

- The importance of personal values and strong academic discipline must be realized in teacher training. Filipino teachers will find this article stimulating.

## PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

As one reads the various reports and recommendations, one often becomes confused but also happy to see that educators are not satisfied with the status quo but are searching for ways and means of improving teacher education. Teaching must be looked upon as a discipline with its own structure, key concepts, principles, and generalizations. It is time to look at Koerner's following statement as a challenge:

"Education as an academic discipline has poor credentials: Relying on other fields, especially psychology, for its practical substance, it has not yet developed a corpus of knowledge and techniques of sufficient scope and power to warrant the field's being given full academic status."

In teacher education the question of values is exceedingly crucial, for it is the prospective teacher who will be given the responsibility

and the privilege of transmitting, maintaining, and improving the best elements of the culture of the country. If he is to be successful in fulfilling this important role in the classroom, he must first have the opportunity in his student teaching to practice the professional values related to students and colleagues. The hopes and aspirations for a better world may be most fully realized in the area of human relations. It will be one of the means for finding solutions to the many problems of this technological world marked by ideological conflicts, riots, war, crime, delinquency, and hallucinatory drugs. Since society has created these problems, it is up to man to work cooperatively toward solving them. The world is looking to the schools, as an agent of society, to use all its professional knowledge and resources in bringing about solutions.

Probably there has been no time in the history of teacher education when there has been greater emphasis on the *scholarly teacher*. Great stress is placed on general education and areas of specialization in the various academic disciplines. This is commendable for the teacher of today must have the knowledge and understanding to participate in the intellectual climate of his profession. It is heartening to see many subject matter specialists and college professors becoming increasingly concerned in the *how, the what, and the why we teach*, and sharing their ideas with the professional educator.

Along with this emphasis on the various disciplines has come a downgrading of professional courses. Much of the criticism (against Education) is justified. We have tended, in the past, to make many of the Education courses repetitious. All too often they were so far removed from the classroom that students could not see any relationship. Methods courses and supervision of student teachers have been assigned to professors who

have had little or no experience in elementary or secondary schools.

Numbers of teachers take education courses only because they will lead to a credential or an increase in salary. No effort is made to apply the knowledge to the classroom. Other teachers seem to lack the initiative to try the new. They find it more comfortable to leave the research and the application to someone else.

Teach teaching, non-graded classroom, programmed instruction, and television cause feelings of insecurity and fear in many. In addition, many excellent teachers are bound to the old by administrative policies that tend to limit rather than encourage inquiry and research. Regardless of the restrictions and limitations imposed on teachers and the curriculum, how ever, all teachers can contribute to the professional values related to students and colleagues.

The soundness and success of any program is dependent upon the quality of the entire staff — administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals. It is here that professional values must become

the key values as we work with the prospective teacher and the beginning teacher. As is generally known, one is not born with a set of values, but they are learned. Since values are learned, it is the duty of every teacher to serve as a model or identification figure for the education student. The student should be able to see these personal professional values practiced in the classroom, the playground, the teachers' lounge, faculty meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and the community. Consciously and unconsciously the student teacher imitates and identifies with the school personnel and particularly the supervising teacher. The student teacher notes the interaction process that takes place between student and teacher as the effective teacher demonstrates his sincere respect for the individual child so that the student can experience a feeling of self esteem and personal fulfillment.

When concern for others, cooperativeness, creativity, respect for authority flourish in a classroom environment, then there is the potential for high standards of excel-

lence. Most beginning teachers and students in education are idealists and have chosen teaching because they consider it one of the truly great professions. It is always saddening when all too often they become disillusioned during student teaching or the first year of teaching and leave the profession when they have so much to give the children and youth of our land.

The student teacher and the beginning teacher imitate and identify with the teacher not only in his work with children in the curricular and co-curricular activities but also in his relationships with colleagues. It appears today that there is a needless amount of jealousy and pettiness existing in school faculties ranging all the way from the elementary school through college. Much of the action is overt, and students are puzzled by the bitterness, vindictiveness, and lack of professional ethics. So-called friends are used to gain promotion and then dropped as soon as the goal has been reached.

One sometimes gets the impression that many teachers are more concerned about

their own self-glorification than the students they teach. Studies that have been made of college students indicate that this lack of interest and concern on the part of their teachers is one of the most critical problems these students face and in many instances leads tragically to suicide. Student teachers and beginning teachers should have opportunities to witness mutual respect demonstrated among all members of the school staff. Teaching is more than working within the confines of a classroom, for it must include working with the whole staff in creating a social climate that encourages a free exchange of ideas, where one is stimulated to give the best to the youth of this space age.

How easy it is to take the time to stop by a fellow teacher's door and compliment him for something he has done. Yet how often does one take the time to do this? Remember that teachers need recognition as much as the children they teach. Then there is the

courtesy that one should show the student teacher and the beginning teacher in making them feel welcome when they join a new faculty.

Through example, one must demonstrate to the student teacher that learning cannot end when he gets a degree or a credential but that he must be a student of the times. This includes reading assiduously about current happenings on the local and international scene. The burgeoning of knowledge forces all to keep abreast of the research and clinical studies being done and then to be willing to modify methods and techniques to meet the needs of the modern emerging society. Teachers must cultivate a sincere respect for new ideas; show that they know the major modes of inquiry; and indicate a willingness to participate in the professional activities that will improve the process of teaching and learning. — *By Florence Schmidt in The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, Spring 1968.*