

BEDFORD COLLEGE

(UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)

REGENT'S PARK, NW1 4NS

Department of Sociology

01-486 4400

BC AL/336/1/20
To Nursing
→ studies

REGISTRAR

HAVE YOU ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS?

41 SEP 1979

Ivor Burton

WITH COMPLIMENTS

DR. I. F. BURTON
Head of Department

Dear Mrs Longden,

Our Registrar, Mr. L.P. Turnbull, has passed your letter of 12 July 1979 to me and has asked me to reply directly to the points contained therein. I should perhaps explain that I had expected to have been asked for supplementary information for the meeting on 6 July, but I understand that by some mischance the proposal we submitted in April went astray somewhere in Senate House.

The Committee's minutes disclose two issues of major concern, the content and character of the degree and the organisation proposed at Bedford College for the teaching of Nursing Studies. I think it would be useful if I prefaced my reply by setting out our motives in developing our present course and I would like to conclude by referring in more detail to the problems we have encountered in interpreting the Regulations dealing with course-unit degrees in Nursing Studies. I and my colleagues will of course be ready to answer questions at the meeting on 12 October and we welcome the opportunity ^{to} ~~of discussing~~ the proposal ^{with the Committee} then.

Why we propose to develop the present Combined Course

We have two motives: the principal one is academic; the second concerns resources but has academic implications.

The present Combined Course has proved very successful, judging from the quality of ^{its} ~~the~~ intake, the academic and professional standards reached by the students on the course, and the successful professional careers followed by graduates. What it does not do is to allow the students to bring more than a very small proportion of their professional experience to their academic study of the social sciences since the latter has to be completed before the great bulk of the professional training is begun. We wish to be able to

intergrate the academic and the professional course much more closely. In this way we ^{aim} ~~will~~ not only ^{to} improve the quality of the students' learning but also ^{to} prepare the ground for research into the application of the social sciences to nursing care. We believe that the unique contribution of a university to professional training lies in its facility for bringing students into contact with the results of research and with those engaged in research. In due course ~~therefore~~ the research that the proposal will ^{stimulate} engender will ^{further} fertilise the teaching ~~on~~ ^{the degree.} ~~further.~~

The resource factor concerns the numbers on the course which are at present limited to six per year because of the necessarily limited ^t funds provided by the GNC which have to meet the cost of student salaries during ^{professional} training as well as the tutors' salaries. We are not so naïve as to argue that a ^{simple} transfer of expenditure from one public authority to another can in any sense be regarded as a saving but we are conscious that the present course, because of its size, and the inflexibility of that size, is ^{expensive in terms of the resources it uses} ~~uneconomical~~ and we have no way of rendering it more economical by increasing the numbers on it. On academic grounds, we would ^{in any event} prefer an intake of double the present ^{size} ~~size~~ since ^{that} ~~it~~ would permit a more effective size of teaching group.

The Content and Character of the Proposed Degree

All professional degrees must have a double purpose, to provide the student both with the knowledge, understanding and skills required by the profession, and with a higher education to develop his or her ^{intellectual} capacity to honours degree level. To achieve both of these ends in four years (when three years is the time usually spent in achieving just one separately) we regarded as our most difficult task. We tackled it by analysing the content of existing degree courses in the area and by bringing these results, and our preliminary

thinking based on our experience with the Combined Course, to a specially convened ad-hoc committee. ~~Individuals were invited from~~ ~~from~~ the Department of Sociology, the Social Research Unit, the Academic Board and the central administration at Bedford College, the School of Nursing at the Middlesex Hospital, the Middlesex Hospital Medical School, the General Nursing Council, and from institutions with experience of running Nursing Studies degrees. ^a ~~The committee's task~~ was to draw up recommendations for the Department of Sociology and the School of Nursing which were the sponsoring bodies for the Combined Course. ~~It~~ ^{It} held several meetings and in due course made its recommendations to ~~and these formed~~ ^{recommendations, subsequently endorsed by the Academic Board at Bedford College} the basis of the present submission.

to serve on this committee.

