

THE CHALKBOARD

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MASTERY: A SPECIAL ISSUE ON GRADUATE EDUCATION

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Guidance and Counseling:

Toward Creating New High School Counselors

David Forbes

assistant professor

guidance and counseling programs

For many years high school guidance counselors were known mainly for their work in "siftin', sortin', and selectin'" students. That meant determining who is a college bound kid, who is a vocational one, and figuring out what to do with the rest, if anything. Counselors were also known as the folks who did class scheduling, scheduling, and more scheduling. Today, the guidance and counseling program is trying to help align the role of high school counselors with the changing needs of students, schools, and society, and encourage counselors to become active agents of change within the schools. Faculty members and students in the program recognize the tremendous emotional, social, and educational needs of high school students and the importance of playing an active part in their lives. This raises a question: how does one work within a system that often does not seem able to offer real ways to meet students' needs, seems resistant to change, and often does not seem to care?

One could consider two approaches: from the outside (changing the social structure) or from the inside (changing one's attitude toward that structure).

On the outside, a new after-school program at New Utrecht High School cosponsored by Brooklyn College is working to establish itself in the school. The program aims to help students bridge the transition from junior high to high school through weekly discussion sessions. As part of their fieldwork, counseling students assist teachers in running these workshops. The heart of the students' work, however, is in co-leading discussion groups with high school students on topics of importance to them. The program itself is experiencing growing pains and is struggling to iron out the kinks of a bureaucratic environment that is slow to change. Our students are discovering firsthand the difficulties in setting up a program that requires teachers and administrators to learn new skills and that demands coordination and collaboration of diverse groups in the school.

On the inside, in terms of their personal and emotional awareness, many guidance and counseling students are changing how they are handling their dissatisfaction with the school bureaucracy. They are often critical of the schools and display a strong sense of injustice that high school students' needs are not getting met. A common response among many students, especially those who have worked in the Board of Education, is: *The system stinks. Change can't happen. You have to be realistic. I'm not going to try to take the initiative and suggest an idea that we can collaborate on. I'm going to do what I'm told and try to survive. I'll complain a lot and blame somebody higher up because there's nothing else I can do.* More recently, they are beginning to look at their own role and attitude towards bureaucratic systems. They are realizing that they have a choice in how to respond to the despair they may feel. They may either complain and let things pass, or they may look for ways to make changes. If change seems impossible, they may look at their own attitude and decide how best to respond the situation.

Either the outer or inner work is an ongoing process that requires patience and wisdom. Both are part of the same whole.

Graduate Programs in Teacher Education

Stephen Phillips

instructor, secondary education;

college director, specialized graduate studies/off campus programs

The School of Education's graduate teacher-preparation programs, which enrolled more than 1,600 students this fall, have completed a total redrafting of their curricula. Formal documents covering Nearly 25 separate programs, ranging from early childhood education to the longstanding master's in reading program were filed with the New York State Education Department last spring. These programs were rethought "from ground up." partially as the result of Education Department regulations that will place all teacher education in the hands of accredited college programs. After 2004 students will no longer be able to gain certification by simply taking random, individual courses, and then applying to the state; certificates will be granted only to graduates of accredited programs who are recommended for certification by their graduate institutions.

A major finding during the redrafting process was that ,for decades, Brooklyn College has exceeded the requirements presently being mandated for the rest of the state. Although many other colleges have granted "education only" degrees, the School of Education's graduate programs have always required students to pursue substantial coursework in the liberal arts and sciences. Traditionally, Brooklyn College students preparing for secondary teaching have taken eighteen credits in their home disciplines. Students in Childhood Education have long been required to take twelve credits of the total thirty credits for a master's in such liberal arts and sciences "concentrations," as the humanities, social sciences, or the arts. In addition, a new state requirement concerning fieldwork is already exceeded by the college's longstanding practice of requiring all secondary education graduate students not currently working as teachers to begin school observations with their first two courses, spending nearly thirty hours in schools during each course.

What changes have we made in our teacher preparation curricula? First, special education, technology education, and work with English-language learners, formerly compartmentalized in individual courses or programs, have now been infused throughout all courses, mirroring changes in the field that require all teachers—not only specialists—to incorporate these areas in their classroom teaching.

Second, in partnership with academic disciplines across the campus, School of Education programs have revamped the lists of liberal arts and sciences courses appropriate for teachers, altering requirements to parallel New York State Learning Standards, to which all K-12 students will be held.

