

BENNINGTON COLLEGE



Announcement of Opening



Announcement of Opening

FORM G-I

THE President and Board of Trustees announce that Bennington College will be ready to receive its first class of eighty young women in September, 1932.

The movement for the new college, initiated eight years ago, was developed in a series of conferences attended by school and college heads, parents, and others interested in higher education. It gradually became clear that the present period of experimentation in college education afforded a strategic opportunity for a new institution to translate into the college field the methods and spirit identified in the schools below by the term "progressive," and to create a curriculum especially adapted to the actual needs of women in the contemporary world. As stated in the resolutions of the earliest conference, called for the purpose, "the new college will maintain a four-year course leading to the A.B. degree with standards at least equal to those of the best American colleges for women."

Two-thirds of a million dollars was pledged at the outset. During the intervening years gifts from two hundred and thirty-four people have increased the funds to a million and a quarter dollars, a sum sufficient to make an actual beginning.

The College site occupies one hundred forty acres on a plateau flanked by the Green Mountains and Taconic Range in the town of Bennington near the southwestern corner of Vermont, fourteen miles from Williamstown, Massachusetts, four and a half hours by train from New York City and Boston, one hour and a half by rail or motor from Albany where train connections to all parts of the country can be made.

There are under construction at the present time four dwelling houses, each of which is designed to accommodate twenty stu-

dents with a faculty suite, and a Commons building which will contain dining and recreation rooms, art studios and a little theatre, infirmary, and physical education centre. A building known as "the barn" is being remodelled into conference and class rooms, laboratories, offices of administration, and the library.

Instruction will be offered in the following fields: literature (English and foreign), the fine arts (painting and design, sculpture, domestic architecture, and industrial arts), music, the natural and physical sciences (botany, zoology, physics, chemistry), the social studies (history, politics, economics, psychology, sociology), mathematics and philosophy.

A leaflet of information for applicants may be obtained by writing to the College office at Bennington, Vermont. In the Spring of 1932 a catalog will be issued.

The main features which differentiate the new institution from the traditional college of liberal arts are as follows:

A. From admission to graduation the fact of individual differences in aptitude and interest will be recognized. No single subject or group of subjects will be required of all students, either for admission or graduation. Excellence in school accomplishment, whether general or specialized in one or two fields, will be the basis for admission.

B. The work of the first two years will be arranged individually by careful conference between college officers and each student. In each case the arrangement of work will be adapted to individual needs, abilities, "blind spots," and interests. It will likewise be related to previous school experience and the inevitable requirements of later college work in the field of the student's choice.

C. The work of the last two years, organized around the student's major interest as a core, will be characterized by small-group work and individual enterprises or projects. Mastery in a broad field rather than narrow specialization in a department or subject within a department will be emphasized.

D. During the four years methods will be designed to promote self dependence, independent reasoning, and direct experience or participation rather than text-book learning. Creative work in literature, in the art studios and dramatic workshop, laboratory projects, investigations in contemporary social life will be the characteristic methods rather than that of passive reception of a mass of possibly useful but practically "inert" knowledge.

E. Intellectual accomplishment will not be measured by courses or credits. The object set before each student in the Junior Division (normally the first two years) is discovering the field of her principal interest and of her distinctive ability, and demonstrating that ability to the faculty. With this done, her goal becomes that of attaining real expertness in her chosen field—art, literature, or whatever it may be. The degree will be given as a symbol of her maturity and expertness. Activities outside of classrooms, known elsewhere as extra-curricular, will be in most cases community rather than "student" enterprises. They will be combined with the studies to which they are naturally related: *i.e.*, dramatics will tie with fine arts and literature; journalism with the social studies and literature, etc.

F. Although the content of the curriculum has been stated as if defined in terms of traditional subject matter the materials will be selected, organized and related with emphasis upon the knowledge and skills needed in actual contemporary life. The basis for selection of the major work will be the student's aptitude and interest. In some cases the advanced work may be a direct preparation for a paid occupation. In such cases the College will offer training, especially by apprenticeship, or by other direct contact

designed to give the student and her advisors evidence of her fitness for the work of the occupation. Such fields are teaching, library work, journalism, social case work, architecture, industrial arts, business. In cases where preparation is required beyond the A.B. degree, such as medicine and law, the College work may be called pre-professional. There will be a major combining psychology, physiology, and sociology, designed to give an adequate background for intelligent motherhood, teaching, or social work. In every case the College will insist upon broad, thorough training rather than upon the short cut of superficial vocational preparation.

