

ALVERNO COLLEGE
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

August 2, 1969

Dear Faculty Member:

Periodically students and instructors in any educational situation seem to need renewal. The routine of classes, lectures, research papers, extensive reading, bogs down. A time for re-examination of goals and purposes can lead to a renewed enthusiasm for the hard work of the learning process. During such a period of renewal, minor innovations can have tremendous implications for approaching classes with new attitudes. We are all aware of this phenomenon.

Largely as a result of discussion begun at the Faculty Institute in May, plans are being made for a very special session to be held on the first three days of the semester, September, 1969. The major focus of these three days will be the mutual responsibility of students and faculty in the educational process, with a re-examination of what the learning process is all about.

To begin immediate preparation for these three days, a meeting was called on July 11 and 12. About twenty-five students and seven faculty members who last May had indicated an interest in doing some ground work to organize this venture were able to attend. The plans described here are the result of a day and a half of brainstorming.

On September 3, to open the three day session, tentatively designated as "September, '69", we will have a meeting of the entire faculty and student body for the sharing of an initial experience. The purpose of this gathering is fostering enthusiasm for learning as a creative process. The question of the student's individual responsibility in her own education will be raised.

Following the initial experience, which is a time for raising questions, there will be an opportunity for practical answers. Classes will meet in special extended sessions roughly approximating the kind of schedule used for semester examinations. These initial class meetings are envisioned as ice-breaking sessions. The students will have an opportunity to meet you as other than a source of information in a particular discipline, and you will have an opportunity to meet the students as other than a pair of eyes and a hand pushing a pen. Actually this is only a secondary aim of the extended class session. Primarily the sessions are designed as an educational venture in class planning. We believe that the burden of mapping out a particular course and deciding on class procedure should be shared by students and instructors instead of falling solely on the teacher.

If the experiment in learning planned for the opening of the fall semester is to be a success, if it is to rekindle the vital spark of enthusiasm for learning, if it is to have repercussions throughout the entire academic year, the cooperation of everyone involved in the educational process at Alverno is required. Students are being informed of their responsibility in this venture. We are counting on them. We are counting on you.

Sincerely,

The Committee on Communications

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