

VOLUME TWO

# CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

JANET C. LOXLEY and JOHN M. WHITELEY

Foreword by Ralph L. Mosher



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IN COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**Volume II: The Curriculum and Longitudinal Results**

by

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John M. Whiteley*

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## ABOUT THE FRONT COVER

The cover design featuring the Chambered Nautilus (N. Pompilus, Linn), is the inspiration of Vivian Chang of the Publications Office at the University of California, Irvine. She read portions of this book in its manuscript form and subsequently prepared a series of sketches from which this cover was selected. Apart from the subtlety and attractiveness of what Vivian has developed, the metaphor itself is highly appropriate, for it symbolically illustrates the growth process which occurs in the development of character.

The Chambered Nautilus is a member of the class Cephalopoda which contains the nautili, octopods, squids, and cuttlefish. Cephalopoda are the most highly organized of all mollusks and have attained the largest size of any invertebrates. In contrast to the occupants of "ordinary shells" whose bodies fill the entire shell cavity,

the animal of the nautilus uses only a small portion of the shell or outer chamber; and builds pearly partitions behind its body as it increases in size, although a slender fleshy cord extends from the body through all the partitions, thus forming an anchor or mooring to the shell (Verrill, 1936, p. 150).

Several stanzas of a poem by Oliver Wendell Holmes on the Chambered Nautilus describe the growth of the Nautilus and parallel the growth which we have hoped to inspire in the character development of college students.

Year after year beheld the silent toil  
That spread his lustrous coil;

Still, as the spiral grew,  
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,  
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,

Built up its idle door;  
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more . . . .  
"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!

Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length are free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!""\*

### **References**

Verrill, A. H. *Strange sea shells and their stories*. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1936.  
The works of *Oliver Wendell Holmes* (Vol. I). New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1950.

\*From *The works of Oliver Wendell Holmes*, Volume 1, pp. 97-98. The Chambered Nautilus. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1892.

## Appreciations

This opportunity to express appreciation to the individuals, whose efforts made the Sierra Project possible, is especially welcome.

Since the focus of Volume II is on the curriculum, and the student staff were key partners in the implementation, we will begin with them:

*Class of 1979:* Mundo Norte (RA), Jeanette Caldeira, Jocelyn Campos, James Harrison, Kim Kreiling, Chris Leatherwood, Jeanette Eberhardy;

*Class of 1980:* James Harrison (RA), Kevin Clover (RA), Maureen Burris, J. Steven Jennings, Susan Lindsey, Chuan Ren, Valerie Samuel, Norma Yokota, Mundo Norte;

*Class of 1981:* Maureen Burris (RA), Gregory Bolles, Robert Burbank, James Fiorino, Jose Leal, Grizel Norte, Mary Ann Skorpanich, J. Steven Jennings (curriculum coordinator);

*Class of 1982:* Bridgette Berry (RA), J. P. Congleton, John Elston, Carlyle Kidd, Teresa Martinez, Pamela McZeal, Lisa Stangl, Maureen Burris (curriculum coordinator).

Journals were required of all participants in the project. These journal readers provided detailed feedback to Sierra freshmen, and helped create a supportive environment.

Pamela Burton, Jeanette Eberhardy, Carol Findlay-Ducoff, Holly Magaña, Dave Marrero, Martha Morgan, Molly Slaten, Karen Vogel, and Edward Weeks.

Writing about the project was an undertaking which, for the contributors, came on top of other time consuming activities. The contributors to Volume II are therefore very special to us: James B. Craig, Norma Yokota, Barbara Bertin, Martha Morgan, Pat Hill, Ralph L. Mosher, and Norman A. Sprinthall.

The ideas which were incorporated into the curriculum reflect the contribution of practitioners too numerous to mention, but several scholars and theoreticians had a profound effect on the shaping of the project activities: Carl R. Rogers, Albert Ellis, Ralph L. Mosher, James R. Rest, and Norman A. Sprinthall.

The proximate empirical measures of character which have been constructed and refined over the past two decades have opened up new avenues of inquiry. The advancement of research endeavors in principled thinking, ego development, and moral maturity is particularly attributable to: James R. Rest, Jane Loevinger, Ruth Wessler, Anne Colby, Elizabeth Speicher-Dubin, John Gibbs, Dan Candee, and Lawrence Kohlberg.

The Sierra Project approach to evaluation and its implementation is especially indebted to three individuals: Karen H. Nelson, the initial project evaluator who brought to our attention recent advances in developmental psychology and life-span developmental research; and Holly Magaña and Norma Yokota, principal data analysts for the Sierra Project who established the system files and trained our subsequent data analysis teams.

The technical creation and availability of the book itself – its aesthetics, its physical presence, its progress through the design phase, and its distribution – has benefited from the contributions of many different talented people: Vivian Chang, Helen Cernik, Herman Williams, Lori Webb, Jane DuKet, Katherine O’Neil, the officers of the American College Personnel Association, and the officers and staff of the American Association for Counseling and Development.

The curriculum was delivered to four groups of Sierra Hall residents (the classes of 1979, 1980, 1981, and 1982) without whose wholehearted participation, this project and its associated research studies would not have yielded the increased understanding of character development.

Finally, our most heartfelt gratitude goes to two individuals who have been mentioned earlier: James B. Craig and Norma Yokota:

James B. Craig has been with the Sierra Project since its inception. He was the central contact person in the Housing Office, a frequent contributor to curriculum development, the person responsible for overseeing student staff selection, an author of *Volume II*, and the principal classroom instructor in Sierra Hall in the years since 1979.

Norma Yokota has also been with the Sierra Project throughout its duration. She has been a resident of Lago, a student staff member in Sierra, a principal data analyst and supervisor of the data analysis team, an author of *Volume II* and other publications about Sierra, the research associate for *Volume II*, and compiler of the index.

The Sierra Project and this report of it would not have been possible without the contributions and commitment of this extraordinary group of individuals.



## DEDICATION

To our parents: Elmer J. Clark  
Charlotte R. Clark  
Robert H. Whiteley, Sr.  
Alice M. Whiteley

Who instilled in us an appreciation for the importance and potential of higher education.



## FOREWORD: WHY CHARACTER EDUCATION IN COLLEGE

*Ralph L. Mosher*

The Sierra Project was, first and foremost, an experiment in the character education of college freshmen. The effort was to educate for principled thinking, greater moral maturity and ego development. How these ambitious objectives were defined we shall return to presently. But why character education in college? Whiteley and his associates believe it to be a crucial task of the university intentionally to influence the moral thinking of the next generation of society's leaders. And in the direction of a more just society. For me, the view that colleges should take seriously their own commencement rhetoric and consciously educate for character is the most challenging of the *raisons d'etre* Whiteley puts forward in the introduction to this volume: "An experience in higher education should provide an opportunity to reflect on the purposes of learning, on the use to which acquired knowledge is put and on the ethical dilemmas which confront citizens individually and as members of society collectively."

Sierra's further reasons for doing character education included benefits *now* for those students affected: e.g. greater ethical awareness, concern for fairness and the welfare of others, "accomplishments which are ultimately self-rewarding." There was a very interesting extension of the "benefits now" argument. It was the carefully documented thesis that personal growth and psychological maturity in one's youth are closely related to many dimensions of accomplishment in adulthood. In the vernacular, them that has now, git's later. Further, college students will become parents and leaders. Thus there is the broader societal benefit of a "citizenry whose lives are characterized by principled thinking and moral maturity." This seems close to John Dewey's view that "the cause of education . . . is one of

development, focusing indeed in the growth of students, but to be conceived even in this connection as part of the larger development of society” (Dewey, 1968, p. 69).

Related objectives of the Sierra Project were to add to prior studies of the impact of the college experience on young people, the psychological development per se of college students and the broader transition from adolescence to young adulthood. As an experiment in character education, Sierra also was positioned uniquely to contribute to an emerging body of applied research on how to relate what is being taught to that which students already know, where they are in the maturation of their moral thinking, understanding of themselves, and so on. In short, it was to provide practical pedagogical knowledge of how to promote those competencies which Whiteley believes constitute character. Here, in the education of college students, we have had so little from the past to guide us.

Several personal reflections on character development as an aim of higher education may be pertinent. As a parent, a teacher of graduate students and an educator, I am in profound agreement with the rationale of the Sierra Project. If I could choose but two competencies for my own children, rationality and character would be in a dead heat. Trying to know and do what is right is, I believe, at the heart of integrity. Further, having taught for 25 years in elitist institutions of higher education, I recognize that they *do* affect students and powerfully so. But it is the tacit and secular nature of the institutional norms which worry me. A pervasive idolatry of intellect; the pressures for academic and professional achievement at virtually any cost; the relative impact of studies in science, technology and management as compared to the humanities or normative philosophy; the “for sale” sign to corporate, foundation or government funding sources of many of our ablest professional minds and research centers are but a few of the institutional values which characterize the universities I have known.

The arrogance of “the best and the brightest” as to what is right for America and its ablest youth would be wonderfully ironic and diverting if it were not taken so seriously (as Vietnam was to make clear). Are not the academy’s epistemologies, our technologies, our co-option by American corporations, funding agencies, governments to be critically examined for their worth to the individual and his/her society? Do we not owe our youth such moral examination of the premises of *their* society and lives, if not our own? In this latter connection, are we as faculty and parents numb or desensitized to our socio-moral compromises; paralyzed or uncertain in the face of the great moral issues of our time (nuclear arms, economic and

social injustice in this society, sexism, racism, hunger and so on) or do we fear an enlightened younger generation which rejects us as compromised?

Perhaps the flaccidity of formal character education in colleges is the result of faculty character unravelling. Clearly, however, adolescence and young adulthood are “prime times” for the building of a personal epistemology by students: the values and priorities by which the young will live and order their personal and social lives. Maturation impells them to form their norms aided or unaided (i.e., in response to many random and inimical forces). Faculty, in my view, have the wisdom and the “position” to help; by listening to young people’s pain and confusion, by mentoring, by example.

Willie Sutton robbed banks because that was where the money was. Universities are where the best and the brightest of America’s youth spend 4 to 8 or more formative years. That universities “teach” or model a hierarchy of values seems irrefutable. That all of us internalize the values of the important social structures (families, schools, corporations, etc.) around us is equally apparent. Intellectual honesty (“*veritas*”) requires that these values be acknowledged and actively examined against the same canons of rational analysis that we require students to apply and hone *vis a vis* the formal academic curriculum. To reiterate an earlier point, our young people seek to know the right, the good, the beautiful as well as the true and they search in the worst of times. Times in which two-thirds of the world’s children are hungry; six percent only of the Pentagon’s contracts are competitively bid and England’s best and brightest, the Oxford Debating Union, resolve that there are no moral differences between the foreign policies of the United States and the Soviet Union. Against such moral dilemmas an education which seeks truth but smuggles the right and the good is either corrupt or deformed. A higher education which pursues the true, the right and the good wherever they lead would seem false neither to its students or itself.

### **Character Defined:**

The Sierra Project defined “character” generally as the college student’s moral reasoning and his or her self knowledge. The definition actually spread to more than this. Understanding what is the right, fair or good thing to do and then doing these things, and acting consistently were seen as the moral component of character. “Ego,” the young person’s understanding of him/herself and his/her social world was the second broad component of character. Why ego was included in the definition is

not entirely clear. Basically, it seems because Loevinger has applied Piagetian concepts of stage and sequence to the study of character development: "Our discussion of ego development includes some topics previously discussed under moral development: socialization, character structure and even cognitive development" (Loevinger, 1976, p. 4). Whiteley relies heavily on Loevinger's "central claim . . . that many diverse aspects of thought, interpersonal relations, impulse control and character grow at once, in some more or less coherent way" (Loevinger, 1976, p. ix). By considering moral actions and personal maturity, Whiteley and his colleagues went well beyond an equation of character as the emergence of more comprehensive moral reasoning. The reach was for a more wholistic conception. "Character" of freshmen in the Sierra Project was made up in about equal parts of the complexity of their moral reasoning, whether their actions were consonant, how they defined themselves as persons and what their concepts of society were.

This was a definition governed in large measure by common sense, ordering concepts from cognitive developmental psychology and, in particular, what could be measured: i.e. the availability of practical tests of moral and ego development. To a considerable degree, psychological thought and tools, the available measures, in fact defined character at the empirical level. One cannot but be reminded of the statement that "intelligence is what psychologists measure as intelligence." At another practical level, character in these young people was sought for, and promoted educationally, in their *thinking* about right and wrong; in the degree that they articulated a sense of social connection to their fellow students, in the amount of empathy and justice they evidenced and in the extent to which they could assert personal rights without infringing on the rights of peers. Clearly the Sierra Project was much influenced by Kohlberg's view that morality is rooted in one's *thinking* about right and wrong, one's understanding of justice in individual and social relations.

I am impressed that Whiteley struggled with the thorny task of defining character. The governing constructs are set out unpretentiously. Whiteley makes no claim to have cut the Gordian knot of character's definition. Similarly, the project was not paralyzed by the philosophical, psychological and empirical crevasses that radiate everywhere on the face of character. Extraordinary care was given to research design and to measurement. There were, not surprisingly, anomalies. Actual study of whether Sierra students acted as they said they should do was deferred to the study of their lives after graduation. How and if these young people connect their personal lives to a formal morality; whether morality is a very private

competence drowned out by a secular, “amoral” tide in the larger society are “eternal” theoretical questions. Sierra’s answers, at their best, are for now. But they are crafted with a profound and scholarly respect for the psychological and measurement complexities inherent in the concept of character. Whatever Sierra was, it was not a Philistine nor a “pop” psychology.

It is one thing to define character in college students. That act, per se, probably leaves most normative philosophers demanding equal time. To translate such definitions of character into commensurately complex educational practices is an act of greater temerity, of exceptional venturesomeness. To further character in the busy secular, scientific technological market place of a major university adds to the burden. That early educational practices may only partially represent a fuller vision of character education should surprise no one—author or reader. Indeed, Volume 2 is a rich Michelin guide to character education practice in the college years. Its enduring legacy is a most detailed exposition and analysis of many practical ways to promote character among college students.

### **The Aims of the Sierra Curriculum: “On Leaping Tall Buildings In A Single Bound”**

Moral education in American public schools during the 1970’s was done primarily by the classroom discussion of moral dilemmas embedded in the academic curriculum. American history, literature, biology, health and so on are subject matters replete with moral issues: slavery, the Nuremberg trials, the massacre at Kent State, *Andersonville*, “Letter From The Birmingham Jail,” dioxin, “acid rain” are but a few of the examples. Teachers in many public schools were taught how to highlight such issues within their discipline and to conduct formal classroom discussions of them. The objective was to encourage children and young adults to think more deeply and ethically about the issues of right and wrong, good and bad, and the rights and obligations so raised. The results were encouraging: the moral thinking of many students became more mature from such instruction.

A second emphasis in public school moral education in the 1970’s was the discussion by students of everyday or “real” moral issues occurring in the life of the classroom or the school. Here the effort was to have students and faculty participate in the actual governance and adjudication of “their” special institution. Again, the use of the school as a natural laboratory for

political, social, and moral education yielded some encouraging evidence as to its effects in promoting students' character development.

Although broadly influenced by this parallel movement in the public schools, the Sierra Project did not, by the large, include the systematic formal discussion of either abstract moral dilemmas nor those naturally occurring in the residence. This happened for several reasons. There was no psychologist associated with the project who had made moral development his/her principal theoretical focus. (That would be true in most colleges, incidentally). Nor was there a normative philosopher or ethicist aboard. Almost all the Sierra students were at a very similar stage in their moral reasoning and therefore, it was difficult for them to "bootstrap" themselves. The student staff were reluctant to identify the moral issues which arose naturally. The project leadership saw the necessity for sequenced moral discussions but felt such to be beyond the scope of the project. Hindsight might suggest that was an opportunity lost.

Moreover, the Sierra Project had multiple and very ambitious goals for its students, the problem of leaping tall buildings in a single bound. These included: "to help the freshmen make the transition to young adulthood, to be responsible for themselves . . . to take a more active role in their education and their lives, to shift from egocentrism to awareness of others and to become aware of cultural and social issues. We were concerned with their moral, ego and character development and with fostering a sense of community amongst them." One may question (as Whiteley does whimsically) whether goals this broad make any sense. Conversely one may ask whether an education which does not respond comprehensively to the life demands of freshmen can add meaning to the difficult psychological and social transformations being experienced. One wonders whether the Sierra team, in retrospect, would pursue more singular, developmental goals; whether in developmental education we need to learn to walk before we run.

The immediate point is that the Sierra curriculum went much beyond the promotion of moral reasoning. Yet one of the principal educational means to promote character, as the project *operationally* defined it, was not used. Here I refer to the formal discussion of ethical issues in the academic disciplines of the undergraduate curriculum. That omission, understandable as it was, put added burdens on the formal Sierra course and on the residence life to carry the day for character. It is also important to note a related bind. Whether Sierra was successful in promoting character was to be measured by an instrument very responsive to the formal, structural properties of moral reasoning and their exercise.

The Sierra staff “tried to enhance the moral atmosphere of (the residence) through our efforts at community building . . . and at bringing moral/conflict issues before the group rather than covering them up. Examples of the latter are stealing, racial conflicts and roommate conflicts. Also the live-in student staff tried to highlight issues as they occurred; to aid students in resolving them.” It is not easy for the reader to ascertain how systematically this was done. Two impressions: first, it was done less than Whiteley believes; second, that the hidden moral curriculum, everyday life in Sierra hall and the “peer culture,” largely worked their will (as probably they always do in significant degree). A case study in *Portraits in Character* (Lee and Whiteley, in preparation), for example, very courageously reports how several students, caught smoking “dope,” blackmailed the staff by threatening to withdraw from the research project and take other Sierrans with them. A further possibility is that many of the Sierra Project’s effects on the freshmen were as attributable to this hidden curriculum as to the Sierra course proper.

In a project with as many objectives and activities as this one, identifying cause and effects is a most complex matter. But a 24 hour residential community in which all subjects break bread together, and live together was a curriculum designer’s dream nonetheless. With such an extraordinary complex interaction of people and experiences to manage and understand, missed opportunities and so on may be the obverse side of all this. Yet, as we learn from initiatives such as Sierra, such 24 hour communities may yield a rich harvest of human growth.

### **Taking the measure of the man and the woman:**

It is hard to be critical of a project so honest about its gaffes. It is not hard to learn from it, however. And that is the great contribution of this volume. Sierra underscores that a first premise of education for character development is to know how mature, morally, one’s students are. Here the writer bears a direct responsibility. At the inception of the project, I had suggested to Whiteley that Sierra would be the first character education project in a position to promote the transition to what Kohlberg had termed post conventional moral thinking. Along with other so-called “experts” in the field, I assumed that late adolescence/early adulthood was the time when that transition would be happening normally. Thus Sierra aimed its initial curricula at a moral stage 4 to study stage 5 transition. Much to my embarrassment, the Sierra Project staff found themselves

confronted with a population of very conventional, stage 3 moral thinkers. They were still prototypical high schoolers.

To the degree that the Sierra curriculum incorporated, or presumed thinking about intellectual or ideological themes relatively abstract to 18 year old freshmen (for example, Module 2: democratic decision making; Module 3: conflict resolution in society), to that extent a meeting of the minds would be difficult. Again and again in the discussion of the Sierra curriculum, it is reported how the thinking of the freshmen was to prove a stumbling block to the aspirations of the investigators: “This ease with the concrete and difficulty with the abstract, or theoretical was to re-occur in every module.” “Again and again when asked for abstractions (e.g., ‘How were decisions made in your Region?’) they would reply with concrete details (‘We decided to get money and travel passes for everyone’).” “Most of our freshmen often tried to avoid cognitive and interpersonal conflict. They wanted to ‘be nice’. At their level for moral and ego development, there was a tendency to believe there was always a ‘right’ answer in any situation or dilemma; having conflict of any type was confusing and upsetting to them.” “Freshmen as a group are quite opinionated and tend to have a dualistic level of cognitive complexity.” And so on.

While Sierra did not test for the freshmen’s cognitive development, in Piagetian terms, it is likely that less than half of American high school graduates are capable of fully abstract thought. The authors’ repeated references to the concretism of the Sierra students raises again the question of how many of these students were ready for the intellectual demands: for abstraction, hypothetical-deduction thinking; for many of the basic instructional concepts: “conflict resolution,” “just” or “democratic community” central to the course and so on. But in theory we would want to expose students to thinking and behaving just beyond their present understanding, in what Vygotski calls their “zone of next development.” To do that with the range of objectives of the Sierra Project would be an extraordinarily sophisticated task. But knowing where Freshmen are in their present thinking and behavior is a *sine qua non*.

### **The Sierra Curriculum in Practice:**

The formal Sierra curriculum consisted of 10 modules taught in the fall, winter and spring quarters; the journal which each student kept; and the community service opportunity for those who chose to participate. The overall rationale for the particular modules/experiences is not explicitly

stated in terms of current developmental theories. For example, Erikson contends that Sierra freshmen are pre-occupied with identity or epistemological issues: *Who am I? What will I be when I grow up? By what values will I live?* The forming of intimate, caring relationships with others might be a further pre-occupation. Levinson believes Sierrans face two psychosocial tasks: to terminate adolescence and begin early adulthood. Further they are in the earliest phase of that transition: "A young man needs about 15 years to emerge from adolescence, find his place in adult society and commit himself to a more stable life" (Levinson, 1978, p. 71). Separating from one's family and "breaking up that old gang of mine" are but two of the painful changes facing the Sierra cohort. My point is that a closely reasoned linkage between one or more developmental theories of late adolescence and the curriculum is not included. Perhaps it may appear in later volumes or as a retrospective. Certainly it would be an invaluable contribution to those building subsequent character education curricula in college.

