

*appendix I*

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## The Bennington College Curriculum

The general aims of Bennington College have already been set forth in College publications. The reorganization of the College curriculum does not involve any major changes in our fundamental aims and purposes. A re-statement for purpose of clarification is indicated in the announcement of the new curriculum and also in the next catalog.

### Fields of Study

Bennington College offers instruction in the fields which can broadly be defined as follows:

- I. Literature and the humanities
- II. The sciences, which include biological, physical, and social sciences
- III. Political economy
- IV. Psychology and education
- V. The fine arts, under which is included the basic arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture along with drawing and design
- VI. The performing arts, under which is included (a) music, (b) dance and theatre, (c) drama

The Bennington College curriculum is divided into two categories within the broad fields of study outlined above:

- A. Studies in special knowledge and skills
- B. The basic studies

Studies in the special knowledge and skills consist of those studies which are designed to develop proficiency within the field of the student's particular interests and capabilities. These studies consist

of work in the studio, laboratory, workshop and in the field, as well as seminar and background courses which are requisite to the development of knowledge and skill in a particular field. The basic studies are those studies which are defined as basic to a knowledge and understanding of the culture of which the student is a part.

Bennington College students in both the Junior and Senior Division will carry on a program of work which includes work both in the basic studies and in the studies in special knowledge and skills. In the Junior Division the student and her counselor will make an individual program made up of work along the line of the student's main interest combined with courses in the basic studies. The highest degree of flexibility will be allowed the student and counselor in arranging individual programs.

Work in the special knowledge and skills will be organized along the following lines:

(1) Literature and the humanities

Courses and tutorial instruction will be given in prose, poetry, writing workshop, creative writing, and philosophy.

(2) Science

Courses in physics, mathematics, chemistry, biology, nutrition, human biology, medical and nursing prerequisites, laboratory techniques, health, hygiene and first aid will be offered in science. Social science will also come under this general heading with offerings of work in statistics and methodology, sociology and survey technique.

### (3) Political economy

Courses in government, economics, and history will be developed under the heading of political economy. These will follow very much the pattern of the present offerings in these fields. Social philosophy might also be included under this heading.

### (4) Psychology and education

General course in psychology along with special work in child psychology, child development, the history of education, and educational philosophy.

### (5) The fine arts

The special instruction in the fine arts will be centered around painting, sculpture, and architecture, and work will be given, as it now is, in printing, design, and drawing. The work in the fine arts, however, will be centered around the three basic disciplines outlined above.

### (6) The performing arts

#### (a) Music

The work in music will be centered, as it now is, on instrumental music and musical theory. More emphasis will be given to group music as embodied in the orchestra and the chorus, but apart from this the present structure will remain.

#### (b) Dance and theatre

The work in the dance will remain as it now is. Instruction in the theatre will be separated from drama and will include work in theatre design, stagecraft, and the general principles of the non-representational theatre.

## (c) Drama

Courses will be offered in technique of acting, dramatic forms, production and directing. Drama workshop will continue to be a feature of the instructional program.

The Basic Studies

The basic studies will consist of courses which are defined as basic to an understanding of and participation in our culture. These courses will include work in the humanities and literature which represent the experience of Western civilization. They will also include a knowledge and understanding of the development of science and technology and the importance of science and technology in our contemporary life. They will also include work in political economy and the American tradition.

The questions to be raised in connection with the basic courses are: (1) The survey course versus the basic texts; (2) the importance of cultural values versus knowledge; (3) the question of whether a common method should underlie the basic courses in all fields. From a broad point of view the basic studies could be regarded as training in "citizenship" or politics if we take the classic conception of politics.

The Junior Division and the Counselor

All students in the Junior Division will be under the general supervision of a counselor who will be responsible for supervising and directing the student's program and giving her general guidance. A Junior Division Personnel Committee will link the work of these counselors together under the general supervision of the Director of Student Personnel. The Junior Division Personnel Committee shall consist of the Director of Student Personnel as chairman and four other Junior Division counselors

appointed by her. They may call on other Junior Division counselors for the discussion of particular student problems.

#### The Senior Division and the Tutors

Promotion to Senior Division will be made by the Educational Policies Committee of the faculty and the decision on promotion will be made on the basis of two considerations: (1) her work in the studies of special knowledge and skills, and (2) her work in the basic studies. Within the first six weeks after admission to Senior Division a student will be required to select a major. The student's work in the Senior Division will be under the supervision of a tutor who is an instructor in the special field of her interest. The Senior Division majors may be outlined as follows:

Poetry	}	Literature and the humanities
Prose		
Narrative		
Drama		
Philosophy		

Biological science	}	The sciences
Physical science		
Mathematics		
Social science		

Economics	}	Political economy
Government		
History		

Psychology	}	Psychology and education
Child development		
Education		

Painting	}	The fine arts
Sculpture		
Architecture		

*Graphic arts*

Music - piano, strings,	}	The performing arts
voice, composition		
Dance and theatre		
Drama		

*Design*

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11/27/41

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