

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
of the City University of New York

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE ON INSTRUCTION - 3/13/69

Present: W. Sokolsky, Chairman  
I. Berger, D. Canty, M. Chang, D. Frank, M. Glacy,  
A. Lessard, D. Lowenthal, S. Wilkofsky and J. Sztacho.  
(The Chairman indicated that although invited, no  
students were in attendance.)

The meeting was called to order at 12:40 p.m. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with the following corrections: (i) On the second line of the fourth paragraph, the phrase "material written by faculty members" should read "material that may be of use to the faculty." (ii) On the third paragraph from the bottom, beginning with "Prof. Canty ...", the last line should read "at the New Faculty Orientation meeting on May 1 and possibly also on May 22."

The Chairman, Prof. Sokolsky, suggested that the Committee draft a request to ask the Deans to do something about the miserable ventilation of the Jerome Avenue Center. The Concourse Center likewise has the same problems - noise from adjoining classrooms, inadequate space and so on.

Prof. Sokolsky read a memorandum from Prof. Terry in reply to his request for space in the Library for pedagogical material. Space is a luxury now, and there is none for this purpose, although the Library will feature some of the material on pedagogy in a future section of the Library News, answered Prof. Terry. In response to his letter to departmental chairmen asking that a separate departmental meeting be devoted to pedagogical questions, Prof. Sokolsky said that a few chairmen had contacted him to say that they would handle it according to their separate needs.

The Chairman next announced that Miss J. Katz, Prof. P. Gell Gelb and Prof. A. Hirshfield were appointed by him to a subcommittee to investigate the possibility of giving an annual "Great Teacher Award." This subcommittee decided that its first step ought to be to ascertain the extent of student interest in the proposal and for that purpose drew up a questionnaire. Prof. Sokolsky also suggested that the first award be limited only to those not on tenure so as to avoid granting the award on the basis of longevity of service. A lengthy discussion ensued in which the following points were made:

- (i) Why should the Award be limited to those not on tenure?
- (ii) Who is to do the judging? The students? The 3 members of the subcommittee? Would not this be in contradiction to the Departmental P & B Committee at times?
- (iii) What criteria are to be used?
- (iv) If the students are to judge, what kind of students? the present ones? the Alumni?
- (v) What role should the students play in such an award?
- (vi) How do the other institutions do this?
- (vii) Perhaps we should change the title of the award.
- (viii) There may be more harm than good in instituting such an award.
- (ix) We can never find out who is "great".
- (x) We may degenerate into using other criteria such as politics, popularity etc.
- (xi) The "great teacher" is different from the "great lecturer". Some instructors are exposed to only a few students. Lecturers are exposed to many students. If the number of students count, the person exposed to a small class will not stand a chance.
- (xi) As a Faculty we are all equal. Who can judge another member of the Faculty?
- (xiii) We don't want a power-group who is in a position to give "gifts" in the form of honors or awards.
- (xiv) Why not have a citation or many citations per year?

Prof Jerry

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- (xv) Do we want an award anyway?
- (xvi) Let us vote on this in another meeting by secret ballot.

It was finally agreed that it is permissible to list (without imposing or judging) some standards of effective teaching, to be distributed to the Faculty. Prof. Wilkofsky volunteered to draw up such a list of characteristics of effective teaching to be discussed at the next meeting.

The Chairman read an announcement from the State Education Department with regard to a Summer Conference in Maine in mid-August for 100 to 150 instructors who will be exposed to three or four days of dialogue on effective teaching.

Before the meeting adjourned, the rest of the time was devoted to the question: "In what way can we improve instruction at B.C.C.?"

The following ways were mentioned:

- (i) Setting aside a day to discuss effective teaching.
- (ii) Learning the questioning technique.
- (iii) Use of television facilities. See oneself in action.
- (iv) A two-to-three-day workshop in pedagogy, as done in the Nursing Department.
- (v) A discussion of testing - oral testing and written testing.
- (vi) Getting an outside speaker - a specialist in the field of education.
- (vii) Inviting students to say what they think.

At 1:35 p.m. it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mabel L. Chang*

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Secretary