Much collective time and thought was given by the Sierra staff to the development of the several modules. That is as it should be in education for development. As Dewey said: "withdrawal from the hard and fast and narrow contents of the old curriculum is only the negative side of the matter. If we do not go on and go far in the positive direction of providing a body of subject matter much richer, more varied and flexible and also in truth more definitive, judged in terms of the experience of those being educated, than traditional education supplied, we shall tend to leave an educational vacuum in which anything may happen" (1968).

For the reader, Volume II defines Sierra's aims in character education and describes a phethora of means for their realization. My purpose is not to review all ten modules; that is a task for others. But the rich tapestry of character education practices reported in Volume II would be profoundly disserved without some general commentary. Following the author's lead, let me review the curriculum of the first quarter. My purpose is to draw out some, by no means all, of the curricular learnings for anyone wishing to emulate Whiteley and Associates' pioneering work.

The aim of the first module is perfectly clear. Sierra was full of freshmen anxious about their academic success. The focus on learning and study skills (how to "survive" in your native university) was a natural one. "Adjustment" has long been a pre-occupation of counselors. The academic anxiety associated with the transition to college somewhat allayed, the project turned to "Community Building," through democratic decision making and student planned classes, and to "Conflict Resolution in Society."

The project, with its usual commendable honesty, reports that the students initially did not know how to act in class. The “informal atmosphere (was) a signal to relax totally, especially to stop thinking; the perfect opportunity to socialize, to see their friends and chat with them.” (With the great advantage of hindsight, it is probable that is exactly what one should expect stage 3 adolescents to do: i.e. to stop thinking about what adults wanted them to consider academically and to think about one another, to build social community as they understand it.)

Another objective of the staff was to get freshmen to take a more active role in their own education and lives. Loxley shares two very telling anecdotes. One is the comment from a freshman. “If I hear the staff mention the ‘60’s once more I think I’ll throw up!” A second reports an exchange. Staff member: “This is your class, you can (should) decide what happens here. To which a freshman replied: ‘You decide about attendance. You’re the teacher and that’s what you’re paid for, isn’t it?’ This opinion received almost unanimous (student) support.” And why wouldn’t it? The Sierra freshmen were solidly conformist, very *other* directed, still very dependent on influential others for the rules of the game: parents, friends, Irvine professors who lectured, gave notes, tested rigorously and so on. The autonomy espoused by the project must seem, as yet, alien, even frightening, a developmental gain won by the staff, inch by inch or year by year. Whether the freshman could be “given” autonomous choosing by this, or any curriculum, is moot. However, it may be that the Sierra approach provides the next feasible step toward autonomy.

The power of the students’ prior academic and competitive socialization to confound the character aims of the project was brought home in other ways as well. The faculty decision was “Pass/No Pass.” The freshmen, in turn, were displeased. They wanted better grades and the chance to get an ‘A’. The moral issues of academic and personal competition, win-lose, being number one and meritocracy explicit in this trivial, every-day dilemma seem to have been overlooked.

The last module of the Fall semester was “Teaching Empathy and Social Perspective Taking.” The aim was to help the Sierra students listen, understand and respond to one another. The theoretical reason for the module was that “an increase in empathy has been found to have a positive association with an increase in moral reasoning. Similarly, social perspective taking has also been found to stimulate the capacity for moral reasoning.” Understanding people whose views and values are different can create dissonance, challenge and, thereby, pace growth in one’s own thinking. The Sierra project also valued better communication and understanding as practical ends in themselves

with friends and family. Whiteley argued their special relevance for college freshmen, who are frequently self-absorbed and ego-centric. Nor was it possible to imagine a Sierra "community" without the presence of such capabilities.

Yet Sierra devoted six formal classes only to these capacities. That is somewhat puzzling in light of several comments the authors made. First, "Being a superb understander . . . is extremely difficult, may be impossible without years of practice." Second, "Perhaps nowhere else during the year were we as directly persuasive about our own beliefs . . . . A key developmental issue (for our students) is learning to broaden this frame of reference beyond peer and immediate family groups when reasoning about choosing values and proper behavior. Our students would frequently dismiss without consideration any frame of reference or point of view of those with different beliefs, value or life-styles. Conflict with peers or immediate family members is anxiety-producing, and Sierra freshmen would go to great lengths to avoid rather than resolve conflict." So there is no doubt of the importance given to empathy and communication by the project.

A very systematic, "micro-counseling" way of teaching empathy and communication "skills" was adopted. It included a sophisticated combination of modeling by the principal classroom instructor (herself a clinical psychologist), direct instruction and practice, the use of audio and video tapes in coaching students and so on. The findings of this module are interesting. Sierra students uniformly were unempathetic to one another in their first attempts, yet thought they were doing fine. Such courses have often found the phenomena of advice giving, interrupting, not listening, moralizing and projecting one's own solutions or difficulties onto the other person. In the staff's view, "few students did anything resembling empathy or social perspective taking (at first) although most wanted to be helpful and supportive." In a nutshell, Sierrans (and probably most young people) communicate like ships that pass in the night.

By the end of the module, 90 percent of the students said their listening skills had improved. What the empirical data are on this point have not yet been presented. But there is evidence from analogous if longer, courses with high school students that such skills can be taught. The staff felt less success in persuading the students of Albert Ellis' view that how we think about painful, difficult or confusing events determines our actual feelings, that we can control, rationally or stoically, our feeling. "For at least 25 per cent the concepts made no sense." Obviously, cognition cannot always control or modulate emotion, especially when abstract thinking is still very

new or tenuous, experience is limited and the emotions are very strong, as is often the case in adolescence.

Having been associated with some of the first attempts to teach counseling to adolescents, one or two reflections may be pertinent. The objectives of doing so have changed very little. Counseling psychologists are teaching, “giving away” as part of the general social education of young people, what they as a profession, have learned about the subtleties of communicating with people who are confused or in pain. The link between enhancing empathy and moral reasoning is now much clearer. The method of teaching has become far more direct, systematic, indeed behavioral than was the case in the earlier high school peer counseling programs. I think some opportunities to make personal meaning may have been sacrificed to efficiency in teaching skills. Further, whether counseling is a generalizable model of “ideal” human communication merits careful re-examination.

The Sierra students as quoted by Loxley and Whiteley sound like they desperately need these skills. (“Parent Effectiveness,” “Teacher Effectiveness,” “Executive Effectiveness” programs, all of which incorporate similar curricula, suggest that adolescent miscommunication foreshadows much adult “deafness” and “dumbness.”) Yet many of the Sierra students did not understand or take to the experience. The developmental status of those students who especially benefitted as over against those who did not is worth examining. There is some suggestion that empathy/listening skills training may be especially pertinent for adolescents moving from pre-conventional moral reasoning to stage 3 thinking but not so for students already there.

Nonetheless empathy, being heard and understood, is a rare and, I believe, precious experience in life. Knowing how and when to offer it (and not to do so) is a human capacity with great power for the general good. Part of wisdom (is that part of character?) is to know what is good and valuable between people and to act accordingly. Eighteen year olds have more excuses than most of us if they do not understand the power and potential of such competencies.

### **The Benefits of Hindsight:**

Several general observations about the formal Sierra curriculum may be pertinent to those considering replication efforts. First, the curriculum was developed and taught by a team: a professor, a resident assistant in Sierra, six student staff members who lived in the residence hall and assorted others. In my own experience, a curriculum planned by a com-

mittee becomes, to some degree, a conceptual bouillabaisse. But there are countervailing benefits. The Sierra team, for example underscored a powerful point about character education made by Erikson: "There is also an age specific ethical capacity in older youth that we should learn to foster. That we, instead, consistently neglect this ethical potential and, in fact, deny it with the moralistic reaction that we traditionally employ toward and against youth (*anti-institutional, hedonistic, desacrilizing*) is probably resented much more by young people than our dutiful attempts to keep them in order by prohibition" (Erikson, 1967, p. 870).

Sierra to its credit, gave slightly older college students a major responsibility in the character education of freshmen. "Six members of the student staff and the Resident Assistant were our front line teachers; living in the residence hall, they interacted as more than peers and less than formal instructors." Had there been a significant number of seniors living as staff in Sierra, this mentoring effect probably would have been even greater. Yet the powerful influence these older students, as people presumably at the next stage of experience and possibly development, had on the freshmen seems clear. Further is the stimulus to their own character development which being front line teachers may have yielded.

It is also interesting to note what kind of curriculum and teaching emerges when psychologists turn to education to realize their aims. Whiteley acknowledges that teaching character and building a sense of community are not the province of psychology any more than other disciplines. Further, Sierra would have been different if planned and implemented from another disciplinary perspective. That the two principal authors of the Sierra curriculum were counseling/clinical psychologists, therefore, must be figured in any assessment. Loxley and Whiteley, as professional psychologists, came to their task with less subject matter pre-occupation than had they been in ethics, moral philosophy or the law. Rather, their experience with students' pain and confusion in the adjustment to college probably caused them to see the person as the critical or "hard" factor in higher education, with academic discipline the "soft" factor. (In virtually every other class attended by the Sierrans these priorities most assuredly would be reversed.)

Clearly the authors came to the Sierra project with values: character, community, the Dewey view that students and their all-around development come first; that an academic response to the non-academic aspects of coming of age: to the person becoming the physicist, is as important, or more so, than his/her knowledge of physics. The authors also drew on very diverse forms of "psychological education." A long disquisition

on psychological education is not warranted here. Suffice it to say that the reference is to systematic education, including curriculum, teaching and active experiences designed to promote broad human competencies: cognition, moral reasoning, personal development, and so on.

The Sierra curriculum is the first organized to further character development in college freshmen. The point is that there are first and second generation, initial and more comprehensive curricula. The great value of any generation of curriculum is what may be learned from them about promoting human competencies more effectively. That is the spirit in which Volume II, and this foreword, are written. In the most literal sense, the authors are explorers in an area, the definition and education of character, for which apart from the teaching of ethics, the preaching of the good book or the Talmud, the modeling of Mr. Chips, the Peace Corps or the Marine Corps R.O.T.C., colleges are without answers.

A further reflection comes with the professional territory of the authors and the locale of the college. It might be tempting to make too much of the fact that the project, and its students, had their roots in southern California, with its traditions of encounter groups and a rainbow-like proliferation and popularization of psychologies applied to the human condition. Behavioral psychology (Jacobsonian deep muscle relaxation); desensitization to test anxiety; non-verbal behavior ("Inane topic exercises"); elaborate role-playing (SIMSOC) all figure prominently in the curriculum.

Sierra used a mind boggling variety of psychological experiences with its students. Yet woven throughout what might uncharitably seem like a Woody Allen satire of "life adjustment at U.C.I." is a much older, more conservative concern: by what norms youths will live their personal and social lives, and the concern of the elders for the moral character of the young.

### **On Doing What We Say:**

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I want to illustrate again how attentive one must be to the opportunities presented by the hidden curriculum in such efforts at character education: Let me cite several examples. Early in the fall quarter, the Sierra students and staff went on a retreat to a conference center in the California mountains. The formal curriculum was to be Module 3: "Conflict Resolution in Society." The aim was to promote understanding of conflict resolution and of society building in general. The unanticipated learnings were potentially rich ones. A first

was that several men ducked clean-up and cooking duties. "One student said proudly that his mother had always done everything for him and no one had ever expected him to do any kitchen or clean-up work. At this point in the year students did not confront each other about any issues like this." A second issue was the unfamiliarity and fear that a camping experience provoked in some Sierrans, especially blacks. "For some, the trees, insects, darkness, cold and somewhat primitive conditions . . . ranged from unpleasant to frightening . . . (these students suggested that, in future, we describe the conditions in detail *before* the trip). Many of the Anglo student staff members thought this attitude was 'stupid'."

A third opportunity was the failure of the student staff members to confront Sierrans observed stealing T-shirts and other items from the camp storehouse. The staff members were divided by this real moral dilemma. "The student staff had been afraid to confront the (freshmen) directly during the incident . . . (they) saw themselves as students and peers . . . And they thought that informing the instructor and asking her to confront the students would be like calling in a parent or 'ratting' on the students. As a result they did nothing at the time and brought up the issue at the next staff meeting. The instructor believed each individual who had stolen should be confronted directly, asked to discuss the theft and to return the items. Most of the (student) staff disagreed and were unwilling to tell the instructor *who* the students were." The compromise was a class to present the issue of stealing. And the class was imaginatively done. But the opportunity for the Sierra community to confront a real moral issue in its own life was missed.

As a final illustration of how the hidden curriculum of Sierra worked its will on the formal curriculum, there is the authors' acknowledgment that "most of the community building came from going on the retreat together, not from playing a game." Further, *SIMSOC* built community rather than understanding of notions of conflict resolution or of society in general. Again my point is not that such contradictions between what curriculum planners say and do can be avoided. Rather, they come with the territory. The craft of curriculum and teaching is increasingly to recognize and capitalize on such contradictions and serendipities. The character of character education is forged in how consistently they are acknowledged and resolved.

### **A Summary:**

I must desist from further detailed commentary on the Sierra curriculum lest my role in writing a foreword become more hopelessly

confused with that of the reviewers of this book. One point in transition to a more general conclusion, it should be palpably clear that Volume II is a very detailed book about the *practices* of character education in college. The volume is richly replete with curricular and teaching details. Everything the reader might want to know about how character education was conducted at the University of California, Irvine is here. Clearly my attention has been much distracted by the curriculum and really only one-third of the educational practices described. For readers aspiring to replication studies, Loxley and Whiteley's book is incredibly valuable, I believe, precisely for the richness of practice which it describes (warts and all).

Levinson, in his *Seasons of a Man's Life* dismisses the first 18 years as "only a prelude" to adult life. One might add: some prelude! Similarly Levinson looks at the "early adult transition" (the developmental period of Sierra freshmen) through the lens of the whole adult life. He sees the principal tasks facing the young adult men as separating from his family or origin and forging an initial adult life structure albeit a very tentative one. Levinson, who talked to men in their 40's, does not ascribe great importance to this young adult transition. In the long view he implies: Why bother very much about what is happening? It is all to be shaken up, undone and re-constituted several times over before 40 or 50 anyway. And success is ultimately elusive for us all.

But with Whiteley and associates, I believe there are compelling reasons to act educationally on behalf of character in the college years. Life itself requires major commitments/decisions from young people: academic or other achievement, choice of a "major," vocation, job relationships long before they have had the experience to acquire the wisdom or the moral insight to make such choices sagely. Time and events wait for no man or woman. Nor do the problems Sierra youth face get any easier. The "Candy" and "Cody" case studies to appear as part of *Portraits in Character* (Lee and Whiteley, in preparation) vividly document the mindwarping, existential moral choices facing young people at Irvine. Nor is there any reason to believe these are peculiar to fast lane living in the land of the lotus eaters, southern California. And the protagonists' bewilderment, pain and inability to bootstrap themselves, to live with integrity either by the old or the newest norms comes through powerfully in these case studies. To remain impassive, relativistic or unavailable in the face of such anguished young people is itself a failure of character at both the personal and institutional lure. That is something, I am sure, which Whiteley and his colleagues were responding to in the Sierra project.

Conversely, as we have already observed, the souls of these young people are actively sought by many secular gods in the modern university. The idolatry of intellect is but one. The promise of ineluctable individual and human progress if young people will only follow science, technology, medicine and so on is another. So, too, corporations outside the university actively solicit brains and “management” skills on behalf of individual gain and stockholder profit. R.O.T.C.’s openly buy youth for country and war with tax-payers’ dollars. Against this secular, ostensibly “value-relative” college environment (which, in my view, is hustling all kinds of character priorities) are arrayed very few voices for deliberation, moral principle, an examination of what is right, just and good. And the voices that are raised are often pitted one against another rather than on behalf of the young (philosophers who won’t deign to talk to psychologists or educators; psychologists who insist on unconditional positive regard for every person, no matter how fascistic, racist or authoritarian their view may be; women developmentalists who argue that women’s special moral voice has been denied and who boycott the forum and so on).

In a university world, then, in which intellect seems so dominant, so sure; where the personal and social mores seem so factured and up for grabs; where young people experience so much adult cant, moralizing, hypocrisy and flat-out seduction; where anguishing moral dilemmas are answered only by secularism, Sierra burns like a beacon in the darkness.

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## INTRODUCTION: A RATIONALE FOR THE SIERRA PROJECT

*John M. Whiteley*

For school and society, character education represents an opportunity to influence the structure of thinking of the next generation of citizens — those persons who will lead and serve our institutions and, as parents, shape the nature of future generations. Young people are especially open to new influences during their years in college. They come into contact with a wide variety of new associations and ideas in an environment where improving the quality of thinking is a primary goal. A growing body of literature indicates that young people will be more effective in utilizing what they learn in school if they have developed psychological and personal skills (such as those derived from character education) in addition to those provided by the traditional high school and college curricula.

The Sierra Project, the subject of this book, seeks to influence the development of college students on dimensions of character. There has been very little previous research on the character development of college students and the factors which influence it. Therefore, the Sierra Project is also a longitudinal study of: 1) the effects of a new approach to character education, and 2) the character development of students during the college years.

### **The Research Tradition Which Influenced the Curriculum and Evaluation**

In the past decade there has been a veritable explosion of knowledge about the psychological and intellectual development of college students, and the role which colleges and universities can have in influencing the

course of that development. New insights have come principally from a series of research studies conducted throughout the country which have their theoretical bases in developmental and counseling psychology.

These studies have been conducted in an educational and psychological terrain previously charted by three different types of studies: those on the impact of college experience (Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; Newcomb, 1967; Astin, 1977; Chickering and Associates, 1981), those on the psychological development of college students (Sanford, 1956, 1962; White, 1952; Katz, 1968; Chickering, 1969; King, 1973; Sanford and Axelrod, 1979; Chickering and Associates, 1981; Heath, 1968), and those on the developmental stages which characterize the shift from late adolescence to early adulthood (Kohlberg and Kramer, 1969; King, 1977; Kitchener, 1977; Gilligan and Kohlberg, 1973; Weathersby, 1981; Perry, 1970, 1981; Erikson, 1950, 1959, 1968; Chickering and Havighurst, 1981; Kohlberg, 1969, 1973; Lasker, 1978; Gilligan and Murphy, 1979; Knefelkamp, 1974; Whiteley and Associates, 1982; Turiel, 1972; Loevinger, 1976).

Closely related to this latter line of studies is the research in recent years which has examined the notion of sequencing educational experiences based upon the developmental level of the student (Rest, 1974, 1979; Knefelkamp, 1974; Perry, 1970, 1981; Whiteley, 1980; Whiteley and Associates, 1982). This inquiry is based on what is known as cognitive-developmental theory originating with the work of Piaget (1932, 1960).

The focus of the curriculum development and research evaluation which is reported herein is on one domain within the cognitive-developmental tradition: character development as it encompasses the constructs of principled thinking, moral maturity, and ego development. There is a broader concern, however, relating back to the genesis of scholarly inquiry into the interaction of college student and university: that of the impact of the college experience on students, and on the growth tasks which college students are confronting in the transition from late adolescence to early adulthood.

The research focus of the Sierra Project is directed to understanding the individual, and then to his or her relationship to others in the university setting. A description of the context (physical, social, and psychological) in which that individual is developing is an adjunct to an analysis of the wholeness of a life in the process of attaining adulthood in our society. Sanford (1982) has characterized such an approach as personology: a consideration of the person in his or her entirety. This fundamental approach is reflected in the choices which have been made about how to evaluate the Sierra Project: a decision to focus both on aspects of the

individual in the context of the group (the Survey Design as reported in Whiteley, 1980; and Whiteley and Associates, 1982), and the individual in the context of his or her life as documented in intensive case studies (the Intensive Design as reported in Whiteley, 1980; and Whiteley and Associates, 1982).

### **The Rationale for Character Education During the College Years**

The Sierra Project presents a curriculum designed to develop in university students a greater capacity for ethical sensitivity and awareness, an increased regard for equity in human relationships, and the ability to translate this enhanced capacity and regard into a higher standard of fairness and concern for the common good in all realms of their lives. These accomplishments are viewed as ultimately self-rewarding. Their development constitutes a central rationale for the Sierra Project effort at character education. There is, however, a second rationale which is to be found in the benefit to society of a citizenry whose lives are characterized by principled thinking and moral maturity. Such individuals will be more responsible citizens, leaders, participants, and parents. Society as a whole is therefore a beneficiary of character education for college students.

Personal growth and psychological maturity are closely related to many dimensions of accomplishment in adulthood (See Chapter 3). The Sierra Project's approach to character education emphasizes ego development *and* the achievement of a higher level of moral reasoning in order to produce general personal growth and psychological maturity in interpersonal relationships. Therefore, a third rationale for the Sierra Project is in the ultimate benefit to its participants throughout their adult lives in terms of greater potential for accomplishment.

The fourth rationale for the Sierra Project is the impact of moral and psychological education programs on the level of moral reasoning and ego development of junior high school, high school and college students (Rest, 1979; Mosher and Sprinthall, 1971; Mosher, 1979; Scharf, 1978; Erickson and Whiteley, 1980; Whiteley and Bertin, 1982). The evidence is conclusive that properly sequenced educational and psychological experiences raise the level of moral reasoning and ego development of adolescents and young adults. This research is extraordinarily hopeful in its implications: for society, education can make a difference in the moral reasoning of the citizenry.

