THE STUDENT PERSONNEL CURRICULUM - A PROPOSAL

Susan Stockbeek

The area of student personnel is complicated by the diversity of institutions in higher education, society's vast influence over the college student today, and the gradual relaxation of the in loco parentis philosophy, which up until the last few years had given the field an added purpose. Training for student personnel workers must be flexible enough to meet the needs of these many different types of colleges and universities. The program should attempt to educate the prospective student personnel worker in a thorough understanding of the young adult with whom he will be working. In addition it must substitute for the "protective" philosophy of old.

Perhaps one way to make a student personnel training program meet these qualifications is to give it a strong academic foundation. It might be advisable to remove the program from a school of education and make it the responsibility of the sociology or psychology department. Allowing for a master's degree in either one of the mentioned fields, with a minor elected in student personnel or some facet of higher education would be a consideration for a new structure. At least one year of internship in an office of student personnel on the campus would be required. The alternative would be a year in the residence halls. In the residence hall internship the student would be taking a credit practicum under the instruction and rigorous supervision of his head counselor, who would use substantial material such as case studies and relevant problems from the residence hall experience.

There are several practical advantages for giving the training program more academic backing. It would make the student personnel worker less of a generalist and more of a specialist in a field that is supported by more research and fewer opinions. It would do away with the stigma often associated with an "education" degree. If the student personnel worker should choose, and in fact such a plan might be advantageous, he would teach part time in his major field. Such an arrangement would put him in direct contact with more students and give him a built-in empathy for their classroom problems.

Providing the program with a firmer academic base seems to be the logical direction for the training to move. Since the type of student personnel position varies so much from institution to institution, it more or less forces the worker to gain the majority of his competency through experience on the job. While present student personnel training is able to offer basic tools which will guarantee, at least, minimal professional success, it is a fact that no profession, course, or program can teach sensitivity, empathy, and responsibility, or any of the qualities desirable for people who help other people. With these two facts in mind it might be necessary to encourage a training program that emphasizes an academic discipline, such as psychology or sociology, with the hope that this background will give the personnel worker a scientific understanding of human behavior.

CANDIDATES FOR PLACEMENT

Thirty members of the residence hall counseling staff will receive their degrees in Higher Education or Student Personnel Administration in June or August and will be seeking placement in the field.

1960 Doctoral Degree Candidates

Miss Betty Jarrah, A.B., Indiana University; A.M., Roosevelt University; Ed.D., Indiana University (Higher Education); Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy; residence hall administration, University of Florida, Indiana University; teaching experience.

Dr. Larry Miltenberger, B.S., M.S., Ed.D., Indiana University (Higher Education); residence halls administration, Ball State University, Indiana University; teaching experience.