

Bennington College
October 10, 1951

Memorandum

To: Mr. Belitt, Secretary, Literature Faculty
From: Charlotte Bowman

I am in the process of assembling for review by the EPC plans made by each of the faculty groups for reviewing student work in accordance with action taken at a faculty meeting on December 13, 1950 as follows: VOTED that the senior committees as now constituted be abolished and the student's competence and achievement within her major field be assessed in accordance with procedures established by the various divisions.

The Secretary of the literature faculty addressed a memorandum to the Faculty EPC on April 12, 1951 outlining procedures which had been adopted by the literature faculty (Miss Sherwood must have a copy of this memorandum if you do not). The EPC discussed the memorandum on April 18 with the following members of the literature faculty present: Mr. Stange, Mr. Nemerov, Mrs. Foster, Mr. Burke, Mr. Simcox. The EPC raised a number of questions. First, it was suggested that items a and b be reversed. With regard to the qualification paragraph, Mr. Stange said this was meant to cover preliminary inquiry to be made by students anytime during their first two years. It was agreed during the meeting to change the provision under this item to read: "Students who wish to major in literature are well advised to consult with a member of the literature faculty before drafting senior division plans." With regard to the rest of the memorandum: Members of the EPC felt that provision should be made for reviewing the entire plan for major work (i.e., course work as well as project) and for certifying to the Senior Division Committee that all major work was satisfactorily completed. During the meeting Mr. Stange said he thought it was the view of the literature faculty that advice on course plans and decision as to whether the total program and accomplishment justify certification for satisfactory completion of major work in literature could be left to the counselor. Members of the EPC objected to leaving this responsibility to a single member of the faculty. During the meeting it was suggested that a statement be included in the literature faculty procedure to the effect that the plan of a proposed literature major would be examined by the literature faculty before its submission to the Senior Division Committee and that ^{the literature} faculty as a whole ^{would} assume responsibility for certifying that the total accomplishment in literature was satisfactory. The Minutes do not show that there was any agreement that the literature procedure should be changed in these respects.

Members of the EPC recognized that the large divisions-- particularly literature and social science--would find it difficult to perform all of the work they should take care of in view of the abolition of senior committees and it was suggested that these large divisions would probably find it necessary to set up a sub-committee or sub-committees to handle the jobs. I believe social science is doing something like this. Some of the faculties have set up formal demands on students who wish to be admitted as majors. It was understood at the April EPC meeting that the literature faculty thought this unnecessary in its field.

Mr. Belitt, Secretary, Literature Faculty, 10-10-51, #2

Could you let me know whether the literature faculty wishes to submit a revised procedure to the EPC for its consideration at a meeting to be held within the next few weeks for the discussion of the procedures established by all faculty divisions?