We identified fairly early on the ^{basic} ~~necessary~~ ingredients of a Nursing Studies ^{in nursing} ~~degree~~ as professional training ^{and} ~~and~~ knowledge of the biological and medical sciences and of the behavioural sciences including sociology, social policy and administration and psychology. ~~More difficult was the task of identifying where the honours degree component would lie.~~ ^{We then turned to the problem} We decided upon a double foundation: to develop the academic ^{the aspect} ~~component~~ of the professional training, drawing upon the basic ^{education} ~~training~~ in the component disciplines set out above, into a programme of 'nursing studies', and ^{at the same time} ~~to~~ focus the education ^{teaching} in the social sciences upon ^{on the} ~~the~~ application of sociology to health care and of social policy and administration to the development of the health services. We were well aware that other institutions reached different conclusions to ours (and that yet others had reached similar ones). We ^{considered} ~~felt~~ however that there positive advantages in having a variety of approaches to the ^{construction} ~~development~~ of nursing studies degrees at this stage ^{in their development} and we felt that ^{our} ~~the~~ two institutions had ^{special} ~~particular~~ expertise in the ^{particular} ~~development~~ that was proposed. We do not ^{nevertheless} ~~however~~ regard our proposal as a final answer but would expect it to develop very considerably during operation. In particular, we would see the ^{two components Nursing Studies and the Social Sciences,} ~~twin foundations~~ becoming ^{The degree} ~~increasingly~~ intergrated. ~~It~~ ^{It} would however probably always reflect the special emphases we place on the ^{further}

social sciences and the special interest we have in those areas of nursing where the social sciences are particularly relevant ^{and likely to become even more involved}.

~~We consider that we have the experience and the expertise to launch this proposal and that we are particularly well qualified to do so.~~ The ~~Soc~~ Social Research Unit at Bedford College has pioneered the teaching of the social sciences to medical students in London University; ~~and~~ it has a very successful M.Sc. course with an international reputation in Sociology as Applied to Medicine; and it has established itself as a centre for research sponsored by the Medical Research Council and by the DHSS. Out of this work has developed a very successful undergraduate course in the sociology of medicine and from this we intend to develop a course in the sociology of health care that will be ^{the course that integrates the} ~~at the centre of the Social Sciences~~ ^{with the Nursing Studies in} ~~component of~~ the new degree. ~~The staff who would be responsible for this are in post.~~ The Middlesex Hospital school of nursing has now had considerable experience in ~~xxxxxxx~~ developing advanced courses, both the present Combined Course and the course leading to the university Diploma. While we would expect to look outside for the first appointments for the new course (and have made informal sounding in this area) we would expect that ~~at~~ tutors already in post who have the necessary qualifications for degree work would contribute to the teaching at the Middlesex, probably in the capacity of visiting lecturers.

The Organisation of the Proposed Degree

We accept entirely ^{ly} the points made by the Committee. The Department of Sociology at Bedford College is ~~somewhat unusual and~~ well organised to deal with this kind of problem. It is in fact a cross between a small faculty and a very large department with 180 undergraduate and 80 postgraduate students. It embraces a variety of social science disciplines - sociology, social policy, economics, public administration and statistics are the main elements - and also a number of separate

units which are responsible for their own day to day administration: the Social Research Unit, the Legal Research Unit and the Social Work Section are the three principle units in addition to the undergraduate and postgraduate sections. All the units and sections ^e embrace a number of disciplines so that individual members of the department are invariably engaged in more than one section, none of which can therefore be regarded as self-contained. There is only one head of department, and in that the department is like any other, but responsibility for day to day administration is delegated and secretarial resources are allocated to that end. The person to whom responsibility is delegated shares with the head of department responsibility for policy initiatives and is a member of all appointment committees ~~concerned with his unit or section.~~ A Nursing Studies section would be established to take charge of the proposed degree and would be headed by the senior tutor. It would probably be based in premises close to the main college along with the medical sociology section, (at present the responsibility of the Social Research Unit), Professor G.W. Brown's MRC research unit and some ~~more~~ of the post-graduate work of the Department. ~~These premises have just been acquired by the College and definitive and arrangements for their use by the Department are not yet finalised.~~ ^{for the Department}

