

Earley relates valuing and ethics in D.C. sabbatical

"Systematic ethics and the valuing process as we teach it at Alverno are really two quite different things," says Margaret Earley, Professor of Religious Studies, who, last Spring, took a sabbatical leave to study ethics at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. "Valuing encompasses many more dimensions, both cognitive and affective, than the primarily logical and rational bases of systematic or philosophical ethics."

Reflecting on ten years of experience in looking at the valuing process and learning how to teach it, Earley points out that many of our ideas as college educators about how people make moral and ethical decisions have been derived inductively from our teaching practice, as well as from bodies of systematic theory. "The various rational, emotional, and volitional components of valuing became clearer as we engaged in the process with our students."

Relationship to Other Theories

In recent years, members of the Valuing Competence Department have worked with other theories as well, particularly theories of intellectual and moral development. "In some ways they have confirmed what we have learned inductively," says Earley, "and we continue to explore aspects of models in order to address student development holistically."

One relationship which the Valuing Department was interested in expanding was that between valuing and systematic ethics. "Since my graduate studies were in theology, I had never really had the opportunity to do much research in the field of philosophical ethics. Gradually, however, it became apparent that if we were to develop a comprehensive model



for valuation, it would have to incorporate systematic ethics more explicitly." Her sabbatical leave provided the opportunity to move towards this objective.

Sabbatical

Earley narrowed her choices of a research site to the Hastings Center in New York and the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University in Washington, two of the country's leading research centers in the field of ethics. "Both have fine resources and a number of world-renowned ethicists in residence," Earley notes, "but I finally chose the Kennedy Institute because of its growing concern for the applications and implications of ethical theory, particularly in the area of public policy."

As a Visiting Scholar at the Kennedy Institute, Earley participated in a series of seminars on ethics and public policy. The primary objective of the sabbatical, however, was an independent project titled, "The Integration of Philosophical Ethics and Moral Development

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Dean's Notes:

Dear Colleagues:

In this second issue of the newsletter, we are still "catching-up" with the activities of the faculty. Because the conceptual work of the faculty has developed from a strong base and expands to include both new ideas and new colleagues, it is possible to observe it at different stages and to communicate its dynamic quality. This issue cites several notable examples of such ongoing intellectual ventures.

By highlighting the research work of Margaret Earley and Georgine Loacker and their respective colleagues, we also call attention to the annual college workshops in Valuing and Assessment to be offered again this summer.

These workshops enable Alverno faculty to "go public" with each year's ongoing research and to disseminate it in a context of critical dialogue with peers from other institutions.

Collaboration for the purpose of improving the quality of our work is becoming a faculty hallmark. The activity of the music faculty described in this issue is illustrative of this growing trend.

Responses to the first issue of the newsletter assure us that you find reading about your peers informative and stimulating, that you want to know more, and that you are willing to write for the newsletter.

With the original editor, Mark Hein, now in Saudi Arabia, James Roth, Assistant Professor of History, has put on a journalist's hat, writing the articles and interviewing Robert Birney on his observations about foreign study.

I invite those of you who wish to author an article to contact me for suggestions. We have a list of faculty research and projects which are scheduled for the next few issues.

Sincerely,

Austin Doherty

same place as being stuck, or you can see your relationship to an organization or community as the essential elements of your life satisfaction.

AEN: Is there anything else we can learn from the Chinese and Japanese?

RB: Yes. It's related to the mobility question. For many years, as a result of our rapid growth, we took pride not in what we were doing at any given time, but in our ability to advance to a new level. The Chinese and Japanese are more oriented toward pride in what they are currently doing. Americans are probably going to have to accept slower movement within professional development and learn to receive more satisfaction from the opportunities that are available to them.

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Theory for the Construction of a Foundational Model in Valuing."

Earley studied basic research in the fields of theoretical and applied ethics and then worked to incorporate these perspectives in the creation of a comprehensive instructional model of ethical valuing theory.

According to Earley, "It was not simply a matter of inserting the dimension of systematic ethical thought within the framework of our valuing process or of moral development theory. The exposure to ethical research helped me to rethink some of the models we have been working with. And, of course, my familiarity with valuing as a complex cognitive, affective and behavioral process led me to raise questions about the more formal philosophical systems.

"In one sense, it might have been easy to be critical of the 'issue and crisis' orientation of applied ethics from the standpoint of how well it assists the individual to make habitual moral and ethical decisions, before and after the crisis. We need to look at the habits of mind and action that sustain our ethical life, day by day and year by year.

"But, of course, one of those sustaining habits of mind is rational ethical thought. The individual, and particu-

Valuing department reaches out to colleagues

This Spring Alverno College will host its Third Annual Valuing Workshop for College Teachers. For those who know only the local work of the Valuing Department, these workshops are the most visible sign of the Department's commitment to share our experience in teaching the valuing process with colleagues across North America. But a glance at the college's travel records shows that the Annual Workshop is only one manifestation of that commitment.

This year alone, Margaret Earley (Religious Studies), Joyce Fey (Professional Communications), and Patricia Jensen (Business & Management) have presented workshops and provided consultations in valuing at King's College (PA), St. Mary's College (MO), Felician College (IL), Allentown College (PA), and Walsh College (OH).

Some of the consultations have been in conjunction with broader inter-institutional projects, such as the Values in Career-Oriented Education Program of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities and Project Lodestar of the Association of American Colleges. Others have resulted from colleagues' visits, the summer workshop, and the Valuing Department's active correspondence with other institutions concerned with the valuing process in higher education.

larly the professional, has to be able to apply critical intelligence to ethical issues, often on the spur of the moment, and to know what kinds of questions to raise, what elements to look for in a conflict." A sharper sense of how formal ethics contribute to the student's development of the valuing process was one thing that Earley took away from her work at Georgetown.

New Approaches

Back at Alverno, Margaret Earley has shared the results of her research with colleagues in the Valuing Department and in the Arts and Humanities Division. Her detailed report, including a comprehensive flow chart relating the components of moral and ethical development, and her oral presentations

"This year's activity has not really been unusual," says Margaret Earley, Coordinator of the Valuing Department. "Members of the Valuing Department, including Marcia Mentkowski (Psychology), and Tim Riordan (Philosophy), and other faculty such as Zita Allen (Nursing), Mary Kay Kramp (Liberal Studies), and Allen Wutzdorff (Psychology), have been bringing our work in Valuing to other institutions for years." These have included St. John's University (MN), Eastern Mennonite College (VA), WOR-WIC Tech Community College (MD), and the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry.

Some consultations have led to repeated visits. "We've been to the University of Minnesota four times," says Margaret Earley. The most recent trip was in conjunction with the Association of Moral Education National Conference on Ethical Development in Professional Education, hosted by the U. of M. In addition to presentations by Marcia Mentkowski and Zita Allen, Mentkowski served with the coordinating committee for the conference.

"In a way," says Earley, "all of these relationships constitute a national network of colleagues committed to the ongoing conceptualization and implementation of valuing in higher education."

have stimulated faculty to begin thinking of new ways to infuse the philosophical content of systematic ethics more fully within the advanced level valuing curriculum.

One concrete result of this rethinking process is a grant proposal which Earley and the Arts and Humanities Division have submitted to the Association of American Colleges. Under the proposal, humanists would collaborate with faculty in the professional disciplines to design learning experiences which would integrate humanistic content and issues with the content of advanced level courses in the professions. "If you see nurses and philosophers meeting with extraordinary frequency this summer," says Earley, "you'll know that we're on our way."