Inquiry into devising curricula for character education, however, is in its infancy. Research has just begun on the crucial problem of determining the optimal match between the developmental level of students and the sequencing of educational experiences. Nonetheless, the legacy of the past decade is one of documenting the extraordinary potential of our educational institutions for positively impacting the character of students.

The fifth rationale for the Sierra Project is the nature of the challenges addressed during the four years of undergraduate education. For perhaps the first time in their lives, college students are physically and psychologically autonomous from those who have previously been highly influential in their lives: parents and siblings, school-age chums, and high school teachers and friends. Since the vast majority of beginning college students reason in a highly conventional manner, their moral referents are those people immediately around them. It is to significant others and to the peer group that college students look for guidance in formulating their thinking about ethical issues. Homogeneity of influence predominated in high school. The typical college environment, however, contains the opportunity for exposure to, and intellectual confrontation with, diversity in beliefs, lifestyles, and personality types. This is especially the case where there is a coed, multicultural, and mixed socio-economic population, as in the Sierra Project.

A further reason why the college years forcefully impact moral reasoning is the challenge of the growth tasks of late adolescence and early adulthood: securing identity, seeking intimacy, choosing enduring values, and initiating career and educational explorations of crucial significance. Each of these tasks contains the seeds of significant moral dilemmas. Their satisfactory resolution involves thoughtful moral choices. The extraordinary opportunity provided by the college years for impacting moral reasoning, therefore, is a fifth rationale for character education in the university.

A sixth rationale for the Sierra Project is a declarative statement about a central purpose of higher education, and about what should be provided as an educational challenge to the men and women of all ages who spend a vitally important segment of their lives studying and learning in colleges and universities. An experience in higher education should provide an opportunity to reflect on the purposes of learning, on the uses to which acquired knowledge is put, and on the ethical dilemmas which confront citizens individually and as members of society collectively.

This is a viewpoint which considers an essential goal of a college education to be the cultivation of a capacity for reflection about, and analysis of, issues in society both of a personal and a political nature. While con-

sistent with purposes of a college education as preparation for life and career, and as a time for personal development, this sixth rationale stresses the importance of achieving a capability for integrating these two aspects of experience during the college years. It is a statement that the opportunity to focus on the *process* of learning, to think carefully about questions of values and valuing, is vital to a well-rounded college student. All too often such an opportunity is insufficiently a part of the usual experience at college and university.

That distinguished philosopher of higher education and the American scene, *Doonesbury*, presented a very similar rationale in one of the commencement address vignettes which Gary Trudeau has written on various occasions. In addressing the assembled graduates, the commencement speaker commented with concern upon the students' "obsessive concern for the future," an approach which has been "the salient shaping influence on your attitudes during a very critical four years . . ." He then went on to state eloquently our sixth rationale: "It could have been more than that. This college offered you a sanctuary, a place to experience PROCESS, to FEEL the present as you moved through it, to EMBRACE both the joys and sorrows of moral and intellectual maturation! It needn't have been just another way-station . . ." (Trudeau, 1972).

In summary, there is a six-part rationale for promoting the character development of college students:

1. For individuals, it is ultimately self-rewarding to have a greater capacity for ethical sensitivity and regard for equity in human relations.
2. Society benefits from citizens whose lives are characterized by principled thinking and moral maturity.
3. For individuals, the development of increased psychological maturity leads to greater accomplishment in adulthood.
4. Research has shown that educational experiences can raise the level of moral reasoning.
5. Experiences during the college years provide many opportunities for impacting moral reasoning.
6. Higher education should provide students with an opportunity for reflection on knowledge, values, and moral choices.

## Introduction to Volume II:

Volume I of *Character Development in College Students* (Whiteley & Associates, 1982) articulated the theoretical groundwork upon which the Sierra Project is based. Volume II, therefore, will only briefly review many of these basic constructs (Chapter 2). The primary focus is on reporting how the Sierra Project was actually implemented—how the theoretical groundwork of the cognitive-developmental tradition was translated into a daily curriculum for the freshmen who participated each year in the Sierra Project. Section I is devoted to presenting a description of the Sierra Project, and the environment in which it was conducted (Chapter 1), its basic constructs (Chapter 2), and to reviewing the literature on factors associated with accomplishment in adulthood (Chapter 3). Section II lays out the background of the curriculum (Chapter 4), and the curriculum class by class in the format which was implemented in the Sierra Project for the Class of 1981 (Chapters 5, 6, and 7). The general psychological constructs are restated as they relate to specific practical curricular decisions. Section III discusses the sometimes unwieldy administrative problems (and our solutions to them) of the Sierra Project, including management of the evaluation component (Chapter 8), and the use of student journals and community service to promote psychological development (Chapter 9).

Finally, Section IV provides the principal findings concerning the development of character during the college years (Chapter 10), and the central implications of the Sierra Project for higher education (Chapter 11).

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## ***SECTION I***

### **THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS**

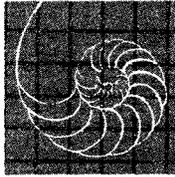
*John M. Whiteley*

The three chapters in Section I set the context for understanding the remainder of the book, and build upon the rationale articulated in the introduction. Chapter 1, Promoting the Character Development of College Students, contains sections on:

1. The Sierra Project approach to addressing six historical obstacles which have prevented higher education from meeting its responsibility for character education;
2. A presentation of the characteristics of the university context in which the Sierra Project occurred;
3. A description of the student participants in the project, the measures of character used in the study, and the student and professional staff;
4. An outline of the Sierra Project approach to evaluation and the basic research questions studied.

With the description of the Sierra Project completed in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 briefly presents the constructs from developmental and counseling psychology which assist in understanding and promoting character in college students. “Character,” “character development,” and “character education” are defined, and moral reasoning and ego development are conceptualized.

Chapter 3 returns to a central theme in the introduction; namely, the rationale for character education in higher education. The specific focus of this chapter is the relationship of accomplishment after college to aspects of the college experience. Considered for review is literature on academic performance in college as it relates to accomplishment in adulthood, and literature on personality factors and non-academic accomplishments during the college years. The concluding section of this chapter considers the implications of this literature, taken as a whole, for developmental education during the college years.



**PROMOTING THE CHARACTER  
DEVELOPMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS:  
A DESCRIPTION OF THE SIERRA PROJECT**

*John M. Whiteley*

**OVERVIEW**

The Sierra Project is an exploration in character education for college students, and a longitudinal research study of character development and the factors which influence it over the four years of college experience. The goal of this exploration in character education is the construction, implementation, and evaluation of a coordinated series of curricular modules which are intended to raise the level of principled thinking, moral maturity, and ego development in college freshmen. The goals of the longitudinal research are the charting of change in dimensions of character throughout the college years, and the identification of experiences which are most associated with that change. The Sierra Project as it has been designed and implemented reflects its dual emphasis as a character education intervention and a longitudinal research study.

The Sierra Project may be understood in terms of how it has addressed six historical obstacles which have prevented higher education from meeting its responsibility for character education. These historical obstacles have been: 1) the lack of definition of higher education's role in meeting this responsibility; 2) the lack of attention by institutions of higher education to establishing effective character education programs; 3) the lack of agreement on what constitutes character, character development, and character education; 4) the absence of controlled studies of long-term psychological interventions designed to promote character; 5) the lack of knowledge

concerning which experiences have the greatest impact on promoting individual growth in moral reasoning; and 6) the relative absence of longitudinal studies of character development in college students.

In order to overcome the first and second obstacles, tasks undertaken by the Sierra Project were: defining the purpose and priorities of higher education to include the development of character (Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 3-16); surveying the relevant psychological literature identifying promising theoretical constructs on which to base a character development intervention (Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapter 4, pp. 39-70); and reviewing the existing literature on character development methodology and practice in higher education (Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapter 5, pp. 71-83).

The third obstacle — the lack of agreement on what constitutes character, character development, and character education — was addressed by reviewing the use of these terms historically and currently, then defining them conceptually and empirically (Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapter 2 and 3, pp. 9-38).

The fourth obstacle — the absence of controlled studies involving year-long interventions designed to promote character development — was approached in two ways. One approach was to study college freshmen in the context of an intensive year-long residential program, focusing on their development of three dimensions of character: principled thinking, moral maturity, and ego development. The report of this approach is *Character Development of College Students, Volume I* (Whiteley and Associates, 1982).

The second approach to the fourth obstacle was to design and implement a psychological intervention extending throughout the freshman year. Specifically phrased, the intent of this intervention was to: a) facilitate the transition from high school to college life; b) stimulate psychological development from late adolescence to early adulthood, particularly on dimensions associated with character; c) foster a consideration of future lifestyle choices and career decisions; and d) challenge learners to apply their educational experiences to problems in the broader community through community service. It is the purpose of this volume, *Character Development of College Students, Volume II*, to report on the curriculum intervention in sufficient detail that interested persons can understand fully what we attempted to do, implement themselves all or part of the intervention, and improve upon it.

The fifth obstacle, our lack of knowledge of which collegiate experiences best promote individual growth in moral reasoning, has been approached in concert with addressing the sixth obstacle, the absence of longitudinal

studies of growth in college students of three dimensions of character: moral maturity, principled thinking, and ego development. Establishing and conducting a four-year longitudinal study of college students, and focusing on experiences which promote character development constituted the Sierra Project responses to the fifth and sixth obstacles. The results from these approaches are reported in *Portraits in Character* (Lee & Whiteley, in preparation), Chapter 10 of this volume, and Bertin, Ferrant, Whiteley & Yokota (in press).

Having summarized the rationale for the Sierra Project, and presented the goals for this endeavor in terms of the obstacles which confront higher education in enhancing the character development of its students, a description of the context in which the curriculum intervention and longitudinal research study was conducted will now be presented.

### **THE CONTEXT OF THE SIERRA PROJECT<sup>1</sup>**

The Sierra Project was conducted at the University of California, Irvine, a research university which is one of the youngest campuses of the nine-campus University of California system. Since its founding in 1962, UCI has grown to over 11,000 students; it offers academic degrees from the B.A. through the Ph.D. and M.D., and has an operating budget which for 1982-83 exceeded 250 million dollars. There is a priority on quality of scholarship and research. In the tradition of land-grant colleges, UCI relates to the community through applied research programs, a regional medical center and community clinics, and an extension division. The location of the campus is in Irvine, California near Newport Beach and Laguna Beach; in relation to the geography of Southern California, UCI is several miles from the ocean and midway between Los Angeles and San Diego.

During the years covered by the curriculum intervention (1975-1979), approximately 25 percent of undergraduates were housed on campus. A sense of on-campus community was difficult to achieve during these years. A student union, the University Center, was not completed until January 1981. The average commuter student drove 11 miles or more each way to school, and was part of on-campus life mainly between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The Sierra Project occurred in Sierra Hall, one of 23 individual residence halls located in the Mesa Court undergraduate housing complex. This housing complex is considered by students to be a particularly attractive place to live (as reflected by an occupancy rate of over 99 percent, a waiting

list at the start of each academic year of over 1,000 students, and a “return rate” request of over 70 percent from one year to the next). Each individual residence hall houses 40-60 students; Sierra Hall houses 50 students in a comfortable wood, stucco, and glass two-story structure with two large common rooms shared by all Sierra residents. Students live in suites housing eight to ten students, each suite having its own living room and bathroom.

The academic component of the Sierra Project consisted of a four-unit, lower division course offered each quarter—Social Ecology 74: “Moral Development and Just Communities.” Students who elected to live in Sierra Hall did so with the understanding that they would concurrently enroll in this class. In addition, Sierra residents could elect a two-unit laboratory course (offered in both the winter and spring quarters) which involved working at least five hours per week in a paraprofessional counseling or service role in the surrounding community. The curriculum intervention portion of the Sierra Project began with freshmen who entered UCI in the fall of 1975. Each class is hereafter referred to by its year of projected graduation and by group (e.g., Sierra students who entered in the fall of 1975 are referred to as the Sierra Class of 1979).

### **PARTICIPANTS IN THE SIERRA PROJECT<sup>2</sup>**

The participants in the Sierra Project consisted of three groups of students from each of the Classes of 1979, 1980, 1981, and 1982. Those three groups of students are the residents of Sierra Hall, the residents of Lago Hall (Control Group I), and the members of several other groups (Control Group II).

Students in Sierra Hall (all freshmen) participated in the intervention and constituted our “experimental” group. Lago residents were also all freshmen living in an identical physical facility, next to Sierra with equal proportions of men and women. The major difference between these groups was that the Sierra freshmen had requested to participate in the intervention (including the academic class), whereas the Lago residents had not. Control Group II consisted of freshmen who were randomly selected from the freshman population excluding students living in the two freshman dormitories mentioned above. The process of selection is discussed later on in this chapter, and in more detail in Chapter 8.

For the research component of the Sierra project, data collected included background information, intellectual data, information about students’ expectations for a sense of community in the university and the residence

hall, and data on these students' psychological development on dimensions associated with character.

Evidence of cohort differences in previous life span developmental research influenced our decision to collect fairly detailed background and attitudinal data on our research population. The following background data for members of Sierra, Control Group I (Lago), and Control Group II for the Classes of 1979-82 are available:

Political orientation	Mother's occupation
Estimated parental income	Mother's education
Father's occupation	Vocational choice
Father's education	Choice of major

Our intellectual data is based on results from the Scholastic Aptitude Verbal and Mathematical Tests of the College Entrance Examination Board. The range of SAT verbal scores (from 200 to 700) indicates that the verbal facility of our participants functions as both a source of diversity and an instructional problem. Similarly, the range of scores on SAT mathematics was slightly more extreme, the spread being from 240-770.

Students' expectations for a sense of community were assessed by eight items from the Environmental Assessment Inventory (Stokols, 1975). Entering Sierra students (and our other groups as well) had an expectation that the University experience in general and the residence hall in particular would provide high levels of trust, consideration of feelings, and relative lack of alienation.

In order to provide a picture of the Sierra Project participants on dimensions of character, it is first necessary to briefly describe the three measures of character used in this study.<sup>3</sup> The first, the Defining Issues Test, (Rest, 1979) measures moral reasoning in terms of six stages and a P-score (the percentage of principled thinking involved in making responses on the test). Our students fall in the expected range between senior high school students and college students. On the basis of this test, Sierra participants may be characterized as predominately conventional in their moral reasoning.

The second measure of character was the Moral Judgment Interview (Colby, Gibbs, Kohlberg, Speicher-Dubin & Candee, 1979) for assessing moral reasoning defined as moral maturity. The level of moral reasoning illustrated by the MJI test scores indicates that Sierra students are very conventional thinkers. As a group, they are very closely clustered around

Stage 3, Interpersonal Conformity. Students at the Interpersonal Conformity stage have an orientation toward making judgments in terms of the approval of those around them, particularly what “good boys” and “good girls” would do in a given situation.

Our final measure of character was ego development as assessed by the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (Loevinger and Wessler, 1970). On the measure of ego development, our students were clustered between Stages I-3 and I-3/4. Stage I-3 represents thinking with a “simplistic conventionality” which fails to question the world. Stage I-3/4 represents the transition from conformity to conscientiousness, where the individual can see multiple possibilities and alternatives. Loevinger and Wessler (1970) captured the distinctiveness of the I-3 to I-3/4 transition that characterizes entering Sierra Project students when they observed:

In place of the I-3 tendency to classify actions in mutually exclusive categories of right and wrong, the I-3/4 subject tends to think about appropriateness, what is right for the time and place and the situation. There are contingencies, exceptions, and comparisons, though they are global and often banal (p. 71).

Sierra Project students — in terms of expectations for a sense of community and psychological factors — were quite homogeneous, and they were rather conventional on such dimensions of character as principled thinking, moral maturity, and ego development. They were also quite diverse in ethnic background, socio-economic background, and verbal preparation for college. They differ as well on the range of their educational and occupational aspirations.

### **STUDENT AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

Along with the primary instructor, the Resident Assistant and student staff (normally sophomores) were our front-line teachers. The students lived in the residence halls, interacting as more than peers and different from formal instructors. These students had either enrolled in the Sierra Project program as freshmen or were deeply immersed in the conceptual framework of the project through course work in developmental or counseling psychology (see Chapter 4 for details).

The professional staff also functioned as teachers. Particularly in the fall quarter, and to a lesser extent in the winter quarter, one or more of the

professional staff served in the traditional professorial role, specifying the content of weekly classes, assignments, and requirements. By spring quarter, a goal of the professional and student staff was to involve freshman students in taking more responsibility for their own learning.

The Sierra Project was designed principally by psychologists, and implementation of the intervention was deeply rooted in the idea of psychologist as educator. The Project would simply have been quite different if it had been planned and implemented from another disciplinary perspective, though teaching character development skills and establishing a sense of community are not the sole province of psychology any more than that of any other discipline.

The basic intervention has been influenced profoundly by the fact that it occurred within the context of a residence hall. Community as it developed was enhanced by the 24-hour day living arrangement; the hours per week devoted to the formal class were few by comparison. If the Sierra Project had been administered to commuter rather than to residential students, the psychological intervention would have been relegated to a much smaller portion of a freshman's time and attention. We doubt that the Sierra curriculum would have had as great an impact as it did were it not for the level of community generated in the residence hall.

## **EVALUATION OF THE SIERRA PROJECT**

### **Basic Research Questions**

The Sierra Project approach to evaluation was multifaceted, reflecting the complex nature of the project. The basic research questions were as follows:

Did the Sierra Project intervention produce changes? If so, did those changes endure?

Did certain parts of the intervention, under particular conditions, produce specific identifiable developmental changes? If so, what were they?

Who benefited most from the intervention in our particular population of students?

What experiences had the most impact on students, particularly on their thinking about moral decisions?

Each of these basic questions was approached by a quite different evaluation method.

### **Evaluation and Duration of Changes: The Survey Design**

The question of whether the intervention produced changes, and whether those changes endured, was approached through a longitudinal survey design. Students were tested at the beginning and end of their freshman year, then at the end of their sophomore, junior, and senior years. The Survey Design consisted of the following measurements:

#### **Moral Reasoning**

*Moral Judgement Interview* (Kohlberg, 1973; Colby, Gibbs, Kohlberg, Speicher-Dubin, & Candee, 1979): a one-hour individually administered structured interview proposing moral dilemmas for the subject to resolve.

*Defining Issues Test* (Rest, 1979): a paper-and-pencil measure developed from Kohlberg's Moral Judgement Interview which asks individuals to rate the importance of various factors in resolving moral dilemmas.

#### **Ego Development**

*Washington University Sentence Completion Test for Measuring Ego Development* (Loevinger & Wessler, 1970; Loevinger, 1976): a paper-and-pencil instrument designed to assess an individual's level of ego development expressed in terms of stages.

#### **Locus of Control**

*Rotter I-E Scale* (Rotter, 1966): a paper-and-pencil measure assessing individuals' perceptions of internal and external factors which govern behavior and events.

#### **Psychological Sense of Community**

*Environmental Assessment Inventory* (Stokols, 1975): a paper-and-pencil instrument focusing on individuals in a social context. For this research, we constructed an eight-item "psychological sense of community" scale from the larger pool of EAI items.

*Keniston Alienation Scale* (Keniston, 1965): a paper-and-pencil measure which asks individuals to determine the extent to which they feel themselves to be an active part of the community or group.

### **Self-Esteem**

*Janis and Field Personality Questionnaire* (Hovland & Janis, 1959): a paper-and-pencil instrument which measures various aspects of personality, centering on self-esteem.

### **Attitude Toward People**

“People in General” portion of the *Environmental Assessment Inventory* (Stokols, 1975): a paper-and-pencil instrument which focuses on attitudes toward people in general.

### **Sex Role Choices**

*Bem Sex Role Inventory* (Bem, 1974, 1975): a paper-and-pencil measure which asks individuals to rate themselves with respect to 60 masculine-valued, feminine-valued, and neutral personality characteristics.

### **Participant Information**

*Background Questionnaire* (adapted from Whitla, 1977): a paper-and-pencil measure requesting information concerning subjects’ family backgrounds, expectations about college in general (and UCI in particular), choices of academic major, and possible career directions.

### **Student Experience at College**

*College Experience Questionnaire* (adapted from Whitla, 1977): a paper-and-pencil measure which elicits information about important experiences occurring during the college years and individuals’ opinions about those experiences.

The Survey Design, through the use of various instruments described above, serves to evaluate the impact of the Sierra experience on college freshmen (Whiteley and Associates, 1982). When repeated over the four years of undergraduate study, the Survey Design also allows us to assess whether changes occurring in the freshman year persist over time. (See Chapter 10)

### **Examining effects of components of the intervention: The Topical Design**

To investigate whether certain portions of the intervention— under particular conditions—produced specific changes in freshmen, we used both a Topical Design and an Intensive Design. Data from a variety of measures were collected before and after specific modules of the curriculum were presented. The Topical Design centered on an evaluation of the effects of each curriculum module and applied only to the Sierra Experimental Group.

### **Evaluating individual variation in response to the intervention: The Intensive Design**

Like the Topical Design, the Intensive Design is an evaluation approach which applies only to the experimental population. In the Intensive Design, the focus is on the in-depth case study of the individual. For the Classes of 1980 and 1981, there were several preliminary case studies undertaken from sources such as freshmen journals, sophomore staff journals, and staff reports. A rigorous application of the Intensive Design was not fully implemented until the Class of 1982 since a properly trained staff was unavailable until then.

