

The administrative offices have been asked to describe to the community their services and functions. Here is such a description from the Admissions Office.

In the Bennington College Handbook 1967-1968 the Admissions Office is described as follows: "This office handles applications and interviews prospective students. The office works with the Faculty Admissions Committee in reaching its final decisions; it also counts on students to guide visitors and to discuss the college with prospective applicants and their parents when they visit the campus". This states the task of the office clearly but it gives no hint of the fat on the bones. What follows provides some of that.

Inquiries: Every inquirer writing to us for information gets a prompt and personal response, in spite of the fact that for weeks at a time in the fall months the office is required to handle between 75 - 100 pieces of mail a day. Responding to the mail is a vital activity since the bulk of our candidates initiate formal application through the mail, and even perhaps because of it. From the 5500 inquiries of last year came the 725 applications, 202 of which make up the group of students entering in September 1968.

Applications: An application is complete when the file contains: Preliminary Application, Personal Inventory, Personal History, Secondary School Report and Recommendation, Teacher Recommendation, College Entrance Examination Board scores, interview report. (A transfer application differs somewhat.) It is not necessary to describe the processing of an application, but it might be of some interest to know that there are thirty minutes worth of procedure to register simply the Preliminary Application Form.

Interviewing: All applicants are urged to visit the college for their interviews. Those living too far away to make the trip feasible are interviewed by alumnae. During the past year 692 interviews were held in the Admissions Office. (Most interviews require forty-five minutes to an hour to conduct and then record.) About 100 more applicants were interviewed by the admissions staff in New York, Washington, etc.

Travel: In addition to connecting to the outside world through the mails, members of the admissions office travel about the country visiting schools, meeting prospective students at alumnae teas, holding, and officiating at, guidance counselors' dinners, and attending professional meetings. Last year we visited about 175 schools. Alumnae, who are consistently helpful in arranging visits and chauffeuring, make it possible for us to visit four schools a day. Visiting a school ordinarily involves a talk with a guidance counselor or the head of a school and a session with a group of junior or first-term seniors. A report of the visit is written and filed in permanent school files in the admissions office.

Admissions Committee: The Admissions Committee is made up of three members of the teaching faculty, the Director of Admissions as chairman and the Director of the Student Personnel Office ex-officio. While the Committee is constituted as advisory to the Director of Admissions, in practice each member votes on applications to be accepted and to be refused. The Director reads all applications and the Committee members, reading in pairs, read up to one half of them. An application ordinarily has three readers, occasionally only two, and often five. Admissions Committee meetings are frequent both in full committee, or among three readers only. It is generally agreed that thirty minutes is required to read and evaluate one application.

Financial Aid: It is the Financial Aid Committee which considers the Parents' Confidential Summary of the College Scholarship Service, and determines the needed aid of an applicant. After all admissions decisions are made, those accepted and requiring aid are reconsidered by the entire Admissions Committee and it is at this point that the grants are allocated. There are always some accepted applicants we are unable to help.

Student Participation in Admissions: At one time, years ago, we included several seniors on the Admissions Committee. For various reasons their contributions could not be fruitful and the project was abandoned. The present Admissions Committee is eager to involve students, and it began working on a proposal for including students in its work last Fall. The proposal is in process now and will reach the President early this Fall.

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