Third, each of the separate certification areas has been reviewed to insure cohesiveness and sequence, so that all students progressing through a course of study will experience, without undue repetition, the topics and issues appropriate to their teaching fields and New York State Learning

Standards.

Preparing 21st Century Urban Educational Leaders at Brooklyn College

David C. Bloomfield

associate professor, programs in administration and supervision

"New York City public schools are being run this year largely by a corps of inexperienced leaders," an October 2, *New York Times* article announced. This, however, is not news to the School of Education's Advanced Certificate Program in Educational Administration and Supervision, (A&S) in which each semester 250 students enroll for a 30-credit post-masters sequence that qualifies them for state certification for school and district leadership positions, including principals and superintendents.

In the past, A&S graduates could count on years honing their craft in the field before an opening arose in their certificate area. They would thus have a chance to grow on the job, mentored by experienced principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and deputy superintendents. Now, however, with the exodus of experienced supervisory personnel and the shifting of individuals from position to position, A&S students are often asked to assume administrative roles even before they *enroll* in the program, not to mention immediately upon graduation.

Responding to this leadership crisis, our faculty has become a critical resource for twenty-first century urban educational leaders. The faculty mirrors the diversity of the student body and includes many of New York's foremost educators—a former special assistant to the chancellor, former General Counsel of the Board of Education, the chief grievance officer for the principals' union, and an associate state commissioner of education. More than twenty faculty members meet with students to study, reflect, and act to improve student achievement and equal access to a quality education.

Most students begin the program with a sequence of six courses (18 credits) in two main strands--instructional leadership and management of educational institutions. On completing the foundation courses, students undertake field internships (6 credits) and are assigned a site mentor, faculty supervisor, and seminar leader. With multi-year informal mentoring now often unavailable, Brooklyn College is placing increased emphasis on this guided internship – often the last chance for new leaders to work under direct tutelage of experienced professionals in a supportive environment.

Following the internship, which qualifies students for New York State principal certification, most students continue with two additional courses (6 credits) to earn both the advanced certificate and state superintendent certification.

A new initiative, the A&S/District Partnerships, enables cohorts of students from a single community or high school district to study together in their first courses in the sequence and to perform internships with the support of district-based personnel as well as A&S faculty. The partnerships are another method of ensuring that A&S students receive maximum support and experience within the program prior to their appointments.

Note: The events of September 11 are addressed in the following articles.

The Power of the Arts in a Fractured World

Karel Rose, *professor of education*

(The following is an excerpt from a forthcoming book, *Art, Culture, and Education: Artful Teaching in a Fractured Landscape*, by Karel Rose and Joe Kincheloe, professor of education.)

In the aftermath of the horrific attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, ideas about a free society are being challenged in ways that are unprecedented in our history. More than buildings are imploding; our conceptual frameworks are fracturing. We are suddenly required to articulate and act on our priorities. Understandably, many will call for a hard-line and a purely intellectual solution to this unspeakable atrocity, assuming that the problems inherent in creating a just society can be reduced to mechanistic and scientific understandings. Consumed by a sense of helplessness and fear for ourselves and future generations, many will say that this is not the time for the aesthetic responses. But how does one disengage with an ancient way of knowing and being in the world that over the centuries has provided people with empathic opportunities and the courage to make sense of the historical moment? Now as we write the first drafts of history, the artistic sensibility offers ways of coping with the grief, terror, and anger engendered by the terrorist attacks. For many people, the arts have always been a necessary buffer when they faced such horrors as concentration camps, prisons, or slavery. New York City now has public art that cries out on the facades of buildings, on the sidewalks, and at firehouses in all five boroughs. The transformation of grief and rage into art has been a survival strategy for making sense of the senseless. Those who suggest that there is no room for art in our lives at this time have a limited lens and understand art as a voyeuristic, frivolous activity rather than a significant avenue for understanding. We need words, music, dance, and images to help us better understand what we think personally and collectively.

Once again, teachers will find themselves on the front line. As the storytellers of the culture, their artful teaching brings form and meaning to students. Teaching is a drama constructed in a given space and time. One way to position ourselves and cope with the agony of the terrorist attack is through a greater interconnectedness with other cultures and ways of thinking. Obviously, this does not mean sanctioning terrorism but rather reflecting on the significant philosophical questions about existence, knowledge, and values. Within the framework of our belief systems, the events of September 11, 2001, suggest a search for a holistic worldview that does not reduce knowing to any one perspective, whether it be spiritual, economic, scientific, aesthetic, or historical. A parochial vision with its exclusive focus on local and Western ideologies is proving to be destructive to those very values of democracy and justice that have been so shockingly transgressed. The making of meaning in a complex world needs to be built on a greater acknowledgment of diversity.