With the Class of 1982, however, staff was available to implement the Intensive Design to a fuller extent. The first implementation of the Intensive Design was undertaken by Resnikoff and Jennings and is reported in detail in Chapter 10 of *Character Development in College Students, Volume I* (Whiteley and Associates, 1982). These researchers attempted to discover how different kinds of students were influenced by specific conditions in their college experiences. They used a methodology structured to gain a phenomenological view of students' thoughts, feelings, and behavior over the course of the year in order to investigate the impact of various aspects of the University environment.

A second approach of the Intensive Design consisted of structured interviewing and the administration of questionnaires to two samples of Sierra Project students after they had graduated (or if they had failed to graduate, after their class had graduated). A first sample of Sierra students was asked to describe the experiences which had most deeply affected their character development over the four years of undergraduate experience (Bertin, Ferrant, Whiteley, Yokota, in press). A second and smaller sample

of Sierra students consented to be interviewed for an additional ten hours in order that a portrait of their lives, their development during college, and the experiences which affected that development could be constructed. In addition to viewing each individual's development phenomenological based on interviews, it was also possible to assess change analytically based on test data since each interviewee had also been a participant in the Survey Design. These case studies will appear in Lee and Whiteley (in preparation).

The Intensive Design allows us to develop tentative explanations for individual variation in outcomes, and to generate new theoretical hypotheses for further exploration and systematic testing. By providing an in-depth view of the changes occurring in students, and by relating those changes to events, the Intensive Design approach helps identify important sources of change in students' thinking and behavior, and provides clues to the reasons for those changes.

### **Identifying characteristics of those who change the most: A statistical analysis of the Survey Design**

The evaluation approach taken by Magaña (1979) and reported in Whiteley and Associates (1982), Chapter 9 (pp. 173-194) attempts to detect which students in our population benefited the most from the Sierra Project intervention. Multidimensional scaling and hierarchical cluster analysis were used to differentiate among individuals in the Sierra sample she studied. The measures from the Survey Design — including those appraising the level of moral reasoning, ego development, locus of control, self-esteem, alienation, sex role identification, and attitudes toward people — served as data sources.

### **Identifying impactful experiences: Perceptions of the participants**

A final approach utilized in evaluating the Sierra Project was to focus directly on students' perceptions of what had most affected their thinking on moral issues. The Topical and Intensive Designs had provided some sources of data on experiences which participants in the intervention felt were particularly influential.

To investigate what students thought had most influenced their thinking about moral issues during the freshman year, we asked a student participant

from the Class of 1979 to assess the intervention from a retrospective viewpoint. Lee's approach, reported in Whiteley and Associates (1982, Chapter 11, pp. 223-267), was to ask students from the Class of 1979 to recall experiences and influences that contributed to their thinking about moral issues. We assumed that those impressions and reactions salient enough for students to remember five years later would reflect their special perceptions of Sierra and of their own growth in moral reasoning. This retrospective evaluation was administered to 14 members of the Class of 1979 during the year following their graduation.

Another evaluation approach (Burris, 1982) that also focused on students' retrospective perceptions of their experiences during the Sierra Project used a modification of The Moral Reasoning Experience Check List, a structured interview developed by Volker (1979). The modified check list was administered to a small sample of students from the Class of 1979 at the end of their senior year, and later to samples of freshmen from the Classes of 1983 and 1984. At the end of their freshman year, these students were asked to reflect upon experiences which they recalled as affecting their moral reasoning. They were also given the Defining Issues Test (Rest, 1979) and the Sociomoral Reflection Measure (Gibbs, Widaman, & Colby, 1981). This study was therefore designed to identify important experiences contributing to students' growth in moral reasoning as reported immediately following the students' freshman year.

### **DEVELOPMENT INTO ADULTHOOD: THE SHIFT FROM STUDYING MORAL REASONING TO MORAL ACTION**

The emphasis of the research component of the Sierra Project through 1982 (the year of graduation of the last Sierra class we followed longitudinally during their four years of undergraduate study) had been on studying the effects of the Sierra curriculum, and on charting the development of college students on dimensions of character during the transition of late adolescence to early adulthood.

Character, by way of review, has been defined conceptually in two parts: *understanding* what is right and *acting* on what is right. The research design from 1975 through 1982 — by focusing on the empirical measures of principled thinking, moral maturity, and ego development — emphasized study of the *understanding* what is the right portion of the definition of character.

By following the Sierra sample into adulthood, it will be possible to address more satisfactorily the *acting-on-what-is-right* portion of the character definition. The first phase of Sierra Project research, focused on how individuals think about moral issues and how they *may* act in different situations. The second phase of research, extending from 1982 through 1992, will investigate in addition how individuals actually behave.

The second phase of the Sierra Project research began in the summer of 1982 with an intensive series of case studies involving nine students in up to ten hours of interviewing (Lee and Whiteley, in preparation). Further, an additional sample of approximately forty students completed several hours of questionnaires and structure interviews.

These individuals participating in the second phase will receive two additional follow-ups, five years after graduation and ten years after graduation. The choice of those two points in time is somewhat arbitrary, but nonetheless based on two considerations. During the five year follow-up, the Sierra Project sample will be in an *exploratory* phase of their lives. For example, some of them will be spending their first years after graduation in one form or another of post-graduate study or further career preparation. Some will just be getting out of medical school and starting their residency training programs; others will have just finished law school, passed the bar, and begun a practice. Still others will have gone to work in some corporate or family business. In terms of personal relationships, some will be in intimate relationships of short duration, others certainly by then will have made a decision about the choice of a spouse or an alternate living experience, and still others will have started raising children. The general point is that five years after college Sierra graduates will have made a number of clear choices, and have been in the exploratory phase of young adulthood.

The choice of ten years after graduation as a point for a second follow-up is the first manageable time to visit with the sample after the start of the establishment phase of their career and personal lives. They will probably be more dispersed geographically. They will have either moved into a fairly stable work and personal environment or they will still be in a process of finding their way. The choice of ten years for follow-up provides us with a finite period of data collection from our own point of view, and places a limit to the commitment to participate by the research population. In addition to continuing data collection on the instruments in the Survey Design and those developed for the intensive case studies, we will request interviews with the spouse (or intimate partner), best friend, and employer. Such an approach to interviewing an adult sample has previously been

implemented by Heath (1965, 1968, 1976, 1977) in his studies of psychological maturity, and has been found to be a valuable source of data.

In addition to facilitating a more adequate examination of moral action, Phase Two of the Sierra Project research program will allow examination of the growth of moral reasoning and ego development into adulthood, and the factors which influence character in a sample which is multiethnic and equally representative of both men and women.

### **SELECTION OF THE CONTROL POPULATIONS**

Perhaps the most perplexing design problem we have encountered is in regard to the nature of our control populations. Control populations are central to the generation of accurate information about the developmental status of college freshmen, the effect of the freshman year, and the longitudinal study of the development of moral reasoning in college students. We decided to have two control groups: Control Group I (Lago Hall residents) and Control Group II (collateral control students). Control Group I consists of freshmen who had elected to live in an all-freshman residence hall, who were in living situations identical to those students in the Sierra experimental group, but who did not receive the Sierra curriculum.

Control Group II consists of subjects selected at random from the entire population of the same class of students. By procedure, a student could be in the collateral control group only once during his or her undergraduate study. We elected the collateral control approach for the classes of 1980, 1981, and 1982.<sup>4</sup> Schaie (1973) notes that collateral control groups are those selected "in absence of total control over one's subjects" (p. 255). They allow the scrutiny of experimental attrition, and can be used to determine whether the residual sample of a longitudinal study has remained representative of its parent population.

### **REFLECTIONS ON THE SIERRA APPROACH TO EVALUATION**

A basic strength of this multidimensional approach to evaluation is that important aspects of the complexity of the Sierra Project can be captured and analyzed. Had we limited ourselves to only a few approaches to evaluation, we would have missed important data necessary for us to

address central questions, to understand what students were experiencing, and to understand how they were changing. Each of our different sources of data collection and analysis served to provide quite valuable perspectives on the process of character development and the factors which influence it during the four years of undergraduate study.

## TRANSITION

With the description of the Sierra Project completed, it is now possible for the reader to understand more fully the context in which the curriculum development and intervention occurred. In the next chapter, we will describe the constructs from developmental and counseling psychology which assist in understanding and promoting character in college students.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>An expanded version of this section appeared in Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapter 6, pp. 87-89.

<sup>2</sup>An expanded version of this section appeared in Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapter 6, pp. 90-101.

<sup>3</sup>Detailed information about the instruments used to assess the developmental status of our students on dimensions of character is provided in Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapters 5 (pp. 71-83) and 7 (pp. 111-125).

<sup>4</sup>See Whiteley and Associates, 1982, Chapter 7, pp. 118-123 for rationale for control group selection and how problems of sampling were addressed.

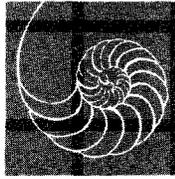
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## CONSTRUCTS FOR UNDERSTANDING AND PROMOTING CHARACTER IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

*John M. Whiteley*

This chapter will define and explain a number of the key constructs involved in understanding the development of character during the college experience. In terms of understanding the development of character, it is essential to offer explanations of what we mean by “*character*,” “*character development*,” and “*character education*” and to describe the central constructs of character (moral reasoning and ego development). In terms of enhancing character development as part of the college experience, we will present certain constructs from counseling and developmental psychology which we have found relevant in the promotion of character development through the Sierra Project. From developmental psychology, we have utilized the constructs of structural organization of thinking, developmental sequencing, interactionism, and equilibration. These constructs describe aspects of the individual and his or her involvement with the environment which are associated with change in character. Also incorporated are three constructs from counseling psychology: a psychological sense of community, empathy/social perspective taking, and assertion.<sup>1</sup> These constructs describe curricular elements which are intended to facilitate character development.

Together, this group of psychological constructs have contributed to the theoretical foundation and presentation of the Sierra Project curriculum. This chapter will relate each of these constructs to its corresponding module or modules in the Sierra Project curriculum, although many of these constructs permeate the whole. Before any further discussion, however, it is essential to define the basic curricular goal of the Sierra Project, and how these psychological constructs assist in achieving this goal.

### CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: A WORKING DEFINITION

The curricular goal of the Sierra Project is the enhancement of character development. But what is character development? In formulating our definition of character development, we have sought one which has empirical referents in order that its application may be subjected to systematic inquiry. The terms “character” and “character development” in common usage have been known historically to convey very different meanings, just as the training of such “character” (character education) has been confronted by the dilemma of determining which approaches to education offer the most promise for developing value systems which enhance the “common good.”<sup>2</sup> Given the confusion stemming from the various connotations of character, it is of obvious importance for developmental interventions such as the Sierra Project to be clear about the conceptual usages chosen for character, character development, and character education.

Character, as we have defined it conceptually, has two parts. The first part refers to an understanding of what is the right, fair, or good thing to do in a given circumstance. The second part refers to the ability to do those things (the courage to act in accordance with one’s understanding of what is right, fair, and good). Thus, character constitutes *understanding* what is right and *acting* on what is right. Current research and instrument development presently focus on two particular measurements of character: moral reasoning and ego development. Although this is a comparatively narrow empirical definition of character, it does focus on how individuals think about moral issues and how they *may* act in different situations, rather than on how they *actually* behave. The measures of moral reasoning chosen were those developed by Kohlberg and his associates (Kohlberg, 1973; Colby, Gibbs, Kohlberg, Speicher-Dubin & Candee, 1979) to assess moral maturity, and Rest and his associates (Rest, 1979) to measure principled thinking. The measure of ego development which we used is that of Loevinger and her associates (Loevinger, 1966; Loevinger & Wessler, 1970; Loevinger, 1976).

Character development, as we have conceptually defined it, refers to the progression of an individual’s capacity for understanding what is right or good in increasingly complex forms and to the willingness or courage to act on those conceptions. Our emphasis in the Sierra Project is on understanding internal (intrapsychic) progression through a maturing individual’s interaction with others and through the environment during the transition from late adolescence to early adulthood.

The approach to character education that we have chosen to work with is the cognitive-developmental model, focusing on moral reasoning and ego development. We consider this model to be more representative of the definition of character and more sensitive to the progression of changes within individuals over time. This choice reflects our judgment that the developmental model captures with greater complexity and accuracy the true nature of this aspect of the human experience.

### **CENTRAL CONSTRUCTS OF CHARACTER: MORAL REASONING AND EGO DEVELOPMENT**

The central constructs of character for the Sierra Project are moral reasoning (principled thinking and moral maturity) and ego development. Both constructs and the approaches to measuring them rely on the theoretical development and empirical research which has progressed dramatically in the past decades. Piaget (1929, 1932) began the original formulations by observing and recording the complexity of mental operations; his particular contribution was to document the cognitive constructions utilized in making sense of experience and how these constructions become elaborated in order to adequately comprehend more complex experiences. Understanding and explaining this process is the heart of cognitive-developmental psychology.

Thinking in the cognitive-developmental framework is assumed to progress through a series of hierarchical stages which occur in an invariant sequence. There is an underlying organization to the thinking within each stage, and between stages there are distinct and qualitative differences. More mature development consists of progressing through successive stages of thinking, each more complex than the last. The first part of this section will present Kohlberg's theory of moral development which identifies six stages of development in moral reasoning. The second part of the section will present Loevinger's theory of development, including seven discrete stages and two transitional periods of ego development.

#### **Moral Reasoning**

Kohlberg's (1964, 1969, 1971, 1981) six-stage conceptualization of an individual's moral development includes the following six stages:

- Stage 1. Punishment and obedience orientation
- Stage 2. Naive instrumental hedonism
- Stage 3. Interpersonal concordance
- Stage 4. "Law-and-order" orientation
- Stage 5. Social-contract legalistic orientation
- Stage 6. Universal ethical principle, or conscience, orientation

The first two stages are considered preconventional since rules and expectations are viewed from a highly egocentric perspective. Here, the concept of fairness arises out of a bargain between parties in which each party has something to gain. The next two stages are labeled "conventional" by Kohlberg (1976) because a person in these stages "is identified with or has internalized the rules and expectations of others, especially those of authorities" (p. 33) and is working from the basis of convention. The final two stages are labeled "post-conventional" by Kohlberg (1976) because a person at these stages is differentiated "from the rules and expectations of others and defines his or her values in terms of self-chosen principles" (p. 33). The emphasis in the post-conventional stages is on principles for choosing a more just arrangement for individuals within the society.

There are theorists, however, who believe that moral development must be viewed in a broader context than provided by cognitive-developmental stage theory. In their view, moral reasoning should be presented as only one of the components of a broader construct of personality. For Loevinger, that broader construct is ego development.

### **Ego Development**

Loevinger (1966, 1976) also conceptualizes ego development as occurring in a number of stages, but, unlike Kohlberg, does not closely define each stage. Rather, she presents "impressionistic descriptions" of stages that are referred to by a name or a code symbol rather than by a number.

Loevinger describes seven discrete stages of ego development, and two additional stages which she terms "transitional." The first stage (coded as "I-1") predates the acquisition of language and is not considered measurable. Loevinger labels the second stage (coded as "I-2") the Impulsive Stage. At this stage, there is a limited capacity for control. The world is viewed from a perspective which is egocentric and concrete (Hauser, 1976).

The next stage is called the Self-Protective Stage (coded "Delta"). Individuals at the Self-Protective Stage recognize that there are rules, but only obey them out of self-interest (Hauser, 1976). Interpersonal relations are exploitative and manipulative; morality is defined in terms of expediency.

During the next stage, called the Conformist Stage (coded as "I-3"), the individual's welfare is identified with that of "the group;" rules are obeyed for the sake of the group, rather than because of fear of punishment or hope of immediate reward. A tendency of individuals at this stage is to value material goods, status, reputation, and appearance (Hauser, 1976). Loevinger indicates that niceness, helpfulness, and cooperation with others are also valued. Sex roles are stereotyped at this stage.

The next stage, the Self-Aware Stage (code "I-3/4"), marks the transition between the Conformist Stage and Stage I-4, the Conscientious Stage. The modal adult in our society functions at this level. In Hauser's (1976) view, the individual at the Self-Aware Stage no longer accepts absolute guidelines provided by external social groups, but begins to rely instead on emerging "introspective capacities and on a beginning understanding of psychological causation, self-awareness, and self-criticism" (p. 931).

The next stage is called the Conscientious Stage (coded "I-4"). Loevinger (1976) describes individuals at the Conscientious Stage as possessing the elements of an adult conscience (i.e., goals, capacity for self-criticism, sense of responsibility), a differentiated inner life, and a high degree of conceptual complexity (e.g., thinking in terms of a number of polarities). At this stage, the norms of external groups are replaced by inner rules.

The next transitional stage is referred to as the Individualistic Level (coded "I-4/5"). A concern for emotional independence and an increased awareness of one's own and others' individuality are marks of this stage. The main growth task is to become more tolerant — both of oneself and of others — as a way to become emotionally independent. As the individual moves from the Conscientious to the Autonomous Stage, there is a greater ability to tolerate paradoxical relationships between events as well as increased complexity in conceptualizing interpersonal interactions. (Hauser, 1976, p. 932). Conflict, however, is still not accepted as a natural part of the human condition.

The capacity to acknowledge and cope with conflicting needs and duties is the "distinctive mark" of the Autonomous Stage (coded "I-5"). Hauser (1976) notes that while individuals at previous stages tend to engage in moral condemnation of the choices and solutions of others, those at the Autonomous Stage develop increased tolerance as they attain greater un-

derstanding of inner conflict. Characteristic of the person at this stage is the ability “to unite and integrate ideas that appear as incompatible alternatives to those at lower stages; there is a high toleration for ambiguity” (Loevinger, 1976, p. 23). Social ideals (such as justice) are often held at this stage of ego development.

Loevinger (1976) offers Maslow’s (1971) model of the self-actualizing person as the best description of the last and highest stage, the Integrated Stage (coded “I-6”). A key distinguishing characteristic of this stage is the ability to transcend the inner conflicts which were encountered, acknowledged, and dealt with at the preceding stage. Table 2.1 provides a summary description of the seven stages (and the two transitional stages) of ego development.

Taken together, Kohlberg’s stage theory of moral development and Loevinger’s theory of ego development are key psychological theories that facilitate an understanding of character development. As such, they form a central portion of the theoretical foundation for the Sierra Project. In terms of actually planning and implementing the Sierra Project as an activity to promote change in the character of young people in the transition from late adolescence to early adulthood, we found seven additional constructs from developmental and counseling psychology to be relevant both in curriculum planning and delivery.

### **Psychological Theories Relevant to Promoting Character Development**

In a previous publication (Whiteley & Associates, 1982) seven psychological constructs were reviewed which have relevance to promoting character development. Four of these constructs primarily derive from developmental psychology, and three from counseling psychology. This section will briefly present each of these constructs in a tabular form.

Although this constellation of constructs has not been previously incorporated into developmental curricula such as the Sierra Project, we find them quite relevant to promoting character development in the transition from late adolescence to early adulthood. Table 2.2 presents the constructs from developmental psychology, and the curricula modules which incorporate them. Table 2.3 presents parallel information for the constructs from counseling psychology. The interested reader is referred to Whiteley and Associates (1982) for an extended review of these constructs (see pp. 39-69)

**Table 2.1****Summary of Stages of Ego Development and Their Description****Based on Loevinger's Theory (1966, 1976)**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Description</b>
I-1	Pre-Social/Symbiotic	Not measurable.
I-2	Impulsive	Limited capacity for control; egocentric, concrete perspective of world.
Delta	Self-protective	Recognition of rules and adherence to them out of self-interest; exploitative and manipulative interpersonal relationships.
I-3	Conformist	Individual identification with group; tendency to value material goods, status, reputation, and appearance; stereotyping of sex roles.
I-3/4	Self-aware (transitional)	"Beginning understanding of psychological causation, self-awareness, and self-criticism" (Hauser, 1976, p. 931); modal adult in our society functions at this level.
I-4	Conscientious	Norms of external groups replaced by inner rules; increased capacity for self-criticism, sense of responsibility, differentiated inner life, and conceptual complexity.
I-4/5	Individualistic (transitional)	Increased tolerance of self and others as growth task toward emotional independence; intensified relationships; conflict still not accepted as a natural part of human condition.
I-5	Autonomous	Increased tolerance and understanding of inner conflict and ambiguity; social ideals such as justice often held at this stage.
I-6	Integrated	Ability to transcend inner conflicts encountered, acknowledged, and dealt with at preceding stages; Maslow's (1971) self-actualizing person.

