A COMMUNITY oriented college must walk a peculiar curricular path, one foot on the uncertain ground of exploration, the other in the furrow of community conformity. At first glance, the community oriented college may seem much like any other standard American college. Facilities, enrollments and student-faculty ratios may fit a pattern typical of many other institutions of comparable size. In philosophical point of view and kinds of service, however, differences become real and critical. First, the community college is blood kin to the public school, established to educate to the full extent of their potential all who are able and willing. Second, the community college identifies itself intimately with the region or area it serves; community goals become college goals; community problems are reflected in college programs. To paraphrase one famous American, "What is good for the community is good for the college." Third, it deliberately seeks to multiply effective contacts with the agencies, institutions, organizations, industries and neighborhoods of its service area. Finally, the community college recognizes that curriculum planning must be basically a faculty function. Staff members engage in curriculum analysis, development and evaluation with the wholehearted enthusiasm and diligence once reserved only for the classroom and the laboratory.

San Fernando Valley State College is attempting from the outset to meet these standards of community service. Established in September 1956, as a branch of the Los Angeles State College, it has benefited immensely from the impetus of faculty and services transferred from the parent campus. Soon the college is to be on its own. Legislative action provides for complete, legal independence by July 1, 1958. In anticipation of the separation, curriculum development from the beginning has been autonomous on this campus.

Community Identification: The Foundation

The service area of the college is clearly defined. Geographical boundaries are precise: a wall of moderate mountains with passes spilling people to and from the Valley in tumultuous haste. Its size is impressive, larger in square miles than the entire city of Chicago. Its growth is spectacular. New neighborhoods seem to spring up overnight with modest cottages, apartment houses and luxury estates stretching to the encircling mountains. Community essentials cannot keep pace with the growth; public utilities, water supply, and transpor-
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Education services lag far behind. Most important, and most critical, is the problem of schools. The Valley has more elementary school children than Boston, Cleveland, New Orleans, or Seattle. Even the current "crash" school building program cannot fully meet the ever growing demand.

In this new metropolis of nine hundred thousand people the San Fernando Valley Campus is the only four-year baccalaureate college. As such it is both a part of the problem and a part of the answer. In 1955, when the State of California was seeking a permanent campus for the Los Angeles State College, representation from the San Fernando Valley was so articulate and vigorous that a supplementary site was chosen to serve this area. Even as the specific Valley site was under survey, late afternoon and evening classes were set up in a local high school to serve Valley residents. Temporary buildings were ready by September 1956, with gas, telephone, power, street paving and sewers coming in a mad August rush.

In November of 1956, though only two months old, the college asked community support for a state bond issue to provide more than twenty million dollars for capital improvement. Virtually every civic and professional organization campaigned in its behalf. Each one took partial credit for the 90% affirmative vote.

Again, in 1957, community support rallied to help pass the bills granting independent status and adding another one hundred acres to the original site. Today the college stands in great part as a testimonial to the united efforts of community action and support. Virtually every civic leader can claim some measure of credit for its very existence.

Public Service: The Need

During these initial years the college has deliberately selected its program in curricular areas of greatest need: liberal arts, to serve as the solid academic foundation; professional education, for elementary and secondary teachers; and business administration, to serve both business and industry. Each strives to serve the community in its own particular manner.

In liberal arts, for example, the college has provided a full program of late afternoon and evening cultural courses in addition to the regular daytime classes. The doors of the college are open to the public for lectures, films and dramatic performances. Dwelling in the penumbra of Hollywood lights, Children's Theatre has taken on significant dimensions. During the first summer session more than one hundred teenagers presented twenty performances in a drama workshop jointly sponsored by the Drama Department of the college and the San Fernando Valley Youth Foundation.

In teacher-training the college has recognized the crucial shortage of teachers for the public schools. A series of conferences co-sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Association has been staged to attract more people into teaching careers. Particularly noteworthy is the summer
program designed to bring housewives with college degrees but no teacher-training into classroom service to help supply badly needed personnel. This program, organized in workshop style, was housed not on the college campus but in regular elementary classrooms through the cooperation and courtesy of the Los Angeles City Schools. Children enrolled in public school summer sessions were available for observation. Normal classroom facilities and regular supplies and bulletins added realism and challenge to the learning situation.

In the business administration program the college has made a sustained effort to meet the needs of community industry. Summer conferences have included a six weeks conference in management, a six weeks conference in auditing, two intensive courses in technical publishing, and five short courses in other aspects of technical communications. All these programs were organized in consultation with civic, industrial and professional organizations throughout the area. Members of the college staff regularly attend the meeting of industrial committees on training. Lay advisors serve various departments of the college, and professional groups such as the Technical Publishing Society help plan both regular and special curricula. In all areas, the college has maintained classes throughout the late afternoon and evenings as well as the normal day sessions. These late classes are an integral part of the regular college program, are taught by the permanent staff, and are equivalent in every way to day classes. Extension courses are given in several remote areas such as the Antelope Valley, approximately 50 miles away in the Mojave Desert, the site of several research and aircraft manufacturing facilities far removed from collegiate service.

