

PHILIPPINE NORMAL COLLEGE CURRICULA

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It is difficult to describe adequately the curriculum, and much more so the curricula, of any institution if the term "curricula" is given its most comprehensive and professionally acceptable meaning. For if we conceive of the curriculum as the total pattern of experiences engaged in by pupils and students under the guidance of teachers and utilized by the school to attain the ends of education, no adequate pictures of such fluid and changing situations as young people's experiences and activities under such guidance can be satisfactorily given in words. One has to be in the midst of these ongoing experiences and activities for some considerable length of time and has to observe the behavior of students with an open and inquiring mind before he can hope to have an adequate picture or satisfactory grasp of the school curriculum. Within the brief compass of this article, I shall therefore attempt to present sketchily only the general and common objectives of all curricula in the Philippine Normal College and a few special features of its teacher-education program.

With the conversion of the Philippine Normal School into a degree-granting institution as provided by Republic Act. No. 416, the new College is bound, by the letter and spirit of its charter, to prepare leaders in elementary education. At the same time, it is enjoined to continue offering the two-year general normal curriculum and the three-year combined

general and home-economics curriculum. Besides the four-year curriculum leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education (B.S.E.E.), the College will also offer courses for the degree of Master of Arts in Education. Plans are also under way to ~~to~~ provide a four-year curriculum leading to the B.S.E.E. degree with home economics as a major field of specialization.

One of the major problems of curriculum development in the Philippine Normal College springs from the fact that the four-year curricula are continuations of the two-year general or the three-year combined curriculum, which must remain terminal so that its graduates could go to the field as legally qualified teachers. Thus the curriculum makers in the College have had to adjust their sights to two types of teachers—the graduate of the four-year B.S.E.E. curriculum, and the two-year or three-year curriculum graduate, who must also be adequately-prepared for elementary school teaching. Graduates of the two-year general or the three-year combined curriculum could continue in the corresponding four-year curricula and normally complete the requirements for the B.S.E.E. degree within two years or one year, respectively.

The objectives of Philippine Normal College curricula have been determined by the kind of teachers needed in our public elementary schools. The Bureau of Public

Schools has adopted the policy of making public schools community schools. The Philippine Normal College accordingly regards it as a solemn obligation to educate prospective teachers for such community schools. Now, a school is a community school to the extent that it (1) educates youth through and for participation in basic life activities, (2) works to democratize life in and out of school, (3) operates as a community-service center for youths and adults, (4) cooperates actively with other social agencies and groups to improve community living, (5) employs community resources in the educational program, and (6) prepares teachers for community leadership. The new type of teacher being educated in the Philippine Normal College will therefore be not only a classroom teacher of children and adults but an intelligent instrument for social action. She must be proficient (1) in taking part in and in leading group thinking, (2) in selecting and utilizing community resources for improving the educational program, (3) in observing and guiding the learning of children as well as of adults, (4) in developing and planning curricula in cooperation with learners and other interested groups, (5) in evaluating educational programs, (6) in interpreting those educational programs to the people, and (7) in fulfilling her own needs as a well-balanced social personality.

In keeping with the foregoing objectives, more and more emphasis is being given in teaching-learning situations to training in group thinking, reducing dependence upon traditional "recitation" methods, and relying more upon

committee work, group study seminars, forums, panel discussions, etc. The development of social insights and appropriate social behavior is the special concern of the courses in rural sociology, community analysis, Philippine social life and culture, and contemporary civilization, although many other courses are also expected to contribute to this area of growth. Courses in child and educational psychology, general and special methods of teaching, audio-visual education, guidance and counseling, curriculum development, educational measurement and evaluation, fundamental and adult education, philosophy of education, administration and supervision, the Philippine educational system, public relations, physical education and practice teaching or internship, provide the professional preparation of the future progressive educational leader. Her general education comprises almost fifty per cent of all credits to be earned. Under this head, she has two in English grammar and composition, six in literature (including mythology and the short story, the novel, the drama, poetry, the essay, and the biography), two courses in health (personal, community, and mental), two courses in science (physical and biological), one course in fundamental mathematics, two courses in music, one in art education, one in the practical arts (including elementary agriculture), and approximately six semester units in physical education. Extra-curricular activities like work on the college paper, membership in class and other organizations, participation in Literary-musical programs, attendance at convocations and special lectures, and the weekly Social Hour held

at the close of the afternoon session on Fridays, help to round off the personality of the future teacher.

Of special interest is the scheme of student teaching and internship in the second or third year of the Lower Division and in the fourth year. Present arrangements provide student teachers with actual practice teaching experiences in the Training Department of the College and in off-campus cooperating schools in the Division of City Schools for an entire semester either in the morning or in the afternoon, student teachers reporting in the College for their academic courses the rest of the day. While in off-campus training classes the student teachers work under conditions approximating the traditional set-up in the field, the work in the Training School on the campus provides experiences in more progressive arrangements because Training Department classes have periods for integrated pupil activities in addition to periods for developing fundamental skills. To give student teachers a genuine "feel" of school-community problems and situations, it is planned to release them from academic work in the College for a period of ten weeks which they are to devote exclusively to practice teaching, part of that time in the Training Department and the rest in public schools in rural communities where they can have full-time, responsible teaching and, in the case of those graduating from the B.S.E.E. curriculum, under-study work in supervision and administration. This latter arrangement will require student teachers to live for a number of weeks in

rural communities so that they can have first-hand acquaintance with rural community processes and resources and an active part in effecting school-community collaboration.

The facilities of the College for audio-visual education have increased to an extent whereby it is now possible to run instructional films and film strips for practically all classes and for the varying needs of the different departments. The cooperation of the United States Information Service in this regard has been very helpful, especially in loaning to the College educational films of telling pertinence to the various courses. The College, however, is building up its own supply of films and audio-visual equipment which, through some kind of cooperative service in the future, may be loaned at nominal rates to other institutions.

The Philippine Normal College curricula so sketchily described in the foregoing paragraphs are undergoing and are bound to undergo continuous evaluation and revision. The Curriculum Committee of the College Council has been at work to improve curricular offerings further. The trend in their work has been definitely towards integration, by which it is hoped undue duplication of subject matter will be reduced to a minimum and the curricula made more truly adequate in preparing teachers for the new educational arrangements basic to the concept and operations of the community school. The Curriculum Committee has taken the position that it need not be fettered by tradition. It is willing to blaze new trails in teacher education to attain the objectives of the Philippine Normal College.