Table 2.2

**Constructs from Developmental Psychology Relevant to Promoting  
Character Development and the Curricular Modules Which Significantly  
Incorporate Them**

**DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Corresponding Modules</b>
Structural Organization	Assumption that thinking progresses through a series of hierarchical stages which occur in an invariant order. There is an underlying organization to thinking within each stage, and distinct qualitative differences between stages. Allows for understanding when progress (successful stage transition) has been made.	All
Developmental Sequencing	Cognitive-developmental framework for arranging educational experiences in an optimal manner to stimulate maximum growth. Also includes the concept that educational experiences intended to produce growth must be proportionate to an individual's immediate capabilities.	All
Interactionism	Assumption that an individual's active attempts to make sense of experiences which challenge previous assumptions require involvement with the psychological and social environment, that increased and richer experiences will enable more rapid developmental growth.	3, 5, 6, 7, 8

**Table 2.2** (Continued)

Equilibration	Process by which the individual makes sense of experiences which challenge previous assumptions: assimilation and accomodation. Assimilation occurs when an experience is understood within an individual's current mode of thinking; accomodation is the modification of thinking to incorporate new experiences which create cognitive conflict and disequilibrium when they fail to correspond to previous beliefs or modes of thinking.	3, 5, 6, 7, 8
Module 1	Survival Skills	
Module 2	Community Building	
Module 3	Conflict Resolution	
Module 4	Empathy/Social Perspective Taking	
Module 5	Socialization	
Module 6	Race Roles	
Module 7	Sex Roles	
Module 8	Assertion Training	
Module 9	Life and Career Planning	
Module 10	Community Service	

Table 2.3

**Constructs from Counseling Psychology Relevant to Promoting  
Character Development and the Curricular Modules Which  
Significantly Incorporate Them**

**COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Corresponding Modules</b>
Psychological Sense of Community	Presence of high level of trust, cooperation, and mutual feelings of security and support among members of a community, with very low levels of alienation or hostility; a psychological sense of community may be one of the most powerful forces in influencing moral reasoning.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Empathy & Social Perspective Taking	Empathy involves the accurate perception and understanding of thoughts and feelings of another individual encompassing the broader spectra of socioeconomic, political, racial, etc., . . . concerns. Both these active skills are integrally related to the promotion of higher stages of moral reasoning.	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Assertion Training	Assists individuals to identify their own personal rights and the rights of others and to resolve interpersonal differences with them fairly. Assertion training provides individuals with skills which help them rethink beliefs about fairness and justice and implement these newly acquired conceptions in daily living.	3, 4, 8

**Table 2.3** (Continued)

Module 1	Survival Skills
Module 2	Community Building
Module 3	Conflict Resolution
Module 4	Empathy/Social Perspective Taking
Module 5	Socialization
Module 6	Race Roles
Module 7	Sex Roles
Module 8	Assertion Training
Module 9	Life and Career Planning
Module 10	Community Service

Further discussion of the interface between the constructs detailed above and the curriculum will appear in chapters 5, 6, and 7 as we present the Sierra curriculum as it occurred.

### Footnotes

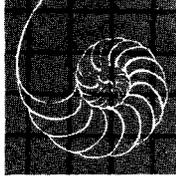
<sup>1</sup>Portions of the material covered in this chapter have appeared in an extended and more detailed treatment in *Character Development in College Students, Volume I*, John M. Whiteley & Associates, distributed by the American Association for Counseling and Development, 5999 Stevenson Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia, 22304.

<sup>2</sup>See Whiteley and Associates (1982) pp. 9-12 for further discussion.

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## **ACCOMPLISHMENT AFTER COLLEGE: A RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION<sup>1</sup>**

*Norman A. Sprinthall, Barbara D. Bertin, & John M. Whiteley*

Universities place a high value on the quality of thinking. The quality of research is the barometer of quality of thinking of professors in research universities, just as the quality of teaching is the prime assessment of quality of thinking of professors in the liberal arts colleges. The quality of thinking of students is usually measured by academic performance – most popularly with the college grade point average. As academic performance in college is a very important measure of the achievement of late adolescents, understanding the relationship between achievement in college and accomplishment after college is important in order for society to determine which young people will develop into effective leaders, participating citizens, caring parents, and self-reliant individuals – and what experiences in college are associated with subsequent accomplishment.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a rationale for developmental education programs such as the Sierra Project by reviewing the literature on the relationship of accomplishment after college to aspects of the college experience. Considered for review is literature on academic performance in college as it relates to accomplishment in adulthood, and literature on personality factors and non-academic accomplishments during the college years. We will examine several approaches, studying factors such as academic achievement, as well as others which relate to post-college accomplishment. The concluding section of the chapter will consider the implications of this literature, taken as a whole, for developmental education during the college years.

### RELATIONSHIP OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN COLLEGE TO ACCOMPLISHMENT AFTER COLLEGE

The study of the general relationship of college experience to accomplishment in life after college is one which has taken researchers in higher education in a number of different directions. One of these directions has been the investigation of the personal and "accomplishment" characteristics of those who gain access to selective colleges. This line of research is valuable to consider for a number of largely methodological reasons, as there has been careful thought given to the issues of assessing accomplishment in high school and in college. For example, Wing and Wallach (1971) developed a category of individual differences they labelled "accomplishment characteristics," referring to "kinds of behavior and products of behavior that are valued in their own right" (Wing & Wallach, 1971, p. 4). They observed that people associated with education regard the grade point average as an "accomplishment" characteristic rather than a personal characteristic. The point for our review is that accomplishment can take many forms; a number of previous researchers have endeavored to systematize these forms for purposes of facilitating inquiry.

A second direction researchers have taken is to focus on academic achievement during the college years. This line of inquiry has not proven to be particularly fruitful, although this direction has been the subject of many studies. The most thorough treatment of this relationship was undertaken by Hoyt (1965). His review of the literature focused on previous studies of five specific occupational areas (business, teaching, engineering, medicine, and scientific research) adult accomplishment in non-vocational areas, and several studies of eminent men. Based on his review of forty-six studies (from 1917 to 1965), the conclusion reached by Hoyt was that "present evidence strongly suggests that college grades bear little or no relationship to any measures of adult accomplishment" (Hoyt, 1965, Summary).

The methodological problems in attempting to make some coherent assessment of this literature on the relationship between achievement in college and post-college accomplishment are pervasive. Hoyt (1965) singled out the following interpretive problems.

1. Research has been concentrated on vocational achievement as a criterion of success to the relative exclusion of other achievements such as family life, happiness, aesthetic appreciation, or community leadership.

2. The studies all deal with the attainment of a college degree as a criterion of academic attainment, thereby limiting the sample.
3. The standard definition and measurement of achievement have not reflected the complexity of work performance and regional and occupational salary variations.
4. The individual differences among occupational groups, firms within a given occupational group, and colleges combine to produce a source of variability which has not been adequately factored into research designs.
5. Variations in time lapse between college graduation and assessment of adult achievements studied by various researchers make it difficult to compare studies (Adapted from Hoyt, 1965, pp. 2-5).

Despite these methodological problems, research on this topic undertaken after the Hoyt (1965) review has confirmed his general conclusions (Holland & Richards, 1965; Richards, Holland, & Lutz, 1966; Munday & Davis, 1974).

The Munday and Davis (1974) research directly addressed the relationship of accomplishment in adult life to test scores, high school grades, high school non-academic accomplishments, and college grades. Adult accomplishment scales were based on a self-reports of activities in six areas: leadership, music, literature, art, drama, and science. Munday and Davis found correlations of college GPAs with adult accomplishment scales to range from .04 to .19 with a median of .09, leading them to conclude "that college grades are not related to the kind of adult accomplishment assessed on these scales, and that this conclusion is consistent with Hoyt's finding that college grades are uncorrelated with many indices of success after college" (Munday & Davis, 1974, p. 11).

It is certainly possible to conclude from research literature that grades in subsequent schooling are related to performance on aptitude tests, which in turn have the important function of predicting grades in school. McClelland (1973) reported research indicating that while the grade level attained (i.e., Grade 12, being a college graduate) is related to success in life, within grade level performance (e.g., how well one did in Grade 12 or as a college Senior) related only slightly. Lewis (1975), in a related study, investigated the relationship between pre-college aptitude test scores (measured by a composite score on the Iowa Placement Tests) and occupational success. He used Roe's (1956) classification system to identify the prestige level of the

occupation of each participant in the study. High scores on the aptitude test taken prior to college were found to be significantly related to the prestige levels of occupations after college.

This line of inquiry has been refined to assess accomplishment *within* occupational levels. Berg (1970) reviewed research on the topic and concluded that neither grades nor amount of education was related to success as a bank teller, air traffic controller, or factory worker. Taylor, Smith and Ghiselin (1963) found that grades in college were not related to superior on-the-job performance of scientific researchers.

McClelland (1958, 1973) has also called attention to the relationship of school performance to performance in life through several additional lines of inquiry. In one approach, he grouped two types of students: "late bloomers" and "morning glories." "Late bloomers," as the characterization suggests, were individuals who carried out important work after college, but who had been unimpressive in school. "Morning glories" had high academic promise and achievement, but then did not proceed to fulfill their potential. In McClelland's view, the presence of these types dispel the belief that intelligence "is linearly associated with success both in school and in life" (McClelland, 1958, p. 14). Extending this line of thinking, accomplishment after college must be viewed in the context of the "lack of fit between school and life—the constant reminder of the 'late bloomers' and 'morning glories'—that forces us, perhaps more than any other single factor, to scrutinize the whole problem of talent" (McClelland, 1958, pp. 9-10). He concluded this line of thinking with the observation that many graduates of leading colleges might not be able to enter these same schools now because "some college admission requirements, both on aptitude test scores and secondary school records, are so strict . . ." (McClelland, 1958, p. 9).

McClelland (1973) later reported an interesting exercise in which he took a list of eight straight-A students he had taught eighteen years ago and contrasted their subsequent careers with those of eight extremely poor students he had taught at the same time. He found that, "to my great surprise, I could not distinguish the two lists of men 15-18 years later. There were lawyers, doctors, research scientists, and college and high school teachers in both groups" (p. 2). It should be noted that the spread in academic performance in the college students which McClelland observed were within a very bright group of students in a highly selective college; the "poor" students were obviously able to enter and leave graduate and professional schools with advanced degrees.

## **RELATIONSHIP OF FACTORS OTHER THAN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN COLLEGE TO ACCOMPLISHMENT AFTER COLLEGE**

The research literature on factors other than academic performance that are related to accomplishment after college generally falls into three distinct categories: (1) economic or sociological analyses of students' backgrounds; (2) studies of non-academic, extra curricular pursuits during college; or (3) comparisons of students' psychological traits to their post-college accomplishments.

The studies in which accomplishment after college may be understood in terms of economic and sociological analyses are varied. Ginzberg (1970) reports that while the attainment of higher educational degrees often provides an opportunity for access to better post-college careers and higher salaries, it was no guarantee of either.

Primarily from an economic and sociological perspective, Solmon (1972) reviewed the literature which pertained to the effects of ability, background, and formal education on subsequent success, using the criteria of occupational status and income level to denote success. The literature reviewed by Solmon establishes quite clearly the general relationship of amount of schooling to post-educational income level, but factors such as quality of schooling, performance in college, selectivity of the college, and characteristics of the student's home, family, and socioeconomic status were largely ignored.

The educational background of the father is an important determinant of a child's schooling, and the parents' income is an even greater determinant of a child's subsequent income (Sewell, Haller, & Ohlendorf, 1970). Hauser, Lutterman, & Sewell (1971), however, found that the ability of the student has an important effect. When ability is considered as an additional explanatory variable, the effect of education on income is reduced by 19 percent. Solmon (1972) summarized the central findings to include the following:

1. Occupational status is most directly affected by educational attainment, but is also influenced by the father's occupational status and by the student's individual ability.
2. Students with similar educational credentials are slightly better off in the job market if they are unusually bright, or if their fathers had or have unusually good jobs.

3. Using occupational status as the criterion for success, the educational attainments and incomes of the parents have no influence on the student's occupational achievement beyond the parents' influence on ability and educational attainment.
4. Using income level as the determinant for success, student's abilities and educational attainments have modest and roughly equal effects, but the parents' occupational status and income — also roughly equal in size — are about twice as influential. (Adapted from Solmon, 1972, p. 31)

A second category of inquiry with a focus on non-academic performance in college as a predictor of accomplishment after college is suggested by the investigations of Wing and Wallach (1971) and Munday and Davis (1974). While approaching related issues, these researchers also focused on endeavors which reflect sustained, self-initiated, and self-directed activity. This category of accomplishment may be part of college classwork, or part of extracurricular activities which include creative endeavors such as sculpture, painting, or creative writing; scientific investigations such as inventions or basic research; leadership activities in the community or on campus; and performance in the recital hall or on the athletic field. These activities may not translate into a prestigious occupational level, but (more importantly) they all reflect sustained, self-initiated, and self-directed activity which can be relevant to post-college accomplishment. Systematic research has yet to be done on this category of inquiry.

The third category of inquiry pertains to the study of psychological characteristics of the individual and, in the view of the present authors, has the most promise of understanding and enhancing the potential for post-college accomplishment through educational programs. This line of inquiry is best typified by the work of Douglas Heath (1965, 1968, 1976, 1977) with a sample from a highly selective men's college. In a series of interrelated studies, Heath (1976) investigated the precursors of maturity and adaptation in adulthood using the Vocational Adaptation Scale as a measure of vocational adjustment. It was completed by each subject, and by each subject's wife, colleague and closest friend. He was addressing an important research problem: namely, how to conceptualize and measure the manner in which a person "fashions an optimal adaptation between fulfilling his needs and talents and the demands of an occupation" (Heath, 1976, p. 2).

Heath's basic contention is that there is a "core group of traits that describes a mature person" (Heath, 1976, p. 2). He describes the components of this core group of traits as follows:

As a person matures he increases his capacity for symbolizing his personal experience as well as aspects of his environment. Furthermore, he increasingly becomes more *allocentric*, capable of taking varied perspectives and viewpoints which he increasingly is able to integrate into meaningful hypotheses. Testing his ideas results in the *stabilization* of the more appropriate solutions which eventually become increasingly *autonomous* and so more generalizable to other situations. (Heath, 1976, p. 3)

Heath applied the conceptual model he developed in the 1976 study to three vocational issues: the relationship of maturing to vocational behavior, the relationship of vocational competence and adaptation to other adult roles, and the personality predictors of vocational behavior. Specifically, he wanted to know if growing maturity was related to vocational adaptation. Previous research had revealed that maturity contributed to competence in other non-vocational adult roles.

A questionnaire and interview on marital, vocational, and child rearing problems was administered along with a second interview on how the men in the sample (now in their early 30's) had changed since college on what Heath characterized as major dimensions of personality. The data about maturing and its determinants were scored using procedures previously reported. (Heath, 1968)

A significant finding was that the "maturity and psychological health of an adolescent predict 12 to 15 years later his vocational adaptation as independently rated by three judges who know him well" (Heath, 1976, p. 12). This finding, in Heath's view, is "even more remarkable because it holds for very diverse ways of measuring adolescent maturity . . ." (Heath, 1976, p. 12). The basic finding that maturity in highly educated men is directly related to vocational adaptation takes on greater importance when the definition of vocational adaptation is more fully understood.

Heath constructed the Vocational Adaptation Scale with the requirements that it: be applicable to numerous occupations, measure success and competence in fulfilling occupational demands, and measure whether or not the occupation fulfilled the men's needs. In this context, adaptation "optimizes both the satisfaction of personal needs and adjustments to the demands of an occupation . . ." (Heath, 1976, p. 6)

Heath further analyzed the relationship of related vocational adaptation to the competence (maturity) with which the men in this sample fulfilled various marital, parental, sexual, interpersonal, and other roles. Components

of the competence rating included seven non vocational roles: host, companion, father (wife's view), creation of a happy marriage (wife's and closest friend's view), and relationships to other family members, friends, and occupational associates, Vocational adaptation was found to be significantly related to the competency with which men performed in the nonvocational roles. Heath noted that the "more vocationally adapted is a man, the more likely is he able to create close and warm relationships with another person . . . ." (Heath, 1976, p. 15). Competency in meeting occupational demands without sacrificing personal satisfaction has a clear relationship to "general personality and interpersonal traits" (Heath, 1976, p. 16). Further, "the unusual consistency with which diverse measures of the men's maturity were associated with their vocational adaptation suggests, though does not confirm, that maturity may be a principal determinant of vocational adaptation" (Heath, 1976, p. 16).

Certainly the Heath data suggest that the role of maturity has an important association with competence in performing a job and satisfaction with that job. In addition, psychological maturity, as measured in either adolescence or adulthood, predicts vocational adaptation. This finding, given Heath's particular definition of vocational adaptation, is an important one in and of itself; it has clear implications for higher education.

Heath (1977) also conducted an intensive longitudinal study of predictors of life success, using over 200 indices of successful adaptation to life after college. Studying college graduates not only from this country, but from a variety of cultures, Heath found that there was general agreement among different cultures as to the definition of adult maturity. Successful functioning as an adult in any of these cultures was composed of the following elements:

1. Symbolization/reflective intelligence
2. Allocentrism/empathy and altruism
3. Integration/ability to combine a variety of views
4. Stability
5. Autonomy/self-direction according to broad humane values.

The definition of successful functioning among college graduates included all five areas. College students who were rated high on these traits were successful as adults; students rated low were not. Heath's most surprising finding was that there was no relation between aptitude and success—especially for the American students in his study. Measures of academic

intelligence (such as scholastic aptitude) did not predict several hundred measures of adaptation and competence of men in their early thirties. In this specific group scholastic aptitude in college was inversely related to many measures of their adult psychological maturity.

This inverse relationship indicated that higher S.A.T. scores were related to less competent adult functioning in the sample. Although Heath does not encourage non-intellectualism, based on his findings on psychological maturation and intellectual development he takes the position that intelligence as measured by tests is not enough. Instead, Heath's work suggests the necessity of a far broader concept of the college student as a thinking, feeling, relating person who: considers the viewpoints of others carefully and systematically, can accurately understand and respond to emotions in others, considers human relationships in accord with humane values, and can trust and modify his or her method of judgment. Heath sees such traits as essential to balanced growth, or what he calls the process of personal integration. As educators, the mistake we can too easily make is to overvalue any single domain of functioning to the exclusion of other areas.

Thus we concur with Heath that the goal of collegiate education can and should be to stimulate balanced psychological growth toward maturity. By promoting reflective judgment, allocentrism, empathy, altruism, personal autonomy, and competence in integrating interpersonal relationships, education can become humanely liberating and have a much more powerful effect on accomplishment in adulthood.

## **A RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

The literature we have reviewed in the first two sections has led us to a number of conclusions about those factors associated with accomplishment in adulthood which can be influenced by institutions of higher education during the undergraduate years:

1. Traditional measures of academic achievement in college — including grade point average — are not associated with accomplishment in adulthood. This basic finding has been replicated so often and with such diverse samples that it appears fruitless to further pursue this line of inquiry.
2. Research by economists and sociologists reveals that there are aspects of family background, such as parental income and father's occupa-

tional status, which have a relationship to measures of post-college accomplishment. These aspects of family background do not appear to be relevant enough to educational components of the college experience to influence their modification.

3. Research on the relationship of self-initiated, intrinsically valuable projects completed during the college years to post-college accomplishment is as yet an insufficient basis for any conclusions regarding alterations of university scheduling and curricula.
4. Psychological maturity has been found to have a significant relationship to post-college accomplishment. Promoting psychological maturity as a component of the college experience is a very feasible way for colleges and universities to contribute to the capacity of their graduates for accomplishment in adulthood.

The rationale for promoting psychological maturity during the college years is simple: it provides an important ingredient for enhancing accomplishment in adulthood. The skills and knowledge acquired in college can have an increased impact in adulthood when accompanied by personal maturity. While there are various approaches to promoting psychological maturity, the common denominator for understanding them is to be found in the tenets of developmental education.

The rationale for developmental education during the college years begins with the legacy from secondary school education and the developmental problems left unsolved by late adolescents. Mosher (1979) is helpful in understanding this unfinished legacy from secondary schools. A key growth task during adolescence is the acquisition of the capacity for abstract thinking, or the “ability to deal with abstract hypotheses, relationships, theories, symbols, ideals, problems and reasoning — things that never were and never will be concrete” (Mosher, 1979, p. 2). Acquiring a capacity for abstract thinking is essential to successful academic work in college. Although Mosher directed this cognitive growth task toward the secondary school years, aspects of this growth task not accomplished prior to the start of the college experience may be attained later.

In Mosher’s view, secondary schools teach teenagers “new content but not new ways of thinking; we teach them answers, which are conventional, sophisticated, or useful, rather than how to think about and act on problems” (Mosher, 1979, p. 3). This critique applies to intellectual (cognitive) tasks, challenges of personal growth, and the acquisition of values. Despite the fact that late adolescents make decisions about their social and humanitarian

values, and their definitions of right and wrong, education as an institution has historically provided little of the necessary support or preparation for adolescent and late adolescent decision-making in these areas of personal development. This lack of educational involvement in teaching students how to make personal decisions can be detrimental to the development of their psychological maturity. Mosher posits that an adolescent is not likely “to develop any more sophisticated ethical position as an adult if his/her natural efforts to create a personal moral philosophy are unsupported by systematic moral education” (Mosher, 1979, p. 4).

Theoretical developments and research investigations over the past two decades have combined to provide developmental educators with the framework and curricular materials to enhance the student’s capacity for more abstract thinking, psychological maturity, ethical awareness, and more differentiated conceptions of justice and principled moral reasoning. This theoretical and research tradition is usually labelled as cognitive-developmental. Its origins are to be found in the early work of Jean Piaget (1929, 1932) on intellectual and moral development in children. This tradition has been extended to moral development in adolescence by Lawrence Kohlberg (1958) and to the creation of curricular materials in moral and psychological education by a host of associates and independent collaborators (for example, see Erickson & Whiteley, 1980; Mosher, 1979; and Mosher & Sprinthall, 1971). Jane Loevinger and her associates (Loevinger, 1966, 1976; Loevinger & Wessler, 1970) extended the domain of cognitive-developmental theory to the ego, and Perry extended it to forms of intellectual and ethical development (Perry, 1968)<sup>2</sup>. Table 3.1 presents representative cognitive-developmental sequences organized by theorists.

For each theorist, the attainment of higher stage development represents an important goal. Higher stage functioning is perceived as a more adequate approach to living in the world than lower stage functioning. The reason for this perception is that higher stages are more complex, consider and integrate more variables, and represent more comprehensive cognitive problem-solving. As we have previously noted, Heath (1965, 1968, 1976) uses the construct of psychological maturity to refer to such a goal. At higher levels of psychological maturity, an individual can think more consistently, critically, logically, scientifically.