The organisation of the Nursing Studies Section would of course be discussed with whoever is appointed to take charge of it but it would probably follow the ^{basic} pattern of the Social Work Section. That section consists of a Tutor-in-Charge who is a senior lecturer, two further full-time and three part-time ^{university} tutors who are all lecturers, and visiting lecturers in the shape of ~~consultant~~ psychiatrists, paediatricians, lawyers and so on. There is one full time secretary, access to a further part time secretary, and a separate consumables account. The Tutor-in-Charge is, in conjunction with her professional

professionally qualified

professionally qualified

colleagues, entirely responsible for student admissions, course planning and timetabling, and student progress, but must of course be ready to accommodate the needs of ~~many~~ all members of the department who are involved in teaching social work students. The head of the department is invariably involved in cases of difficulty and both he, and the department as a whole, participates in developing new policies, just as the all social work tutors make their contribution to departmental policy making in other sections. The full time tutors all contribute to ~~the~~ undergraduate teaching though necessarily in a very limited way because of the constraints imposed by their social work responsibilities. We have been complemented by the professional validating body on the way in which the social work section is and is supported by it being integrated fully into the department whilst at the time given full professional independence. The same principles would govern the running of a Nursing Studies Section.

We are ^{that may} aware of the difficulties ~~likely to~~ arise from a shortage of ^{experience and} well qualified applicants for the posts of tutors in nursing studies. We would plan to appoint the tutor in charge before the arrival of the first intake and to involve him or her in the further detailed planning of the degree. The second tutor would be appointed during the first year of the course so that by the time the students arrived at the part of their course where the professional element predominated, the summer of the second year, both tutors would be well established. Both would be full-time university teachers in every sense. We prefer the title of tutor to lecturer on an analogy with the social work teachers as an indication that they must have professional qualifications and that the acquisition of further such qualifications may be counted as part of the commitment to pursue research which is a requirement of all university teachers. Our experience with social work education has shown that there is something

lost if teachers allow themselves to be cut off entirely from what is happening in the field in their profession. For that reason we think it essential that the tutors should have a second base in the Middlesex Hospital and should have some connection with ^{teaching} other student nurses there. In return, we would hope that some of the tutors already engaged with advanced work at the Middlesex could contribute ~~xxxxxxx~~ ^{some} teaching for the degree students who would benefit from a variety of inputs in their professional training. While the administrative (and possibly financial arrangements) would have to be worked out, the probable basis for this kind of co-operation would be the appointment of qualified tutors at the Middlesex as visiting tutors at Bedford College.

The Interpretation of the Course-Unit Regulations

As explained in the submission, we have had considerable difficulty with the mechanics of the course-unit structure (as distinct from its substantive content) and we feel that we cannot finally solve these problems until we have had an opportunity of discussing with you our interpretation of the rules for course-unit degrees in Nursing Studies. It will probably help if I set out the substantive content of the degree as we see it ~~without regard to the mechanical~~ and then explain ^{mechanical} the ^{have} problem we encountered and so put the solution we ^{have} adopted into context.

As explained above, the degree has twin academic bases in Nursing Studies and in the Social Sciences. Each begins with introductory studies designed to provide a foundation for further ~~study~~ specialised studies in each branch. The ~~degrees~~ ^{two branches are} integrated in the second half of the final year which is devoted to this purpose. This scheme can best be set out in diagrammatic form:

SOCIAL SCIENCES

NURSING STUDIES

INTEGRATION

Sociology of Health Care

Extended Essay

SPECIALISATION

General and Social
PsychologySocial Structure of
Industrial Societies

Research Methods

Social Policy

Administration of
the Health Services

Geriatric Nursing

Acute Medical Nursing

Acute Surgical and
Obstetric Nursing

Gynaecological Nursing

Paediatric Nursing

Psychiatric Nursing

BASIC FOUNDATION

Intro to Social Theory

Intro to Nursing Studies

.. Social Structure

Intro to Medical Sciences

.. Research Methods

.. Economics

.. Social History

(NB There is also a Consolidation of Professional Practice in the Long Vacation of the Fourth Year which completes the student's qualification for State Registration)

study
The ^htime spent on the two branches would be about the same (the ^{total} Nursing Studies component would ^oin ~~practice~~ be much the larger because of the further need for training on the wards) so that with the addition of the intergrating studies there would be a majority of units in Nursing Studies.

