for Development		X
Assistant for Publications & Public Information	X	
Assistant for the New York City office		X
Dean of Faculty	X	
Dean of Studies	X	
Assistant to the Dean of Studies		X
Registrar		X
Director of Admissions		X
Assistant Director of Admissions		X
Assistant to the Director of Admissions		X
Assistant to the Director of Admissions		X
Director of Business and Finance	X	
Director of Health Services		X
Psychiatric Counselor		X
Psychiatric Counselor		X
Psychiatric Counselor		X
Acting Director of Student Services	X	
Assistant for the Non-Resident Term		X
Assistant to the Director		X
Librarian	X	
Assistant Librarian		X
Reference-Circulation Librarian	X	
Director of Physical Plant	X	
Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds	X	

None of these administrators is a member of a minority group. The president and vice-president are appointed directly by the trustees, the two deans are chosen by the president from a list of three candidates (for each job) nominated by the faculty. Seven of the administrators listed above (six of them women) moved from lower job categories in the College to their present position.

Following our goal to achieve through affirmative action a community in which the percentage of women and minority individuals approximates nationwide census figures, we have met our goals for women in all administrative positions. Only by steadily increasing the proportion of women and minorities on the faculty can we increase the chances that one or both of the deanships will be held by women and/or minority individuals.

Theoretically we should not have to wait for the college community to evolve in order to satisfy our need to have minorities as well as women represented in the non-academic branch of the administration. Of the twenty-eight administrators, three (according to our goals) should be members of minority groups. Here the problems of recruitment are in many respects the same as the problems involved in recruiting minority faculty.

Location becomes an even more serious drawback. It is one thing to commute from an urban center and work two or three days during term time at the College, and quite another to work a five-day week, twelve months a year. Moreover, we cannot count on a regular turnover in administrative staff.

We will make every effort to recruit minority candidates for future administrative openings; however, it would be naive of us to imagine that we could count on recruiting experienced minority administrators, ready to assume full responsibility for any of these positions at the precise moment that an administrative position becomes open unless we plan ahead. Therefore, we intend to

- a. explore the possibility of joining with universities offering degrees in educational administration to significant numbers of minority students in such a way that we regularly employ their students in carefully designed internships.
- b. explore the possibility of running our own very modest internship program, recruiting candidates directly through college and university placement offices.
- c. in the process of working out an exchange program with predominately black colleges or universities, we intend to explore the idea of exchanging administrative personnel as well as students and faculty (see Appendix C).

Our analysis suggests that if we are to have any success in recruiting minority administrators, we are going to have to play an active role in training them for major responsibilities in collegiate administration. Insofar as Bennington has long pioneered in innovative higher education we believe that through internship and/or exchange programs we could not only make it possible to find and keep minority administrators ourselves, but could have a broader impact on higher education across the country.

Recruitment of Minority and Women Staff Other Than Faculty and Administrators

This category includes office and clerical workers, skilled craftsmen, semi-skilled operatives, unskilled laborers, and service workers. A breakdown of the number of employees in each category by sex, race, and national origin, can be found in our Equal Employment Opportunity Information Report (EEO-1), an extra copy of which is attached as Appendix E.

Bennington College is committed to recruiting faculty members and administrators from a nation-wide labor pool, and therefore our long range goals in these job categories reflect United States census figures (proportion of women to men, of minorities to non-minorities). However, our labor pool for filling other job categories is necessarily local.

The area from which we must look to recruit the non-managerial, non-professional portion of our labor force is Bennington County. The proportion of minority individuals in that population is 4/10 of one per cent (.004), a figure which does not take into account the number of individuals over 65 or under 18. Therefore, there is little possibility of hiring a significant number of minority individuals.

Bennington College's Affirmative Action Program can, however, be of great benefit in ensuring a) that the College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and b) that the College does not underutilize the employees it does have by failing to promote them to positions of higher responsibility.