In other domains of human functioning, higher stages represent more adequate and complete processing of what is presented to an individual both internally and externally: the ability to role take — to be empathic to the emotions of a wide variety of human beings — then to process moral

Table 3.1

**Developmental Stage Theories of the Domains of Intellectual Functioning (Piaget), Moral Reasoning (Kohlberg), and Ego Development (Loevinger)**

Theorist:	Piaget (1961)	Kohlberg (1969)	Loevinger (1966)
Domain:	Cognitive	Value/moral	Ego-self
	Sensorimotor	Obedience-punishment	Presocial, impulsive
	Preoperational	Naively egoistic	Self-protective
	Concrete	Social conformity	Conformist
	Formal substage 1	Authority maintaining	Conscientious
	Formal substage 2	Contractual, legalistic	Autonomous
	Formal substage 3	Principled orientation	Integrated

dilemmas about values according to standards of democratic justice. In the domain of self and self- concept, higher stage functioning permits a clearer differentiations from and integration with self and others; a sense of both individuality and interdependence. Bakan (1966) referred to such a process as the ability to fuse the apparent paradoxes, of human functioning. In explaining these paradoxes, he used the terms agency (self-direction) and communion (relationships).

Other theorists have used constructs to describe higher stage functioning as more complex, more humane, more subjective, yet more objective. For example, Allport (1968) used the phrases “tentative, yet committed” and “whole-hearted but half-sure,” implying the ability to puzzle through the tough problems of living, to take a stand, and yet to remain open to possible revision and new information-making successive approximations. These constructs have been employed to describe how humans can function more comprehensively at higher and more complex stages.

It is clear from any reading of higher stage functioning that there is an obvious cultural context with respect to democratic principles. Respect for principles of human dignity and individuality, responsibility to the common good, and commitment to freedom and equality for all are embedded in the stage of functioning that we consider to be more cognitively and morally complex. Dewey saw the clear connection between the goals of free public education and the needs of a democratic society. Dewey (1950) noted that all social institutions have a meaning and a purpose:

“That meaning is to set free and to develop the capacities of human individuals, without respect to race, sex, class or economic status. The test of their values is the extent to which they educate every individual into the full stature of his possibility” (p. 147).

### **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION GOALS: DO THEY MEAN ANYTHING!**

A close colleague, Professor Ralph Mosher, put the question in the form of a metaphor. During the famous Watergate investigations of the Nixon administration, one of the Senate panel, Howard Baker, noted that lawyers spend their professional lives “shoveling smoke.” Mosher suggests in a parallel that all this talk about ego, morality, personal, interpersonal, social stages, etc., . . . as “character” and “moral judgment” may be engaged in the same smoke-shoveling game. In other words, where is the reality in all this rhetoric? In the hard, cold world of adulthood, after the last entrance test, multiple choice exam, final term paper and/or honor’s essay has been completed, what are the lasting products of a college experience for a young person with aspirations for accomplishment?

In the past decade, a series of studies has examined the relationship between psychological development during college and success after graduation. Taken as a whole, they not only clearly indicate that psychological development predicts success in life quite effectively, the studies also provide evidence that indices of psychological maturity and stage development predict success after college. There is, of course, no ultimate measure of life success; the early Greek philosophers warned us all to “count no person happy until death.” However, it is still possible to use a variety of measures and evaluations as a basis for some judgment as to which college graduates have succeeded in life as opposed to those who do not fare as well. There is admittedly some bias in any attempt to assess any criterion such as success in adult functioning, yet it is possible by employing multiple indices to reduce bias substantially.

Institutions of higher education clearly want to admit young people of promise and graduate four years later men and women with the potential for accomplishment in a variety of endeavors and life roles. Heath concluded one article with the observation that it remains reasonable “to talk of a competent person who is effective in many different roles” (Heath, 1976, p. 18). Psychological maturity appears to be a human characteristic profoundly

associated with translating ability, skills, and knowledge into effective living and job performance. The promotion of psychological development is therefore a necessary component of those undergraduate institutions that want to produce graduates whose later lives will be characterized by accomplishment.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>This chapter has appeared in modified form as "Accomplishments After College: Rationale for Developmental Education," *NASPA Journal*, (1982).

<sup>2</sup>It is clearly beyond the scope of this endeavor to review the field of cognitive-developmental education. There has been a number of previous reviews or collections of articles which can guide the interested reader through the literature. Included in this category are Rest (1974, 1979); Loevinger (1976); Lickona (1976); Kohlberg (1981); Mosher (1979); and Erickson & Whiteley (1980).

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## ***SECTION II***

### **THE CURRICULUM TO PROMOTE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

***John M. Whiteley***

A principal product of the Sierra Project is a curriculum for the development of character in college students which covers three ten-week academic quarters. The four chapters in Section II translate the theories and concepts described in previous chapters into an approach to psychological education (practice) with college freshmen.

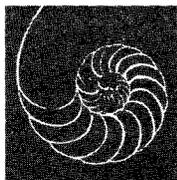
Chapter 4 presents the goals and concepts which guided the curriculum development, describes briefly the curriculum modules and the staff involved in their delivery, and illustrates how the staff worked together to produce the curriculum. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 describe the curriculum for each academic quarter. Each of these three chapters begin with an introduction which lists goals and a general description of that quarter's curriculum.

The curriculum is organized into ten separate modules-general topical areas which contain at least two or more classes. Two modules (Empathy/Social Perspective Taking and Community Building) extended throughout the entire year, while most modules appeared in the curriculum of only one or

two quarters. In terms of module organization, the first section contains goals and relates these goals to relevant theory. Then each class in the module is described in three sections: Goals and Overview, Delivery, and Instructional Problems and What We Learned. Commentaries on the modules included issues in sequencing educational experiences, and suggestions for improvement.

Following the presentation of the modules, the quarter as a whole is summarized. Each chapter includes a table (5.1, 6.1, 7.1) showing the order of classes, and how each class is connected thematically to one or more modules. Studying these tables (found within the first few pages of each of those chapters) before reading each chapter in detail will clarify the schedule of class delivery.

The curriculum is presented as we actually delivered it rather than how we would do it now. Since one important purpose of this book is to indicate to others *how* to do what we did, it was necessary to present the method of a “trial-error-evaluation-trial . . .” For anyone planning to deliver a class or module, the sections on “Instructional Problems and What We Learned” and the “Module Commentary” provide suggestions for improving the delivery and content of the classes.



## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CURRICULUM: GENERAL BACKGROUND

*Janet Clark Loxley and John M. Whiteley*

This chapter presents the goals of the curriculum, describes the concepts that have guided us, gives an overview of the curriculum, describes the staff involved and their functions, and illustrates how the staff worked together to produce a curriculum appropriate for the Sierra freshmen. The Sierra Project was divided into a research component and a curriculum component. The curriculum component consisted of a three-quarter-long academic course taught to freshmen in the Sierra hall (for four units of academic credit each quarter). The overall goals of the Sierra Project were to:

- a. facilitate the transition from high school to college life;
- b. stimulate psychological development from late adolescence to early adulthood, particularly on dimensions associated with character;
- c. foster a consideration of future lifestyle choices and career decisions; and
- d. challenge learners to apply their educational experiences to problems in the broader community through community services.

In facilitating the transition from high school to college life, there was an active effort to increase student responsibility for themselves, and to have them evaluate the impact of their behavior on others and on the community.

Stimulating psychological development in the transition from late adolescence to early adulthood on dimensions of character was approached principally through:

1. skill development in empathy and social perspective taking, assertion training, and conflict resolution in the context of a psychological sense of community;
2. presentation of structured moral and value dilemma experiences; and
3. analysis and reflection upon socialization issues, cultural and social concerns, sex roles, and race roles.

Fostering a consideration of future lifestyle choices and career decisions consisted of providing increased knowledge and understanding through structured decision making experiences. Challenging learners to apply their newly acquired skills to problems in the broader community was accomplished through an opportunity for community service and study. Students could earn four additional units of academic credit (two in Winter Quarter and two in Spring Quarter) by involvement, analysis, and reflection (see Chapter 9) while participating in a Field Study. Given the range and scope of our aims, we frequently joked about adding "they will be able to leap tall buildings in a single bound."

The major theoretical constructs which influenced this intervention were summarized in Chapter 2. Concepts from developmental psychology which influenced our thinking are: structural organization, developmental sequencing, interactionism, and equilibration. The concepts from counseling psychology are: the importance of a psychological sense of community, the power of empathy and social perspective-taking in the development of higher stages of moral reasoning, and the impact which assertion training can have on the development and implementation of fairness as a principle in the resolution of interpersonal conflict. As defined by Kohlberg's (1958, 1964, 1969) cognitive developmental theory of the stages of moral reasoning, assertion training can also be employed in promoting transitions from Stage 2 to Stage 3 and from Stage 3 to Stage 4.

How did these principles from developmental and counseling psychology actually influence curriculum choices? In general, the developmental concepts (structural organization, developmental sequencing, interactionism, and equilibration) influenced the goals and how the class was actually presented, what the students were to experience, what type of thinking would be promoted, and how classes were sequenced. The counseling psychology concepts (psychological sense of community, empathy and social perspective taking, and assertion) clearly had a direct impact on goals and content. Three other modules (Socialization, Sex Roles, and Race Roles) were closely tied to both Community Building and to Empathy

and Social Perspective Taking. The last three modules (Survival Skills, Life and Career Planning, and Community Service) were chosen because we believed the content addressed important issues for freshmen.

The developmental and counseling psychology concepts were combined with our own interests, skills, and knowledge about freshmen. For example, in planning the curriculum the first year of the project (for the Class of 1979), a heavy emphasis had been placed on providing experiences which would promote a transition in moral reasoning from Stage 4 to Stage 4 1/2 to Stage 5. It was our supposition that the group was in the process of making a transition from conventional to post-conventional thinking. As was reported in Whiteley (1978), this assumption proved to be incorrect. Part way through the first-year curriculum, we found that we were dealing with a very conventional Stage 3 population; that the dominant transition issues were from Stage 3 to Stage 4.

This knowledge, confirmed by the test battery during the summer after we had worked with the Class of 1979, allowed a number of fundamental changes in the curriculum and how it was presented. The shaping of the curriculum for the second year was guided by our knowledge of the general psychological profile of Sierra students on dimensions of ego development, moral reasoning, sex-role choices, level of empathy and assertion, and internal/external locus of control. The Sierra Project curriculum was revised to promote a transition from Stage 3 to Stage 4 and to help students explore Stage 3 thinking. This choice was based on the assumption that each stage of cognitive development must be fully explored as part of a successful transition to the next stage of thinking.

Moral development in late adolescence and early adulthood and the form which moral reasoning takes during this transition period clearly influence the Sierra Project goals and curriculum. Kohlberg (1976) has stated that movement from stage to stage in level of moral reasoning occurs as a result of cognitive-moral conflict, that the "experiences of cognitive conflict can occur either through exposure to decision situations that arouse internal contradictions in one's moral reasoning structure, or through exposure to the moral reasoning of significant others which is discrepant in content or structure from one's own reasoning" (p. 52). The central developmental construct underlying "reflective reorganization" is equilibration. For Kohlberg (1976), cognitive-moral conflict is "central to the moral discussion program" (p. 51) that he and his associates have implemented in the schools (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975; Blatt, 1969; Colby, 1972).

The Sierra curriculum has attempted to induce cognitive conflict. First, a genuine attempt was made to capitalize on situations which might "arouse internal contradictions in one's moral reasoning structure" (Kohlberg, 1976, p. 52). These attempts have been discussed in Whiteley (1978). The second method for inducing cognitive conflict--exposing individuals to levels of moral thinking different from their own--was a source of difficulty in the implementation of the Sierra curriculum. It would have been desirable in this regard to have the instructors and student staff members regularly provide examples of moral reasoning which were one stage above that of the students. While this often happened informally, the staff did not do on-the-spot assessments of the stage-level of a student's response in order to formulate a +1 response "all in the frame of conversational exchanges" (Rest, 1974, p. 249). Rest (1974) noted in this context that considering the "time it takes to stage score a regular interview and the amount of time it takes to compose unambiguous stage-prototypic statements, it is unrealistic to expect a teacher to be computing +1 reports to students in a group discussion" (p. 249).

It was beyond the capability of the Sierra staff to accomplish this without more training time than was available. Therefore, the curriculum was shaped by knowledge of relevant theory and staff interests but limited by available staff skills. Of the three moral reasoning change vehicles singled out by Kohlberg (1976), the Sierra Project intervention made the least explicit use of the cognitive-moral conflict approach. The reasons were several. First, professional staff was not available to train the student staff in leading moral discussion groups and in "one-up" modeling. Second, Rest's (1974) critique stating that effective moral dilemma discussions were very complicated was convincing; the staff was unwilling to venture into moral discussion groups employing "one-up modeling" without resolving Rest's (1974) concerns. Third, the discussion groups for the Class of 1979 had not gone well. By the time the staff was convinced that groups were going satisfactorily with the Class of 1980, it was too far into the school year to introduce more effective staff training.

While *formal* cognitive-moral conflict approach was not used often, there were many opportunities in and out of class for students to engage in evaluation and discussions of moral dilemmas. We tried to create internal conflict (disequilibration) as well as to structure conflict among residents. The student staff's role in these discussions included helping freshmen listen to each other, minimizing aggressive contributions, encouraging quieter members to share their opinions and making sure that a variety of opinions and reasons were expressed. The staff all understood the concepts of moral

development, knew the stages of moral reasoning, and recognized the importance of having students exposed to other (preferably higher) levels of reasoning. In addition, most of the student staff members were able to reason at a higher level than most of the students. They were cautioned to present their views within the groups as “here’s another way to look at it” rather than “this is *my* opinion.” This strategy helped them remain group leaders, minimized their emotional investment in “right” answers, and allowed the students to keep expressing their own opinions.

Certainly a major influence on the curricular design was the set of goals developed for the project. Concern with the students’ level of moral development was but one of many goals. A curriculum predominantly based on a sequential series of formal moral dilemma discussions might well have had a more direct impact on raising the level of moral reasoning and moral action, but this would have required the elimination (or severe curtailment) of other modules. Readers will see again and again that the translation of theory into actual practice was based in our desire to achieve project goals and modified by our limitations. For these reasons, it is not our contention that the formal cognitive-moral conflict approach is inappropriate with freshmen. Depending on one’s goals and available resources expanding this area of the curriculum could be an appropriate choice.

Another curricular issue is the idea that the moral atmosphere of an environment has an important influence on the moral development of those who reside or participate in it. According to Kohlberg (1976), the core of an environment’s moral atmosphere is its “justice structure.” The definition of “justice structure” he employs is that of Rawls (1971): “. . . the way in which social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages for social operation” (p. 7).

Moral atmosphere influences how individuals learn to resolve conflicting points of view. Role taking will assess the points of view which are operative in a situation, but the moral component of a judgment can be sensed from the atmosphere of the environment as well as learned from more explicit interventions such as moral discussion groups. As Kohlberg (1976) sees it, “. . . individuals respond to a composite of moral reasoning, moral action, and institutionalized roles as a relatively unified whole in relation to their own moral stage” (p. 51). He sees a higher-stage institutional atmosphere as one which will lead to moral change.

Sierra Hall has had its fair share of rivalry, jealousy, conflict, drugs and alcohol, pillow fights, silliness, good fun, quarrels, collegueship, and formation of lasting friendships which characterize other UC Irvine residence

halls. The atmosphere in Sierra Hall was marked by a higher level of community (trust, openness, absence of much hostility . . .) which was fertile ground for creating a positive moral atmosphere. We tried to enhance the moral atmosphere of Sierra through efforts at community building, empathy and social perspective taking, and at bringing moral conflict issues before the group rather than avoiding or covering them up. Examples of potential moral conflict issues are stealing, racial conflicts, and roommate conflicts. Discussions related to fairness and justice were held in the class in the Triple I-D groups and informally within the residence hall. The live-in student staff tried to highlight issues as they occurred, and to aid the students in resolving them.

Developing an intervention to change people's thinking structures *and* trying to measure its impact is a massive undertaking. What you see here in print is a compilation of many years of work from many people. While not ideal, we do believe the curriculum presented here is impactful as a whole and in its respective pieces.

### ACTUAL CURRICULUM

The formal curriculum consisted of the modules described below, the journal which each student kept, and the community service opportunity (for those who chose to participate). The informal curriculum consisted of life in Sierra Hall itself and the instructional influences of the peer culture. We attempted to tap the peer culture as part of the class by making it an object of study in the various modules. The 44 freshmen living in Sierra Hall participated in the year-long course, "Moral Development and Just Communities" (see Chapter 1 for more detail). Chapters 5, 6, and 7 detail the curriculum of the course designed for and delivered to the Class of 1981. In brief, the modules were as follows:

- Module 1. *Survival Skills*: What freshmen need to know that most seniors already do; how to organize their time, how to study effectively, and how to prepare for and take examinations.
- Module 2. *Community Building*: Helping students work together to create an atmosphere of openness, trust, and group support in an environment characterized by conflict resolution through democratic decision making. This is not an entirely self-contained module; often the *content* of the class fell into another module, but the *process* was designed to enhance the building of community. This module includes student-planned classes.

- Module 3. *Conflict Resolution in Society*: Includes participation in SIMSOC (Gamson, 1972a; 1972b; 1978a; 1978b), a commercially available simulation game in which students are given vaguely structured roles and allowed to form their own society. In the implementation of SIMSOC in Sierra Hall, emphasis is placed on survival issues, personal goals, problems of power and authority, and what type of society provides the most good for the most people. Principles of fairness and justice as well as conflict resolution skills are involved throughout the game.
- Module 4. *Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking*: Basic listening and communication skills for the development of empathy — defined as the ability to understand the point of view of another — and of the ability to communicate that understanding.
- Module 5. *Socialization*: What are people like now? How did they come to be that way? Values and life styles were examined as salient factors and pressures in the socialization process.
- Module 6. *Sex-Role Choices*: How socialization by gender affects current values, behaviors, and interests.
- Module 7. *Race Roles*: How race relates to socialization. Examines stereotyping, racial values and attitudes, and cross-cultural relationships.
- Module 8. *Assertion Training*: Enhances relationships by helping students learn to identify the personal rights involved in a conflict situation and to resolve that situation, assuring their own legitimate rights without violating those of others.
- Module 9. *Life and Career Planning*: Students explore decision making. This module helps students in the decision-making process by exposing them to a variety of life and career options.
- Module 10. *Community Service*: Provides the opportunity for students to work with people with real problems in a naturalistic setting; allowing them to apply the skills they have been learning in Sierra in a community setting. This module allows the students to have positive contact with agencies outside the university community while still receiving support from the campus (this module was optional and was in addition to the regular class. See Chapter 9 for a description).

## CURRICULAR DESIGN AND DELIVERY

### Curriculum Team

The Sierra curriculum was developed and delivered by a team which included the primary instructor (Janet Clark Loxley), the curriculum coordinator (typically a junior or senior who was a past student staff member) who lived outside the hall, the Resident Assistant from Sierra Hall, six student staff members who lived in the hall, and occasionally the administrative head of the project, the field study coordinator, and a representative from housing.

The primary instructor was a clinical psychologist interested in human development. She was skilled in workshop delivery and in working with paraprofessionals. During the first year of the project, she devoted twenty hours per week to coordination and teaching. Once the basic curriculum was developed, teaching the course (including working with the student staff) was reduced to ten hours per week for the next three years of the project.

The Resident Assistant (R.A.) assigned to Sierra Hall by the housing staff was one of 23 students (usually a junior or senior) selected from a pool of 125 applicants after a rigorous process. (See Chapter 8 for a description.) An R.A. is responsible for maintaining order in the residence hall, explaining and enforcing university policy, coordinating programming, and meeting the students' basic needs for support and counseling. In addition, the Sierra R.A. met with the curriculum committee to develop the class, participated in delivery; and provided structure and support for the six student staff members. On the side, the R.A. was a full-time student!

The student staff members were selected during the spring by the R.A. in consultation with other project staff. Typically they were sophomores and juniors. A goal of selection was to choose a team of diverse individuals so each freshman could have someone to identify with in terms of ethnicity, academic major, interests, and personal style. With a staff of six, not all needed to be outgoing, be social organizers, or to be seen as leaders. The student staff members were sources of information for freshmen about the university ("How do I drop a class?"), organized social activities, met with the curriculum team, and helped deliver the class. They frequently brought up ideas from the class at other times, thereby encouraging the students to view learning and thinking as a continual process, not just something that happens on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 7-9 p.m.

During the spring, summer, and early fall before the freshmen arrived, the student staff received training in: basic listening and counseling skills, group dynamics and group leadership, conflict resolution, assertion, and awareness of sex roles and race roles. They spent time getting to know each other and forming their own support system. They were exposed to the theoretical basis of the project. During the year they learned to set teaching goals, to develop workshops to fit the goals, and to deliver these workshops in a teaching style appropriate for freshmen.

The six members of the student staff and the Resident Assistant were the front line teachers. Living in the residence hall, they interacted as more than peers and less than formal instructors. They had either been in the Sierra program as freshmen, or were deeply immersed in the theoretical basis of the project through course work in developmental or counseling psychology. They served as leaders of the small groups which functioned in the Winter and Spring Quarters. In that role, they helped freshmen plan several Spring Quarter classes. In conventional terms, a student staff member can be variously characterized as a peer advisor, teaching assistant, peer counselor, teaching aide, participant-observer, role model, and friend. The student staff role as it actually functioned in Sierra Hall reflected the personality of the particular incumbent and the demands of the particular situation.