A two months' reading and field period in the winter, extending from Christmas through Washington's Birthday, as well as provision for non-resident work at other times, will allow for arrangements covering apprenticeship in preferred occupations and access to special educational facilities not available at the College.

G. The College is not concerned solely with intellectual training. It is vitally interested in the physical, emotional, and character development of its students, in nothing less than the whole personality of each student. The environment presents inviting opportunities for an extensive health and recreation program. The social life will be democratically organized. Every attempt will be made to secure a faculty who can really understand the life and problems of the students and of the type to win undergraduate cooperation. To this end the College will remain small—the total contemplated enrollment is limited to two hundred and forty.

H. The College charges, based upon actual cost are for tuition \$975, for room and board \$675, for health service fee \$25. Funds equivalent to full tuition for one quarter of the student body are available for reducing tuition charges. These will be allotted in varying amounts according to financial need.

Signed:

ROBERT DEVORE LEIGH, President

WILLIAM H. KILPATRICK, Chairman,


Board of Trustees

BENNINGTON COLLEGE · BENNINGTON, VERMONT

Information for Applicants

FORM A-1

THE ADMISSIONS SYSTEM

HE object of the Bennington College admissions system is to discover and to select girls from all types of schools, in various parts of the country, who have shown serious interest and real promise in at least one of the fields of human achievement such as literature, the fine arts, the natural sciences and the social studies.

The admissions procedure differs in important respects from the customary requirements. The student planning to enter Bennington need not prepare herself in a group of subjects specified by the College. Her preparation will not be interpreted in terms of fifteen units in which she has been certified or passed examinations. No one will be refused admission simply because she has failed in a single subject: *e.g.*, mathematics.

The content and methods of work in the schools are left to the schools themselves. It is presumed that the school heads will work out the best educational arrangements for their own students. By this means the College hopes to open the way for admission equally to graduates of private preparatory

schools, public high schools and the newer or experimental schools throughout the country.

Creditable completion of a secondary school course is the required minimum. In unusual cases persons of maturity, sincere purpose and especial excellence who can offer satisfactory substitutes for formal or regular schooling will be considered for admission. Selection for the freshman class will be made after obtaining all the evidence available, both subjective and objective, regarding each candidate's accomplishment and promise. The quality of the school work will receive the greatest weight. Attention will be given to the worth while enterprises in which the applicant has engaged outside of the curriculum; value will be attached to her ability to take initiative and to do independent work. A girl of unusual capability in one field, combined with temporary or permanent lack of aptitude in another, will be encouraged to seek admission. It should be noted, however, that poor performance in a part of the school work must be compensated for by excellence in at least one field in which the College offers instruction.

THE ADMISSIONS SYSTEM



The following criteria will be used:

1. Grades and school records
2. Responsible recommendation of the principal regarding the applicant's fitness for successful college work
3. General records, observations and personal history, including out of school as well as school performance, which reveal indications of purpose, range of interests, traits of character and personality

This information will be secured from school officials, parents, and from the candidate herself through interviews and written statements.

4. Score on a scholastic aptitude test given by the school or, when it is not a part of the school routine, by the College
5. In individual cases and only when the school's standard of grading or reliability of recommendation is unknown, a newer type of achievement test in one of the subjects in which the student has done her best work

These tests differ from the usual written examination in that they require no previous specific preparation.

With this system of individual selection, the College Director of Admissions can, in the majority of cases, make a decision regarding a student's application a year before the completion of her secondary school course. When this is done the College will reserve the right to cancel the preliminary promise of admission if the student in her last school year, reveals weaknesses previously not apparent.