The arts with their broad spectrum may help us to understand the many aspects of this dilemma. The offensive against those who have violated basic human rights will have to proceed on many fronts against the backdrop of our revulsion with the unspeakable horror of September 11. Shocked into living with new ambiguities, postmodernism and culturalism are challenged once again to articulate their principles with even greater clarity. Teachers will have to seriously consider how their teaching can rethink concepts of wholeness, context, and connectedness not only as reading strategies but as metaphors for living in a transformed world that has relied too heavily on smoke and mirrors.

The School of Education Responds to the World Trade Center Disaster

Florence Rubinson

assistant professor, graduate program in school psychology

Responding to the tragic events of September 11, School of Education faculty members joined in activities on campus and throughout the community to provide support and comfort to students. Those of us with counseling and psychology backgrounds volunteered with the Personal Counseling Center and the CUNY Helpline to aid traumatized students and staff.

We also worked diligently during the days after the tragedy to prepare our students for the challenges they would face in their work with New York City schoolchildren. For many, September 11 was only their fourth day of student teaching. In the midst of their own shock and grief, these students found themselves having to respond to the trauma experienced by the children in their classrooms. Their new mission became all too apparent--to train teachers and support staff to assist those directly affected by the tragedy as well as the majority of children who witnessed terrifying images in newspapers and on television.

Teachers and staff can do a great deal to help children through this unsettling time. The following suggestions have been culled from the literature on trauma interventions in schools.

Understand that how children handle the situation will depend on their level of development. Young children may find it hard to understand what happened and may react to the actions of adults around them. Since they will have difficulty articulating their thoughts, they are likely to show distress through their behavior. Young children, and less verbal older children, might be encouraged to express reactions through art, writing, and puppetry. Elementary students are able to tell us more about their feelings yet may need help to express themselves fully and to understand the more abstract aspects of the tragedy. Middle and high school students want to understand motivations and address such concepts as justice and fairness. They may voice their opinions and express their feelings, and often want to do something to assist. Providing them with opportunities to decide how to help those in need allows students to establish a sense of control.

- **Assure students that adults are doing everything possible to ensure their safety.** Remind students that trustworthy adults at home, in school, and in city, state and federal governments are working hard to do so.
- **Talk about events in class.** Do not deny the seriousness of the situation, but be careful not to be an alarmist. Stick to the facts, tell the truth, and squelch rumors. It is often helpful to follow the children's lead and respond directly to their questions. Keep these sessions brief while maintaining a normal schedule because routine increases children's sense of stability.
- **Listen to students and watch their behavior.** Some may be uniquely vulnerable, especially those who have experienced previous trauma. Contact mental health professionals and parents of students who appear extremely anxious, fearful, withdrawn, or angry. Some children may become inattentive, others may act out. Do not be concerned by students who may appear unaffected, -that is a normal reaction, too.
- **Help students understand that the majority of people from other countries are good people much like themselves.** Model respectful behavior toward others and limit hurtful or aggressive language. Take opportunities to help students understand that stereotypical and biased remarks are inappropriate. Be sensitive to cultural differences in the expression of sadness and shock. For example, among some cultures it is not acceptable to express negative emotions.
- **Remember that staff members are feeling the effects just as acutely as students.** It is helpful for school personnel to discuss their reaction to events with colleagues. They might benefit by meeting for a few minutes to share their feelings as well as receive support and encouragement.

Finally, it is important to **emphasize to staff as well as parents that such reactions as shock, anger, confusion, fear, sadness, pessimism, and**

even denial are normal. Most people exposed to disaster have mild, temporary symptoms that lessen over time. In fact, children may often be more resilient than adults in overcoming trauma.

News and Notes

Alumni

Carmelo Piazza, '97, early childhood education, and graduate student in environmental education, was cited in *Scientific American Explorer* for making his science classroom a center of interest and enthusiasm in PS 261, Brooklyn.

Faculty

Laura Barbanel, professor and program head, graduate program in school psychology, represented the American Psychiatric Association at a State Department briefing by nongovernment organizations on reducing illiteracy and ensuring the completion of primary school, for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children and Adolescents.