The curriculum coordinator (an ex-staff member who lived outside the hall) worked with the design and delivery of the class and assumed responsibility for many of the details involved in presenting the class. This included preparing handouts, readings, and posters or assembling any other materials needed for the class. The curriculum coordinator would make sure that other staff members had followed up on their responsibilities, and in general served a coordinating function.

### **Working as a Team**

The primary instructor of record, R.A., student staff, and coordinator were responsible for all curriculum planning and delivery. They spent at least four to six hours per week together in class and in planning meetings. From early in the year this group worked as a team supporting each other, respecting each other, listening to each other.

There was concern among the student staff over equal division of tasks, and people were quite aware of the impact of their behavior on others, e.g., "If I agreed to make a handout for class and don't do it either the freshmen will suffer *or* another staff person will have to do it for me." With occasional

exceptions, staff members were very responsible. In the planning meetings, we talked about concerns and feelings. There was time to give and receive support and to share disappointments and enthusiasm as well as to plan. Several times each quarter we would stop the planning to discuss how *we* were working together e.g., how the quieter people were feeling and how to encourage them to share more, whether the professor was too vocal, how each person could have more of a sense of control over what was happening and address any hidden conflicts. This time for discussing the process of working together is absolutely essential. A group that works this closely together needs time to discuss process as well as content. We found this time helped us become a team of people who liked each other, respected each other, and, as a consequence, were more aware of the freshmen's needs and were more efficient.

In addition to goals for the class and the project, the primary instructor had goals for the student staff. Much of working with them involved teaching them to think, to share their own opinions, and to be more self-confident. This was done not by telling them to do so or by direct teaching, but by being the type of authority figure who encouraged and supported them, and who was genuinely interested in their welfare and development. Initially in the curriculum planning meetings the student staff tended to be quiet and to defer to "authority." The instructor began to ask for their opinions directly and listened carefully, frequently paraphrasing the answers to let them know they were heard. When student staff volunteered comments she used verbal and non-verbal reinforcement. She also monitored the group process, being aware of who was and was not speaking or being listened to. Frequently time was spent discussing group process even when there were "things to get done and decisions to be made."

The influence of being a psychologist is clearly seen here. Many times it would have been easier to plan and deliver the class without the student staff. But our belief in the value of student staff as role models, and the conviction that they possessed special insights about the freshmen made the student staff role essential in the Sierra Project as it was implemented. During the year several of the student staff members would seek out the instructor to help resolve more personal concerns in addition to discussing project issues.

### **How We Planned**

The curriculum team met for several days before the academic year started and for a day at the beginning of each quarter to set goals. We

discussed general issues: “Why were we doing this at all? What was the purpose of undergraduate education? What did we want freshmen to learn? To experience? What were our goals for ourselves? What were the freshmen like from a psychological perspective?” From these topics we moved to setting goals for the year and for each quarter. Then we discussed *how* to reach these goals. This led in turn to a general outline for the year and quarter including what modules would be covered and in what order. The next step was to consider specific classes within the quarter. Planning the details of actual delivery was done in the weekly meetings, but we tried to begin each quarter with a plan for the entire ten weeks. After the first year, the previous year’s curriculum was used as a model which was altered to fit the changing needs of freshmen and the changing interests of our staff.

Each week the previous week’s classes were discussed and evaluated on dimensions such as what went well, what did not, what we would suggest for the future etc. After a discussion on special circumstances affecting the freshman, we began future planning. The most effective way we found to structure each class was to begin by asking ourselves: “What module and class were next in our quarter’s outline? Were there any reasons to change the schedule? What were our goals? Why should the next class be taught at all? How did it make sense in terms of the principle of sequencing of experiences?”

Once these questions were answered, the next focus was on the details of class development. “What is the goal? What do we want the students to know, to learn, to experience? How would we meet these goals? What were potential activities? In what order should they occur? Who would be responsible for what?” After answering these questions we would begin to structure the class and using our knowledge about how to teach freshmen. At the end of each meeting, a written outline had been developed for the class including specification of each person’s responsibilities. This was an extremely time-consuming process as it often involved developing new exercises and approaches to the class. The time was well spent, however, because the curriculum was much more relevant to our students than if we had stuck to a prepackaged plan that was simply unfolded week by week. Also, the student staff learned how to set goals and develop curriculum to meet these goals. At the end of the year, they were effective in both the development and delivery of workshops, and many went on to use these skills in other contexts.

The fact that the primary instructor was a clinical psychologist with interests in human development and training certainly affected the curriculum planning. Most teachers in non-psychological fields have not had coursework

in teaching education, or developmental theory. (This is especially true of college and university professors who know their subject matter well but may not know as much about how to teach or know much about the psychological development of students.)

An important part of the teacher role, as we implemented it, involved the teacher as psychologist. We taught assertion training and empathy skills, for example, in much the same way most other psychologists would. A developmental intervention such as this need not be run by psychologists; teaching character and establishing a sense of community are not the province of psychology any more than of any other discipline. However, our approach is deeply rooted in the idea of using the psychologist as educator, and the project would be quite different if planned and implemented from another disciplinary perspective.

Knowledge of developmental theory helped the psychologist/teacher form realistic expectations for students and see different behaviors and experiences as valuable for different students. The psychologist also had an understanding of the students' behavior from a psychological perspective; why they were doing what they were doing? For example, conflict resolution frequently created anxiety. Knowing this aided the psychologically-minded staff to design a curriculum which engendered the least amount of anxiety *or* to be aware of students' behaviors indicating anxiety and to handle these as they arose. This psychological/theoretical information about students was used to develop intervention strategies for the group as a whole and for individual students who seemed to be having difficulties. Frequently in curriculum planning meetings the psychologist/teacher would explain principles to the student staff and offer suggestions related to developmental or psychological theory.

The role of the student staff in curriculum planning was very important. Often, when the professional staff members would have a "great idea" about a new exercise to use in class, the student staff would consider the exercise and point out reasons why it would be totally ineffective in achieving the goals for the class. For example, the "Alligator River" exercise was considered an exciting experience by the over-25 staff, but the students saw it as boring and irrelevant. (Briefly, a woman wants to visit her boyfriend across the river and is able to obtain means of travel only in exchange for sexual services. Her boyfriend rejects her for this, and she then gets a sympathetic friend to beat him up. Students were to discuss each character and define the moral issues involved). We were at a loss as to how to handle the situation until one student staff member realized that by reversing the roles (having a male cross the river to see his girl friend, etc.)

this exercise could be used as a vehicle for discussing differences between male and female roles. This topic turned out to be of keen interest to freshmen when presented as recommended by the student staff.

There were many “teachers” within the Sierra class. All members of the curriculum team were involved in direct teaching. The teachers’ roles varied from fall quarter to spring quarter. In Fall Quarter, the teachers were quite explicit about defining student tasks and the primary instructor took major responsibility. In the first year of the project with the Class of 1979 the entering freshmen had a high need for structure and Fall Quarter curriculum was, therefore, highly structured by the staff. In Winter Quarter, teaching involved one structured class each week yet also allowed student staff and students more responsibility through participation in small discussion groups.

The student staff took an active role within these Triple I-D groups as group leaders and in helping the freshmen plan a class presentation. Triple I-D stands for Intensive Interpersonal Interaction and Discussion (see Chapter 6). The title was created by the staff to communicate to students that they would have an opportunity to share themselves and their values with other students. The groups were much more personal than a typical discussion group, and were more oriented toward the sharing of values, ideals, and philosophies than a typical encounter group (although none of the students were concerned about the Triple I-D groups turning into encounter groups since they indicated they had never *heard* of encounter groups.)

In Spring Quarter, the role of the teacher was quite different. We were directly attempting to get students to assume responsibility for thinking about what they were learning. While we retained responsibility for the outcome of the class, our goal was for the students to become more active learners. By Spring Quarter, our intent was to stimulate students’ thinking sufficiently that they would be able to systematically think through the concept of presenting a learning experience for their classmates. At this point the teacher was available as a resource person to the groups which were planning classes and consulted weekly with the student staff about the functioning of their Triple I-D groups. By spring, individual class members frequently sought out the primary instructor to discuss topics raised in class or to share more personal concerns, though this might be expected to happen in any course.

The basic Sierra curriculum intervention is influenced profoundly by the fact that it occurs within the context of an undergraduate residence hall. As a psychological sense of community develops, it is enhanced significantly by the twenty-four-hours-a-day living arrangement. The average of three

to four hours per week devoted to the formal class are few by comparison to the amount of time in which students interact with each other. If the Sierra Project were for commuter students rather than resident students, we would be relegated to a much smaller portion of a freshman's time and attention. The Sierra curriculum would not be as impactful as it is were it not for the level of community we are able to generate within the residence hall context. Extensive use was made of issues generated within the student peer culture in Sierra Hall as topics for classes within the modules. This would not be possible, at least in the same way, in a commuter group; the student peer culture would be much less influential.

### **Considerations in the Teaching of Freshmen**

The Sierra students who participated in the curriculum described here were 44 freshmen entering college for the first time in the Fall of 1976. There were 22 women and 22 men. Ethnically about half were Anglo and the other half were divided relatively equally among Black, Hispanic, and Asian students. Almost all came from within a 100-mile radius of the University of California, Irvine campus. These were freshmen in a highly competitive research university. Many were worried about succeeding academically, most had short attention spans, had been trained previously in traditional classroom settings, and were away from their families for the first time. Almost all of them were engaged in making (or fighting) the transition from high school to college and from adolescence to early adulthood. For example, when anyone referred to the female freshmen as "women" their typical response was, "don't call us women, we're not that old yet." They were very bright and had histories of being successful in school; almost all had been in the upper 12% of their high school graduating classes. All had chosen to live in the Sierra residence hall knowing it was a freshman hall and had previously agreed to enroll in the 4-unit course each quarter. The characteristics of Sierra freshmen greatly influenced our approach to teaching. By focusing first on approaches to effective learning and study skills, after several sessions students were able to give more attention to what the staff considered important for the Fall Quarter curriculum: Community Building, Conflict Resolution, and Social Perspective Taking.

This group of freshmen did have short attention spans. We started with a three-hour evening class and learned quickly that three hours was too long, no matter how varied or how stimulating the class, especially since the class

met in the residence hall living room. After about an hour, students were easily distracted by anyone walking by, ringing phones, sounds outside, insects, or anything different. To counter this, we met in one-and one-half-hour sessions for two evenings per week. We changed the main instructor and modified the format frequently. Responsibility for presenting class material was interchanged among the professional and student staff members. For example, one person might give an overview of the evening, then someone else would take over the class to present the initial exercise. Formats included lectures, demonstrations, role plays, large- and small-group discussions, and panel presentations. Students were seldom asked to listen for more than 20 minutes without some intervening activity. A variety of media was employed including films, videotapes, audiotapes, oral readings, dramatic presentations, and posters. The question we frequently asked ourselves was, “Now that we know *what* we want the students to learn in this class, *how* do we present it in a way that will be stimulating to the students?” (However, there was a constant reminder to ourselves that our goal was education not entertainment.)

The schools that most of the freshmen had previously attended were traditional educational settings which included chairs or desks in rows and an emphasis on being quiet and learning material in order to pass tests. They were quite comfortable in these settings and (from observations in regular university lecture halls) were attentive and respectful when placed in these formal, structured educational settings. They seemed to understand how to study and learn — or at least get good grades — in these classes.

The structure in Sierra was significantly different. The class met in the residence hall living room which had few chairs and no desks. Students could sit wherever they wanted. As the year progressed, some came in pajamas or *very* casual clothing. Instead of one professor who lectured while the students took notes, there were many professional and *student* staff members in the role of instructor. No formal tests were given; regular attendance, selected readings, and keeping a structured journal (see Chapter 9) were the only requirements. Students were graded on a Pass/Not Pass basis. Thus, there was little external formalized pressure to be attentive in class and to take careful notes.

Initially students responded to this change in atmosphere and requirements by not being attentive, talking, daydreaming, even trying to read other material or doing other school work. Students did not know how to act in this class. For some, the informal atmosphere seemed a signal to relax totally, and especially to stop thinking. For others, it seemed the perfect opportunity to socialize, to see their friends and to chat with them. When

they realized there would be no formal exams, most students decided not to take notes in class, and if one is not taking notes while someone is talking, what else is there to do? In addition to their short attention spans, most students were easily bored. This created a dilemma for us. We wanted the class to hold their interest and at the same time to maintain a clear educational focus.

The staff could have chosen to move the Sierra class into a regular university classroom setting and to change the class requirements to create a more formal, externalized pressure (e.g., instituting a final examination, regular readings, and formal lectures), but the structure of the class was designed to fit our principal goals. Remaining in the residence hall community aided in developing a psychological sense of community. The Pass/Not Pass grading system eliminated as much competition among students as possible. We also believed that with this model we could more easily meet the goal of having the freshmen take a more active role in shaping their own educations.

Two major issues we faced initially in teaching this class to freshmen were: helping them adjust to a learning environment which was quite different from their previous educational experiences and encouraging them to take a more active role in shaping their own educational experiences.

For the first issue, student involvement was sought in resolving the dilemma of maintaining an informal structure and yet retaining attention without being entertainers or deviating from our central educational mission. Several weeks into Fall Quarter the students were asked to identify the ways in which this class was different from their previous educational experiences. Their list included the issues mentioned above. Next they examined how they tended to behave in response to these differences: being inattentive, disrespectful, easily distracted, bored, and disruptive. Finally the group developed their own suggestions for influencing their behavior, mainly taking individual responsibility for remaining attentive and for examining the concepts presented. They also offered suggestions for improving the content and impact of the class. This approach to changing disruptive behavior and involving students in shaping the content and delivery of the class was chosen over simply asking/telling people to change. Involving students in this critical discussion was an initial step toward encouraging a more active attitude toward their educational experiences. Several students were delighted to see that their suggestions actually resulted in changes in the class. This in turn raised their interest level and involvement in the class.

During the year, students were frequently reminded of their own comments and decisions from this discussion about appropriate behavior. While these reminders did not eliminate all problems with the class structure, the students did make a visible effort to be more attentive and to *think* about material presented to them.

Student staff members were extremely important in helping freshmen adjust to this class. They would sit among the students, often sitting next to someone who was potentially anxious or disruptive. They quietly discouraged inappropriate behaviors and encouraged people to ask questions and discuss items. Outside class they would raise issues presented in class hoping the freshmen would see that thinking was appropriate in both contexts. After our discussion about how the class was different from other instructional settings and how to make it work better, and especially after assertion training, the students were more likely to ask their peers to be quiet or to urge someone who seemed ambivalent to speak. The student staff served as excellent role models.

Our initial attempts at helping the students adjust to a new learning environment were relatively successful. On the other major educational issue, encouraging the freshmen to take more active control over their own educational experiences, the results were less satisfactory. We made several errors in the process of addressing this issue and hope other educators will benefit from seeing our trial-and-error approach. We knew what we wanted to accomplish, developed a strategy for doing so, and kept revising unsuccessful strategies until our goal was met. The essential problem was to help students make the transition from their usual passivity in formalized learning situations to taking more control over their own educational experiences. Several of the professional staff members had been college students during the 1960's and had strong beliefs about the value of taking active control over one's life and education. In the first year of the project, freshmen were told "This is *your* class. You can decide what happens here. Here is your chance to have control over your education." We then proceeded to ask them to decide on the attendance policy. After several opinions had been expressed, one student said, "We're wasting time with all this arguing. You decide about attendance. You're the teacher, and that is what you are paid for, isn't it?" This opinion received almost unanimous support. One student, commenting on this class session in his journal, went a step further, saying, "If I hear the staff mention the 60's once more, I think I'll throw up." We realized that our group of students were not exactly clamoring for active control of their education and that we needed to introduce a much more structured approach to elicit their involvement.

Also during the first year students were asked to take responsibility for planning a class in Winter or Spring Quarter. Each Triple I-D group (see Winter Quarter curriculum for a description) was told, "You will have one class period to present something to the entire group. Think about what you want to do, pick a date and let us know." The Triple I-D groups presented classes in response to this *vague* request ranging from a demonstration of hypnosis to a "talent/no talent" night where students presented entertaining acts. The stated goal for the "talent/no talent" night was to bring students closer together and to share interests with each other. While this goal was accomplished, the staff had hoped the class would have a more educational focus. The students did feel more ownership of the class, and the staff learned a significant lesson; namely, that much more structure was necessary in order for freshmen to present a stimulating and educational experience.

The second year we offered more structure: "We want your group to plan a class that relates to one of the following issues . . .," and we listed topics they might choose from with the option that they could choose another topic with our approval. This year the student-developed classes included: effective journal keeping, types of personal relationships, women's health care issues, religion and patriotism, human sexuality, and an interview with a mature couple.

By offering the freshmen more structure within which their involvement could occur, we were able to have classes that fit the overall goals for the year. Students also found they wasted less time trying to decide *what* to present and therefore were able to use that time planning *how* to present it. A frequent comment was that they had not realized how difficult class planning was. Several students suggested we have the freshmen plan some classes early in the year so they would realize this fact and be more appreciative of our presentations, another opportunity for perspective taking.

Because the Sierra course was offered through an academic department (Social Ecology), we needed to grade the students' educational performance. The professional staff decided at the beginning of the Project to offer the course on a "Pass/No Pass" rather than on a letter grade basis. We believed this grading system would reduce competition, anxiety, and comparison with peers. It also allowed us to set minimum standards that any student must meet to obtain a Pass. (Pass is equivalent to a C- or better.) To pass, the student needed to attend 80% of the class meetings, turn in an acceptable journal on a bi-weekly basis, and complete pre- and post- test questionnaires which were part of the Sierra research component.

While the staff was quite pleased with the grading system, many of the students were not. They wanted to have letter grades. Being extremely grade conscious, they believed they could earn an “A” in this course and thought we were unfair in not offering them this option. We explained that they would have to take formal examinations and write term papers if we went to a grade option. The students still said they would prefer to adopt the formal letter grading system. However, this was an instance when the professional staff did not let student opinion rule.

After discussion we decided to stay with the Pass/No Pass option because it served to avoid competition, the attendance requirement kept the level of participation high and the journal requirement (see Chapter 9) stimulated the introspection and analysis essential to our educational goals. Also, since living in Sierra dorm and taking the course were optional and since they had been informed beforehand that the course was Pass/No Pass, we believed our stand to be fair.

### **How to Use This Information**

The Sierra curriculum included ten modules. Some of these modules, such as Survival Skills or Assertion Training, are “skills” oriented and can be reproduced easily as a single unit. Other modules are more interdependent, relying heavily on concepts discussed in previous modules and later expanded in following modules. Such interrelated modules as Community Building and Socialization can be seen as spanning most of the year-long Sierra class, although roughly equivalent amounts of class time were devoted to each module. We do not encourage the exact replication of the year-long intervention due to the fact that each group of students is different and we attempted to adapt the general curricular goals to the individual differences of our particular population and setting. We do encourage adapting, where relevant, the classes and modules to the specific institutional setting and student population remembering that these modules often build on the developmental tasks and skills completed at an earlier point in the class.

Goal setting was an important task within the Sierra Project. For the year, the quarter, and each individual class, we asked questions like: “Why are we doing this?” “What do we want the students to learn?” “Wait, I’ve lost sight of where this is going!” “That sounds like fun, but how does it fit what we are trying to do?” If we were not clear about what we wanted to accomplish, how could we expect the freshmen to be? Our classes (and

modules and quarter sequences) were most effective when we began by *stating* our goals to the freshmen, emphasizing the goals during the presentation, and summarizing them at the end.

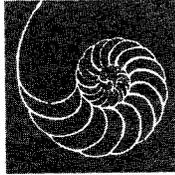
We hope readers will be stimulated by our structure of setting *goals* for the year, the quarter, each module and each individual class. The curriculum will be presented by modules within each quarter. In the following chapters, we will discuss learning goals for the students, what we actually did that could be replicated by others, offering suggestions for changes, and what a more ideal curriculum might include. Readers may: use individual classes in a workshop format; deliver a series of classes on a theme; or combine modules, as we did, to form a multi-themed course.

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## FALL QUARTER

*Janet Clark Loxley*

The major goals for the Sierra Project students in the Fall Quarter included: (1) becoming acquainted with the other students in this multicultural, coed group, (2) developing a sense of community, (3) developing the skills and awareness to discuss conflicting values and ideas, and (4) learning skills for academic success at the university. In considering the Sierra curriculum, it is important to remember that the actual Sierra Project encompassed far more than two class meetings per week. The freshmen were all living in the same small dormitory, many of them had classes together, and they were all new to the university experience. Six older students lived in the dormitory as staff members to serve as role models and resource people. They were familiar with the content of the curriculum, and were therefore able to reinforce concepts presented in class. While each class was intended to be impactful in and of itself, the overall experience of Sierra added to the curriculum. This chapter describes in detail the Fall Quarter curriculum as presented to the Sierra class of 1981.

During Fall Quarter the class met for 90 minute sessions two evenings each week for ten weeks, and spent one weekend on a retreat. While it would have been more convenient for the staff, and for some students, to meet in one 3-hour session each week, the attention span of freshmen did not make this possible. In addition, the shorter sessions left the students some free time every evening to study or to do whatever else they wanted. This made them more willing to set aside their other concerns during class time.

