

To: The Community
From: Edward J. Bloustein
Subject: The Current Status of our Discussion Thing



1. The College's Board of Trustees will meet this Friday and Saturday to exercise their primary responsibility in deciding on next year's budget, a decision which must necessarily reflect consideration of the possibility of tuition rise and the possibility of an enlargement of the student body and the faculty. In deciding on the budget, I am certain they will be helped greatly by the intense period of discussion which has taken place on campus this last month and a half since I circulated my "Budgetary Options" memorandum.
2. To help the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board (Mrs. Emmet and Mrs. Mortimer) to understand the substance and tone of the discussion which has been going on, I have asked them, and they have agreed, to come to the campus two days before the Board meeting in order to talk directly with faculty and students. They arrived today. A schedule of their meetings and interviews is currently being worked out by Miss Stewart and Mrs. Tate.
3. The full Board will have dinner with the Faculty and Student Educational Policies Committees on Friday evening and on Friday afternoon these two groups will meet with the Board of Trustees sitting as a committee of the whole on educational policy. As many members of the Board as are able to be present have also been invited to meet with the College Community Council on Thursday evening and representatives of other faculty and student committees will be meeting with their counterpart Trustee committees during the Board meeting as well.
4. This afternoon the full faculty will begin the first of a series of weekly meetings which will be addressed to the question of educational change at the College. The full faculty will continue to hold meetings on this question until it has reformulated the educational program of the College. I understand that the Student EPC will also be organizing a period of student discussion of the educational program and that it intends to use a questionnaire to sound student opinion. Although primary responsibility in the area of the educational program is vested in the faculty, I am certain they will be anxious to have the best judgment of the student body on these issues.
5. Each of the teaching divisions has also been urged to re-examine its teaching program. A number of the Divisions have already begun doing so with fine results, I believe. I am certain those divisions which are rethinking their programs will consult divisional EPC representatives and others concerning the proposals they are considering.
6. Thus, we are presently launched on a discussion of fundamental educational changes at this College. Most of us have the feeling that such changes are long overdue, even though we disagree about what they should be. We've discussed and discussed our differences; now we must attempt to accommodate them and take action to make the college a more sound and fulfilling educational community.

Bennington College
May 16, 1969

April