Articulation: One Key to Better Service

Throughout all these varied activities the college administrators and faculty members are ever aware that the San Fernando Valley Campus is not the only collegiate institution serving the community and that its facilities are as yet limited. Coordination is maintained with the parent college through frequent informal meetings, appointed committees, and planned inter-campus communications. Close liaison has been established with the University of California at Los Angeles, 20 miles over the mountains, as well as with the three junior colleges and the eleven high schools located within the college service area. Frequent meetings with other administrators, counselors, faculty members, and students facilitate formal and informal exchange of ideas and help develop the personal relationships that add meaning and understanding to official communiques.

Specific results of this coordination are already apparent: (a) the decision of the San Fernando Valley Campus to offer only upper division and graduate courses in late afternoon and evening sessions so as not to duplicate offerings of the nearby junior colleges; (b) the allocation of Valley classrooms for the U.C.L.A. Engineering Extension program to offer courses on this campus rather than attempt any duplication of offerings; and (c) the streamlining of entrance and transfer procedures to accommodate the rapidly growing and shifting population. Entrance requirements for the Valley State College are specifically noted in junior college bulletins. Students enroll in courses at the Valley Campus and at Los Angeles State College with complete freedom of choice. Credit transfer problems are minimal. Students may plan
their educational programs for completion either at the Valley Campus or at the downtown center.

Curriculum: The Common Enterprise

Curriculum is seldom built under an open sky. Limitations are ever present, imposed by code, circumstances, or self. This situation is no exception. First, are the limitations of law. The Education Code specifies that California State Colleges are to offer courses in (a) teacher-training, (b) general education and responsible citizenship, (c) vocational education such as business, public service, and social welfare and (d) pre-professional training for advanced professional studies. Beyond this are such items as budget control, staffing ratios, and the initial approval of all new curricula by appropriate state departments.

The procedure by which curriculum develops is one which involves the maximum number of individuals and groups: faculty, administrators, community representatives, and professional groups. All contribute ideas and all may participate, but the faculty and administration of the college carry the major load as their basic responsibility.

Usually, curriculum proposals originate with an individual faculty member or with some on-campus group, either formally organized for curriculum development, or perhaps organized primarily for some other purpose related to curriculum. All professional members of the college administration have status as regular and active members of the General Faculty. Curriculum developments are therefore all-college in nature. Cooperation is further secured by insuring representation from the library and the student personnel office on appropriate committees.

A growing trend is for curriculum suggestions to come from representatives of community organizations. Such suggestions and requests are considered by regular college committees. When further study is warranted, community representatives are invited either to participate personally or to supply information.

Other guidance is given by the State Department of Education which establishes basic objectives and reviews curriculum developments for all eleven California State Colleges. Their concern limits itself primarily to goals rather than specific curricula. Similarly the Western College Association, the regional accrediting agency, offers criticism and checks quality so as to provide guidelines for curricular improvement. Whatever the origin of ideas and information the faculty of the college, including the administrative officers, makes the basic decisions and assumes basic responsibility.

For the present, because of the relatively small faculty, major curriculum decisions are made by the General Faculty acting upon the considered recommendations of various study committees. As the college grows, this “town meeting” procedure may perhaps become less feasible and delegation may have to be increased. But the fundamental rule that curriculum must be built upon the broadest possible base of participation should always persist.

Community Leadership: The Challenge

Regardless of the mechanics of curriculum development, permanent principles must emphasize the service role of the college and the ultimate responsibility of the faculty. The college ought itself to serve as a model of the democratic processes and of human, yet scientific, dedication. Such a condition can be

(Continued on page 131)
terials to deepen their own insights and understandings while, at the same time, they serve their students.


This is a well conceived manual which sets forth basic guidance principles, describes techniques particularly appropriate at the elementary school level, and defines the role of teachers, guidance specialists and administrators for developing and administrating the guidance program. Essential concepts underlying an elementary school guidance program are presented as a basis for understanding the aims of such a program: "to promote the study of the child with the hope of preventing personality maladjustments and enhancing learning ability."

The scope and nature of the activities of staff members are discussed and the specific roles of teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors are well defined. The role of the psychologist is seen only indirectly as one encounters situations requiring therapy or clinical attention. Depending upon the reader's familiarity with the guidance field, the relationship of the psychologist to the other members of the guidance team may appear unclear. However, this is a minor flaw in an otherwise excellent manual. The second part, wherein guidance techniques are presented, is particularly well done. The techniques are clearly discussed and well illustrated. The last few chapters are concerned with dramatics, play, puppetry, and art as guidance methods which teachers can utilize. As is pointed out clearly, "No teacher is expected to be a psychiatrist, nor is she expected to find time to provide unlimited assistance to each of her children. . . With the aid of clearly defined techniques, she is, however, in a position to help more children more effectively."

(Continued from page 90)

maintained only within a matrix of liberties: freedom to introduce experimental concepts in curriculum, freedom to submit new courses to the market place of faculty opinion, freedom to question, to dissent, and to evaluate.

An essential characteristic of any useful social institution is that it must, perhaps unwittingly and haphazardly, cater to some basic social need. Not infrequently in the past, colleges, as long as they satisfied some of the basic cultural needs, were not greatly concerned that other needs lagged or were neglected entirely. But modern society today with all its costs and complexities cannot con-