The mechanical problem proved to be this: Bedford College accepts the ^{University}definition of a course-unit as the minimum amount of work required from an average student in a third of a year and

therefore expects most students to do more than the minimum and good honours students to do the maximum ~~max~~ (four per year) or very near the maximum. The Department of Sociology normally admits only good honours students and would certainly regard any others as not qualified for this degree. We would therefore expect such students to complete 16 units in four years, including an extended essay for which there would be no specific teaching. On this basis, there would be 7 Social Science Units and 9 Nursing Studies Units, including the 2 integrated studies units. 2-2½ of the units in each branch would be foundation units. As we have been advised, and as we interpret the University Regulations, unless we restrict the number of units to 12, we run the risk of turning out graduates who obtain a professional qualification ~~xx~~ although they have failed some of their professional courses. Indeed a candidate could fail two Nursing Studies units and three Social Science units and still qualify for a degree.

Obviously, we could have ignored our existing interpretation of the basic definition of a course-unit and reduced the weighting of every unit by 25% so that the total came out at 12 but here we run up against the fact that most of the social science units are already established in other degrees (and we regard it as a positive benefit - on both sides - that these students will take some courses with other students) and so the value cannot be changed. What we have done therefore is to eliminate the extended essay as a separate unit but retain it as part of the assessment of the Sociology of Health Care course, and reduce the weighting ^{only} of the Nursing Studies units and of the social science units devised specially for this degree. We would intend to remedy the unbalance this would give the final assessment for honours by weighting the third and fourth years substantially against the first (which we would do anyway) and ~~the~~ second (which consists of mainly social science units which ^{retain their} ~~have an~~ existing value). Finally

by the present authority to the basic University Regulations

we have identified as Nursing Studies units the social science courses specially devised for this degree in order to ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{identify/make} the paper balance ^{was found to} with the balance in reality.

We are not proud of this manipulation except as a piece of manipulation forced upon us by the existing regulations. We would much prefer to base our regulations on the reality which is that we expect these students to ^{study} and require them to be capable of studying, the maximum of four units a year. Only on that basis is it, in our opinion, possible for a student to obtain both an honours degree and a professional qualification in four years. Our scheme would then have 7 units of Nursing Studies, 7 units of Social Sciences and 2 units of integrated studies which could count as either. ~~xxxxxx~~ This is the problem we would like to discuss, because there is always the possibility that we have got it wrong

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~~xxxxxx~~

I hope that, having originally ^{after} submitted too little by way of explanation, I have not now fallen over backwards by overburdening the Committee with too much. I am of course ready to answer any further queries before, or at, the meeting in October.

Please let me know if I can help the committee further before the meeting ~~in~~ October

yours sincerely

Ivor Burton

Finally, may I say how much I welcome the positive reception given ~~our proposals~~ by the committee to my proposals and say that I look forward to meeting them in October.

? To be kept back at first

(1)

Possible Amendments to Regulations to provide for a 16 C.U. scheme

Title: 'Degree in Nursing Studies and Social Policy'

Regulation 2. second sentence to read:

'Each Course has a prescribed unit value and to qualify for a degree, a candidate must complete 16 course-units, including 9 course-units in Nursing Studies, and satisfy the examiners in at least 15, including all 9 units in Nursing Studies.'

Amend courses as follows:

First Year

- (MX) INTRODUCTION TO NURSING STUDIES (1 C/U)
- (MX) INTRODUCTION TO MEDICAL SCIENCES (1 C/U)

Second Year

- (BC) ADMINISTRATION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES (½ C/U) to be a Social Sciences Unit.
- (MX) GERIATRIC NURSING (¾ C/U)

Third Year

- (BC) GENERAL AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY (1 C/U) and to be a Social Sciences Unit
- (MX) ACUTE MEDICAL NURSING (¾ C/U)
- (MX) ACUTE SURGICAL AND OBSTETRICS NURSING (1¼ C/U)
- (MX) GYNAECOLOGICAL NURSING (¾ C/U)

Fourth Year

delete all after 'unseen paper.' in assessment for SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH CARE and add new unit:

- (BC) EXTENDED ESSAY (1 C/U)
- (MX) PAEDIATRIC NURSING (¾ C/U)
- (MX) PSYCHIATRIC NURSING (¾ C/U)

Summary of Programme

	Social Sciences		Nursing Studies	Total
1st year	2½	1	3½) 4
long vacation		1	1 (½)	
2nd year	3½		3½) 4
long vacation		¾	¾) 4
3rd year	1	2	3	
long vacation		¾	¾ (¼))
4th year		3½	3½) 4
Total	7	9	16	4 x 4