

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
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Professor L.T.E. Oppe
Paediatric Unit
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Dear Professor Oppe,

I am writing about the meeting of the Special Advisory Committee next Friday the 19th February. You will have seen that we have submitted a number of papers and I was intending to speak to these at the meeting. Unfortunately, a meeting of our Planning Committee, which is responsible for conducting all negotiations for mergers and transfers and similar matters concerning the restructuring of the College, has been made at short notice for the 19th. There is no way that I can avoid this commitment which must take priority over everything else. Nevertheless, provided that the meeting does not go on too long, I will be able to be at the Special Advisory Committee later that afternoon. The best thing I can do in the circumstances is to explain to you some of the matters I would have explained to the Special Advisory Committee.

You will see from the papers that we have not yet submitted all the syllabuses for next year. The reason for this, as you will yourself know, is that we have not completed our negotiations in respect of the teaching of these subjects. These negotiations were held up last term by the embargo made during the negotiations between Bedford College and Kings College upon all discussions with other schools of the University. This embargo has been lifted following the breakdown of those negotiations, and I am actively pursuing my negotiations concerning the teaching of medical sciences next year. A further factor has been, of course, my own involvement with College negotiations as a member of the College's Planning Committee. This was not something I sought but it was a duty I could not refuse and I have a responsibility on that Committee for representing the interests of all social studies departments. I hope that in these circumstances the committee will be patient concerning the submission of detailed syllabuses for next year.

I do not think the syllabuses that are being submitted will cause many problems. The detailed information has been revised where suggested to take account of the points made at the Special Advisory Committee's last meeting. I have, in addition, submitted a paper which shows how practical training and clinical experience is co-ordinated with academic learning and how the various components of the academic learning are co-ordinated with one another. No doubt Mrs. Ferguson will speak to this paper should the committee wish.

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With respect to the SARC recommendations concerning Bedford College, these were very much what I expected. Our contribution to the social sciences in respect of social policy and administration, medical sociology, socio-legal studies and social work has been recognised. We have been recommended to cease teaching a full degree in Sociology and to 'buy-in' our requirements in economics. Neither of these recommendations will affect our provision for nursing studies. In the longer run, it is suggested that our research in medical sociology and in socio-legal studies would benefit from collaboration with a School such as University College or Kings College. In fact, we already have connections with both these schools and I am actively pursuing plans to increase these. Indeed, in the case of one of these schools, it is rather a matter of resuming plans which were interrupted by the outbreak of the present financial crisis. I have, in general, no doubts concerning the continued development of the Department as a centre of excellence concerned with the application of the social sciences particularly to two areas, medicine and the health care services and legislation and legal institutions. You will appreciate that I do not wish to commit myself in detail concerning the future plans of the Department and of Bedford College, but I can say that the development of nursing studies forms a very important part of those plans.

Please accept my apologies if the meeting does not in the event allow me to attend the Special Advisory Committee. I can assure you that only the fact that it is a vitally important meeting at which my presence is absolutely necessary could prevent me from coming.

Yours sincerely,

Ivor Burton