EXPENSES



Tuition Fee

THE Bennington College financial plan differs from that usually found in colleges in that its charge for tuition is determined by the actual cost of instruction (faculty salaries, maintenance of educational and recreational buildings and equipment). The tuition fee is computed by dividing the total annual instruction expenses by 240, the number of students constituting the contemplated full enrollment. If experience proves that expenses for instruction of high quality are less than estimated, the tuition fee, in subsequent years, will be reduced; if they are greater, it will be increased. For the college year beginning September, 1932, the tuition fee will be \$975.

Reduced Tuition Fee

UNDER this plan students who can afford to do so will pay the full cost of instruction. A necessary part of such a system, however, is the provision of funds to reduce the tuition charge to those students who cannot afford to pay the full cost. Such funds have been given for a portion of the student body. They will be used for reduction of tuition charge (or scholarships) in varying amounts dependent upon the financial means of applicants as shown by a confidential statement to be furnished by parent or guardian on a blank provided for the purpose.

Decisions regarding fitness for admission and reduction of tuition fee are to be considered separately and by different College officers. Reduced tuition allotments will be made after the student has been accepted but before the opening of the college year. Ordinarily an allotment before entrance im-

plies its renewal, if necessary, each year of the student's college course.

The College desires especially not to limit its students to any one economic group. No student, otherwise qualified, should hesitate to apply for admission on account of inability to pay the full tuition fee.

Board and Room

AS in the case of tuition, the charge for room and board will be determined by the actual cost of operation of residences and dining halls (materials, service, maintenance of buildings and equipment, including interest on investment). This charge will be modified in subsequent years if experience proves the estimates too high or too low.

For the college year beginning September, 1932, the charge for room and board will be \$675.

Health Service Fee

A FEE will be charged each student for physical examination and maintenance of health and dispensary service. This also will be based on cost and is subject to modification in subsequent years.

For the college year beginning in September, 1932, the health service fee will be \$25.

Summary

FOR THE COLLEGE YEAR BEGINNING
SEPTEMBER, 1932:

<i>Application fee</i>	\$ 10.00
<i>Tuition fee</i>	975.00
<i>Room and board</i>	675.00
<i>Health service fee</i>	25.00
TOTAL	<hr/> \$1685.00

METHOD OF PROCEDURE
to be followed in applying for admission to the freshman class
OF BENNINGTON COLLEGE



BENNINGTON COLLEGE can accept only a limited number of students in any one year. In order to make procedure clear to applicants, the following plan has been adopted for the college year, 1932-1933.

1. The first step for a prospective student is to fill in and return an application card provided by the College. This should be accompanied by a fee of \$10.00 to cover the cost of securing various preliminary records. The fee is not returnable.
2. Upon receipt of the application card and fee, the following blank forms will be mailed to the applicant: Form A-2; Form A-3. Space is provided on Form A-2 for an unmounted photograph, preferably a snapshot, which must be included with the completed record.
3. *The completed forms should be returned by the applicant within two weeks after they have been received.*
4. A blank (Form A-4) will be sent to the school head. In addition to the applicant's school record, it will ask for her score on a general scholastic aptitude test. If a test of this type has not been taken, the applicant will be required to take such a test at a place and time designated by Bennington College. Such tests are intended to appraise general aptitude in scholastic work; they do not require specific preparation. The nominal cost of tests will be paid by the student.
5. Whenever distance does not make it prohibitive, the applicants for admission in 1932 will be interviewed sometime during the year by a representative of the College.
6. *The first list of applicants will be closed February 1, 1932.* All applicants whose records have been completed will be notified of their acceptance on or before May 15. If it is impossible to accommodate all of the students whose records and recommendations qualify them for admission, a list will be kept of those who are willing to wait for possible vacancies occurring during the summer of 1932.
7. A student applying after February 1, 1932, will be placed on a reserve list to be considered in case vacancies occur. The blanks noted above will be sent to her upon receipt of the application card and arrangements will be made, if necessary, for her to take the scholastic aptitude test. Notification in regard to acceptance will be sent as soon as possible after the complete records have reached the office of the College Director of Admissions.
8. For further information, write to the Director of Admissions, Mrs. Mabel Barbee-Lee.