Koshi Dhingra, assistant professor, elementary science education, contributed an article, "Can TV Teach Science?" to *Television Quarterly*, the journal of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Dhingra's research focuses on science as portrayed in television programs.

David Forbes, assistant professor, guidance and counseling program, received a PSC-CUNY grant to develop a meditation/discussion group project with members of the New Utrecht High School football team. The group's focus is a mindful approach to living and sports and aims to better deal with the pressures faced by males growing up in today's society.

Hollyce Giles, assistant professor, guidance and counseling, participated on a panel, "Community Organizing for School Reform: The Question of Parent Agency Past and Present," at the Gotham Center Conference on New York City History. At the annual meeting of the American Educational Studies Association in Miami, Giles presented two papers, "Thinking Their Own Thoughts: Schools' Scripts and Parents' Knowledge in Community Organizing for School Reform," and "Working with the Working Class: Healing Splits Engendered by Critical Pedagogy."

Wen-Song Hwu, assistant professor, secondary education, was invited by the New York State Education Department to serve on the Bias Review Committee for the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations program. The committee reviews test frameworks and items for fairness and equity.

Kathleen McSorley, assistant professor and program head, special education, collaborated with **Gail Gurland**, professor, speech communication arts and sciences, on the second year of funding for a CUNY Workforce Development grant for preparation of special educators and speech pathologists. The grant will support development of a specialty track of postgraduate courses in assistive technology. The award is funded jointly by CUNY and the Sloan Foundation. In addition, Brooklyn College was one of five campuses statewide to receive funding from the State Education Department for a three year project to develop a post bachelor's specialty track in autism spectrum disorders. Gurland and McSorley wrote the collaborative grant with Queens College. McSorley is project director for both programs.

Wayne Reed, assistant professor and undergraduate deputy, presented a paper, "Creating a Context for Compassion in the Classroom," as part of the

symposium "Embracing Compassion in Critical Pedagogy" at the annual meeting of the American Educational Studies Association in Miami.

Karel Rose, professor, presented a paper "Recognizing How Race and Ethnicity Influence the Aesthetic Story;" in a panel "Urban Education and Urban Pedagogy" at the March National Association of Ethnic Studies Conference on Race, Ethnicity and Pedagogy in the Twenty-first Century. At the same panel, **Barbara Winslow**, assistant professor, presented a paper, "What is Black History Month? The Experience of Teaching Future Teachers How to Integrate Race and Ethnicity into the High School Social Studies Curriculum."

Jessica Siegel, assistant professor, secondary education, received first prize in news reporting from the New Jersey chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists for an in-depth article examining the ten-year old state takeover of the Jersey City school system.

New Faculty

The School of Education extends a warm welcome to the following new faculty members:

Pauline Bynoe, assistant professor, special education; M.Ed., special education, Brooklyn College; Ed.D., Teachers College, Columbia University; Post Doctoral Fellow, Center on Minority Research in Special Education (COMRISE). Research areas include children with special need, and issues of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Nora Hyland, assistant professor, literacy program. Ph.D., curriculum and instruction, University of Illinois. Scholarly research include teaching for social justice, developing antiracist teaching by building relationships between communities and schools.

Carolina Mancuso, assistant professor, literacy program; M.Ed., Ph.D., English education, New York University. Her scholarly interests include linguistics, emotional literacy, art and drama in the classroom, and learning in the diverse classroom

Jacqueline McDonald, assistant professor, mathematics education and program head, early childhood programs; M. Ed., special education and Childhood Education; Ph.D., computer education and mathematics education, University of Washington. Her research focuses on curriculum development that integrates mathematics with other curricular areas.

Barbara Rosenfeld, assistant professor, secondary education, and supervisor, Teaching Fellows program; M.Ed., Childhood Education, William Paterson College; Ph.D., Curriculum Instruction, University of Missouri. Her research focuses on methods of teaching mathematics and integrating technology and media in adolescent education.

Gerard Shaw, assistant professor, School of Education and Department of Physical Education and Exercise Science; MS, exercise physiology, Ph.D., education/sports Psychology, Columbia University, *Maître D'Armes* (fencing master), Institut National des Sports, Paris. Shaw has coached for the United States Fencing Association, the U.S. Olympic Training Center, the Junior Olympic Training Program, and New York University.

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