As described in detail in the Survival Skills Module, the opening module focused on academic issues. This was followed by classes to enhance community building, and to learn skills for conflict resolution and social

perspective taking. Table 5.1 shows the sequence of classes during Fall Quarter, connecting the theme of each class to its appropriate module or modules.

A variety of sequencing alternatives occur in scheduling Fall Quarter. After survival skills, much of our decision making revolved around the optimal time for holding the weekend retreat. We decided on the third weekend of the quarter because by then students had had time to adjust to the university, yet it was too soon to conflict with their first mid-term examinations. The community building module was introduced before the weekend. Then the weekend itself, and the SIMSOC game played during the weekend, were vehicles for community building and for focusing on conflict and conflict resolution. This made the students aware of their own need for listening skills and social perspective taking, which were planned as the next modules. However, the SIMSOC game might have been used differently (for example, as an analysis of roles in society) had the students already learned listening skills and conflict resolution.

There is no one right sequence for delivering these classes or these modules. The choices made by the Sierra Project staff in 1982 reflected a blend of our goals, of practical factors such as student schedules, other events on the campus, and of the staff view of optimal sequencing of experiences.

The Fall Quarter curriculum is presented by modules rather than by the actual order of classes. This provides a more coherent picture of goals, intent, and the finished product. Reference to Table 5.1 will remind the reader of the actual sequence and themes of the classes as presented, and the relationship of each to the modules.

### **Fall Quarter—Introduction to the Class: Information and Overview**

#### **Goals and Overview**

On the evening of the first class of the year in Sierra Hall, goals included: 1) meeting the staff involved in the class, 2) learning what is involved in the class (requirements), and 3) hearing an overview of the content of the class for the year; i.e., what they might expect to learn. When students had requested to live in Sierra they had signed a card saying they knew there was a class in the hall and that they were required to take it if they lived there. They had seen a brief description of the class, but few remembered

**Table 5.1****SCHEDULE OF FALL QUARTER CLASSES FOR THE CLASS OF 1981**

<b>Class Session</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Module</b>
F-Intro	Information and Overview	
F1	Time and Contingency Management	Survival Skills
F2	Test Anxiety Reduction; Objective Test Taking	Survival Skills
F3	Identifying Group Dynamics, Group Roles	Community Building
F4	Values Clarification with Focus on Group Dynamics	Community Building
F5		
Weekend Retreat	SIMSOC (Simulated Society) Game	Conflict Resolution Community Building
F6	SIMSOC Evaluation and Discussion	Conflict Resolution Community Building
F7	SIMSOC Evaluation and Discussion	Conflict Resolution Community Building
F8	Stealing	Conflict Resolution
F9	GAIT (Group Assessment of Interpersonal Traits) Pre-test	Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking Community Building
F10	Identification of a Listening Skills Model	Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking
F11	Using Listening Skills for Fair and Unfair Fighting	Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking
F12	Continuation of Listening and Questioning Skills	Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking
F13	Relation of Thinking, Feeling, and Behavior	Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking
F14	GAIT Post-test	Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking Community Building
F15	Evaluation	

much about it. Students had already been living in the hall for a week during an orientation period and had met the Resident Assistant, the student staff, and each other.

### **Delivery**

During the class each staff and student staff member was responsible for sharing some information. Students were told at the beginning that they would be meeting many people and hearing a large amount of information and were encouraged to ask questions and make comments. Following is the list of information presented:

First two students gave a history and overview of Sierra Hall and of the class, (e.g., Sierra had always been an all-freshmen hall). It had a class without the research project for six years. Sierra seemed to produce more student leaders than the other residence halls. They also described the goals for the entire year and what we hoped the students would gain as a result of the class.

Next the instructor explained that the project had two parts: the class and the research. They heard that we wanted to develop a curriculum that would be replicable and that we wanted to understand more about freshmen and about the impact of the Sierra experience.

The grading policy was then explained. This was a Pass/Not Pass class offered for 4 units of lower-division credit. In order to pass students needed to attend class and remain reasonably attentive during that time (up to 6 hours of absences were excusable), hand in their journal each time it was due with the proper number of acceptable entries, complete the research test packets and interviews, and attend and participate in SIMSOC (Simulated Society Game played over a weekend retreat). They were also told that if they especially liked or disliked something in class to tell someone on the staff.

Different student staff described the books for the class, the retreat and how the attendance policy would be enforced; student staff would take attendance during class including comments on whether the person was late or inattentive. Students were to check with their staff person if they had any questions about their attendance and were always free to take their concerns to the instructor.

The journal keeping process was described in more detail. Five short or two long entries were required each week and journals would be handed in every two weeks. Students would be given a set of questions

each week in class and would always be asked to write on a certain number of them. They could then add anything else to the journal they were interested in writing about; although they were cautioned not to use the journal as simply a record-keeping book (e.g., “Today I went to class. I talked to Bill. Then I had tuna fish for lunch . . .”). Rather the journal was a chance to explore thinking, feeling, values, opinions about our topics or theirs. While they could certainly simply do enough to “get by” they were encouraged to use the journal as a tool that would ultimately be helpful to them. They were to be allowed to choose a reader; either a specific staff member or an anonymous reader they would never meet unless they asked to.

They would receive their journals back with comments from the reader and were free to communicate to the reader what types of comments they found helpful.

Students were told that while this evening’s class was devoted to giving out information, most classes would require them to be actively involved with thinking and talking.

Finally, students were asked to express any questions. Very few wanted to know anything else at this point. Meeting the staff and hearing about the class had taken 1 1/2 hours. Class was dismissed after students were told about the content for the next two classes (survival skills). They were also given a set of journal questions and instructed to begin writing.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

While this seemed to be a lot of information to share at one time, we decided students should hear it all the first night so they would have more of an idea about what they had agreed to do. Having each of the staff present some portion of the information let the students know that there were going to be many “teachers” and people responsible for the class. In addition to hearing about the grading policy students received all the information on a handout which they could consult later. This also prevented students from saying “but I never heard you . . .” If the students had not already met each other in dormitory meetings, we would have included icebreaker and introduction exercises in the first class.

## SURVIVAL SKILLS MODULE #1

### Module Introduction

At the beginning of the Fall Quarter the Sierra Project freshmen were starting their college experience in a highly competitive research university. While our project goals focused mainly on cognitive, moral, and ego development, it was important to assist the students in obtaining a good start academically. The Survival Skills module was designed to teach basic skills and attitudes to aid in learning. More specifically, the goals were for the students to learn skills in time management, contingency management, organization of materials, test anxiety reduction, and objective test taking. In addition, the intent was to assist them in beginning to see education as an *active* process where one thinks, questions, and analyzes rather than a *passive* process where one memorizes whatever is assigned.

Because most of the freshmen had done well in school in the past without these skills, this module also contained an element of “selling” the skills: convincing students to try them out in their daily lives. With their passive approaches to education, freshmen were likely to “learn” the concepts but not try them outside of the classroom.

The Survival Skills module consisted of two classes (F1 and F2) which taught specific skills.

### Class F1—Time and Contingency Management

#### Goals and Overviews

This class was designed to (1) introduce students to the concept of *active* learning, (2) demonstrate how they were spending their time, (3) teach basic principles of time management, (4) teach them how to set behaviorally specific goals and (5) teach contingency management as one means to help accomplish goals. In addition to teaching specific skills, the skills were “sold” to them through examples of how staff members actually used them in their own lives.

The student staff served as the primary instructors for both of the classes comprising the Survival Skills module. Three major topics were covered in this opening class: active learning skills, time management, and contingency management. A lecture format was used for the bulk of this material, interspersing short exercises and illustrations to punctuate major concepts.

**Delivery**

Class opened with a short discussion of the importance of taking an active step toward academic survival by implementing certain basic approaches to learning. A student staff member began by encouraging students to approach material “intending to remember,” to react actively (internally or externally) to material presented, and to review notes on a regular basis. By encouraging Sierra freshmen to take an active role in their academic survival, the foundation was laid for encouraging that same interest in issues of character development. We believed it was important to allow the freshmen to become acclimated to the university and establish some sense of stability and security before introducing classes that would induce cognitive conflict and disequilibrium.

The next topic was time management. A student staff member explained the notions of “fixed” and “flexible” time, and the importance of setting priorities. “Fixed” time involved attending classes, working, or other commitments that could not be changed; “flexible” time included time spent eating, sleeping, studying, talking with friends, partying, time students could have more control in scheduling.

Students tend to go to either extreme; for example, some initially decide that college is a place to play and have little concept of how difficult it is to be successful at the university. For these freshmen it takes a long time to get down to school work; by the time they do start studying, they are quite far behind. Other students come into the university very frightened about what it is going to be like and simply do not give themselves any time or permission to play or have fun. These students, we find, tend to spend more time in their rooms than socially with other people. Because they spend so much time studying without breaks and are highly anxious, their level of concentration actually drops.

As an initial exercise, students were asked to write all of their fixed commitments on a form which had spaces for each hour of the day from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. for 7 days. They were then asked to consider how they might schedule their flexible time to include studying during periods when they would be maximally effective at doing school work and also to include play. They seemed eager to fill in their fixed schedules, but had difficulty deciding about flexible time. Students later reported that they had used the time management principles; many asked for more copies of the time chart so they could alter their schedules as their time constraints changed during the quarter.

As an additional aid to time management, students were encouraged to organize their class notes in a three-ring binder with separate sections for each course. This would facilitate organization and accessibility to class materials so that unexpected free time could be used for studying. We suggested that a case for pencils, erasers, money, a three-colored pen for note-taking, and personal miscellaneous items be included with the notebook. Since virtually all of our students had been in the top 12.5 percent of their high school graduating classes and were so bright, many had never needed to be so organized in high school. These classes presented basic principles for coping with the increased demands of college. While many students followed these basic suggestion, several thought our ideas were “dumb.”

To introduce the concepts of contingency management, students were asked about their journal writing assignment: “Last night when we were discussing journals, you may have *planned* to go right out and start writing in your journals, but how many of you actually *did* that? And what got in the way of carrying out what you decided to do?” Many students who had not begun their journals said that “studying for another class,” “sleeping,” or “talking with friends” had interfered with their goal of writing in their journals. Contingency management was presented as a way to help analyze why one activity might take priority over another. This gave the freshmen a tool to organize their environment to facilitate accomplishing their goals.

Students were taught basic terminology: long-term and short-term goals, contingencies, reinforcers, and punishers (see Malott, 1972, for more detailed definitions and examples). Long-term goals often have a distant and uncertain payoff (e.g., getting good grades in order to get into graduate school). Many freshmen tend to behave in ways that give them immediate and certain rewards. For example, given the choice of studying for an exam or talking to someone for the next 20 minutes, it’s very easy to think, “Well, what difference is 20 minutes going to make anyway?” The long-term goal of doing well academically is overshadowed by short term and immediate rewards from talking with friends.

Of the three concepts covered in this class, contingency management was the most complex and yet the most familiar. All of us set goals, expect immediate returns, become frustrated, and give up. To teach students to set goals that were behaviorally specific, positive, realistic, and stated in terms of their own behavior, we provided examples of goals that illustrated each principle.

A *behaviorally specific goal* is concrete and measurable. For example, “I’d like to say hello to five new people each week” or, “I’d like to ask one person to do something (Frisbee, tennis, ping-pong) with me” is more

behaviorally specific than “I’d like to have more friends.” *Positive goals* are stated in terms of what one wants to *do* rather than what one wants to *stop* doing. Exercising thirty minutes a day is a positive goal while trying to stop being physically inactive is a negative goal. A more *realistic goal* for a student who is on academic probation and has not studied is, “I’d like to build up to studying three hours per night and earn C’s or better in all my classes this quarter” rather than “I’ll start out studying three hours per night and build up to using almost all my free time studying so I can earn all A’s this quarter (and leap tall buildings in a single bound).” By setting goals that are specific, positive, and realistic, realization of those goals is less frustrating and more personally gratifying.

The final principle, setting goals for your own behavior is perhaps the most difficult. Frequently goals are set for other people without considering what behavior on your part would help. “I want to talk with my roommate about how her smoking in the room bothers me,” is stated in terms of one’s own behavior, as contrasted with “I want my roommate to quit smoking” or “I want my roommate to listen quietly to me.” Instead of expressing goals for other people, students were asked to focus on controlling their own behavior.

Once goals are set, aiming for the long-term goal can be difficult; people become frustrated and give up. To overcome this, sub-goals and more immediate reinforcers should be made available enroute to one’s long-term goal. This task involves setting up contingencies in the form of “If I do (*goal*), then I get (*reward*)” or “If I fail to do (*goal*), then I get (*punisher*).”

Using rewards and punishers, contingencies can reduce long-term goals into a series of short-term goals which receive more immediate rewards and punishments. In explaining the concepts of rewards and punishers, the use of rewards was emphasized instead of punishers since freshmen already punish themselves by being too self-critical. They were also not as likely to follow through on delivering punishers as they would rewards. Behavioral research has demonstrated reward to be more effective than punishment in changing behavior and in promoting learning in general. Students were asked to list potential rewards for themselves: e.g., food, sleep, talking, going somewhere, buying something, phone calls, partying, sex, and doing nothing. Several examples of contingencies were provided:

“If I study one hour, I get three chocolate covered cherries.”

“If I ask Mr. X for a date, I get to call my friend in Arizona.”

“If I complete all my assignments this week by Thursday, I get to buy a new sweater.”

“If I practice my violin thirty minutes, I get to do absolutely nothing for fifteen minutes (and not feel guilty about it!).”

For the last exercise of the class the students formed small groups of four to six people with one student staff leader. Each student was to write down goals and choose rewards, combining these into a personal contingency contract. The student staff leader was on hand to offer assistance, especially in avoiding the two most common errors in making contingency contracts: (1) failing to *be specific* and (2) failing to set small goals. After they had made their individual contracts, students were asked to share their contracts with the others in their own groups. In order to conduct this exercise effectively, the student staff needed specific training in contingency management, group dynamics, and—in particular—keeping the group focused on the task at hand.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Many students thought the suggestions for organizing their time and materials were too basic. Much of this material is common sense—what seniors know that freshmen need to learn. Left to their own devices, the students would have discovered most of these principles. The goal of the module was to assist the students in putting the concepts into use immediately (which some did) or to remember them later if they had academic trouble. The student staff were always available to answer questions outside class. This did mean, however, that the student staff needed to be taught all the skills from this class (organization, time management, goal setting, contingency management) so they could be part of the in-class presentation and so they could accurately answer questions outside of class.

A lecture of presentation on goal setting needs to be tied to actual practice in setting goals. This topic seems to be *understood* (i.e., the students *know* what is being said) but they tend to repeat the same errors when they actually try to set goals. People had a very difficult time being realistic and specific; especially specific. Student staff must know how to tell when a goal could be even more specific or should be broken into a series of sub-goals.

Students also *understand* the concept of using rewards to make the target behavior more likely to occur. But some of them thought that giving one's self a reward was “stupid” and “unnecessary,” that “you should just do it because you're supposed to, and not *need* a reward.” Several said they were persuaded to use a reward system after learning that the instructor frequently

used one on herself. These personal examples (from a grown-up!) seemed to make the principles come to life and changed them from “good theoretical concepts” to “something that should be tried because it works.”

## **Class F2—Test Anxiety Reduction, Objective Test Taking**

### **Goals and Overview**

The second class in the Survival Skills module presented test anxiety reduction and objective test taking. The goals of this class for students included: (1) seeing objective test taking as a learnable skill, (2) learning principles of desensitization as applied to test anxiety, and (3) experiencing deep muscle relaxation. This class was deliberately presented several weeks before the first mid-term examinations raised test anxiety.

### **Delivery-Objective Test Taking**

Objective test taking was presented as a skill. While studying the material before the test was essential to doing well, there were a series of helpful approaches to taking tests. These included picking out key words in the questions and answers, watching for qualifiers, and looking for answers that were different from the others. Students were encouraged to use test taking time wisely by skipping over difficult questions, and then returning to them later. Double checking answers was stressed also.

We gave the students a sample objective test drawn from class materials of an actual freshman class. The professor of that class had obviously designed it to be a “tricky” test so that even students who knew the material might be fooled by the qualifiers. Students were reminded of the principles while taking the practice test. Afterwards they were reminded again that while these techniques were always helpful, they were most helpful when the material was well known through diligent study.

### **Delivery-Test Anxiety Reduction**

First students were asked to imagine a test was coming up, to put themselves right in the situation and to begin to become anxious. After 2 minutes of imagining, the presenter said that a small to moderate amount of anxiety could be helpful; it raises energy, alertness, and motivation. However, too much anxiety may interfere. Student’s examples included “I’d get sick,” “I can’t sleep,” and “I couldn’t study.” They were told there was a technique

(desensitization) that helps people learn to relax and to reduce anxiety and that this technique worked especially well with test anxiety. Students were told to make themselves comfortable and to follow the instructions they would hear on the audiotape.

A model of deep muscle relaxation using a tension-relaxation method (Jacobson, 1938; Wolpe, 1958) was taught. In this exercise, students followed taped instructions to tighten and relax each muscle group. They learned to feel the differences between tension and relaxation. This would help them identify when they were becoming tense, and this would allow them to use the relaxation techniques before they became too anxious. The entire tape lasted 35 minutes; students were told they could obtain copies for themselves.

The class lecture informed students that anxiety and deep muscle relaxation cannot occur at the same time and that anxiety about test-taking is a *learned* response. Therefore, people can systematically teach themselves to be relaxed about test taking, through desensitization. For some students, anxiety begins on the first day in class as the professor hands out the syllabus, which notes that there will be an exam in the class. Anxiety then increases as that exam date approaches. The students were encouraged to make their own hierarchy of anxiety-producing situations to illustrate the point that each of them had a different level of test anxiety. Some people were anxious only before the test; once they are taking the test they are fairly calm and task-oriented. Others are fairly calm until they get to the exam, then the sight of the exam paper serves as a cue for them to become quite anxious. Students designed their own hierarchy for use in conjunction with the relaxation and desensitization. Several sample hierarchies were given in class, one of which was: (Listed from most anxiety producing to least anxiety producing)

1. "Actually being in the class and seeing the time run out while taking the exam."
2. "Not knowing the answer to the first question."
3. "Walking into the classroom on the day of the exam."
4. "Gathering up the necessary paper and pencils one hour before the exam on preparation for going to the testing room."
5. "Trying to review material the night before the exam."
6. "Feeling guilty about not studying a week before the exam."

In desensitization, an individual becomes relaxed (through use of the tape or any other technique), then imagines vividly the least anxiety-producing scene from the hierarchy. If any anxiety is experienced, the scene is mentally switched off, and the person focuses upon being relaxed again. If no anxiety is experienced, the scene is switched off after 30-60 seconds. The person then focuses on relaxation. After a scene is experienced without anxiety, the next scene from the hierarchy is imagined. This procedure may be repeated over several sessions until all items can be imagined without anxiety. The lecture informed students about generalization; that being relaxed while *imagining* an anxiety-producing scene leads to relaxation in a real life situation.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

The relaxation tape was made available to anyone who asked. While students reported using it productively for general relaxation and to fall asleep, none actually attempted systematic desensitization. Desensitization might be taught more effectively if: (1) the principles of desensitization are explained, (2) deep muscle relaxation is learned and practiced, (3) a standard hierarchy is presented while students are relaxed with instructions to stop imagining any scene that arouses anxiety, (4) they then construct their own personal hierarchy, (5) they do two sessions of relaxation and desensitization for homework, and (6) they report on their sessions at the beginning of the next class. Outlining principles of desensitization while students were in deep muscle relaxation (and therefore only partially attentive) failed to provide a clear model. They left with only a vague notion of what to do and, as a consequence, did nothing. This exercise taught relaxation. If the goal is to teach desensitization, more time and structure are needed.

Two students objected to the test-taking instructions, indicating their belief that teaching people *how* to take objective tests was like teaching them how to cheat and that students should instead be encouraged to study. These remarks opened our first (unintended) moral dilemma discussion. When other students were asked for their opinions, few responded. The instructor and the two student objectors continued for two or three minutes. The instructor talked about test taking as a *learned skill* (like reading or bowling) which could be improved. This dilemma discussion would have been a richer learning experience for the class if it had been extended with questions like:

What if John studied less than Sally, but got a higher grade because he knew about objective test taking?

What if a professor knew that students were learning these techniques and intentionally designed the exam to throw the students off?

What if these techniques were taught for a fee that only a few students could afford?

What if a researcher found that some students needed these skills more than others because of the quality of their previous educational experiences?

Of all the principles in the Survival Skills module, objective test taking seemed to be the least beneficial and to have the least substance. The goal had been to teach students how to expand their thinking about approaches to test taking so that they would be aware of both the content of the subject matter and the process of test taking at the same time. Because subject matter in the university is so diverse and each professor constructs tests so differently from other professors, the concepts of objective test taking were very difficult to communicate, especially before the students had taken any tests at the University.

### **Survival Skills Module—Commentary**

The intent of this module was to teach skills related to academic success in a competitive, research-oriented institution. By teaching how to organize their materials and time, how to use principles of contingency management, test anxiety reduction and objective test taking, the instructors hoped the skills would be used at the start of the freshman year. The skills were intended to reduce stress and (hopefully) allow students to focus more attention on productive academic work and on the rest of the Sierra class.

As Chapter 2 from Leonard (1968) so aptly points out, the lecture format can be the easiest way to get material from a professor's notebook into a student's notebook without ever having touched the brain of either. The goal of the classes was to inspire freshmen to respond actively to the presentation of new material, to listen and try to connect what was being said in class with things that they already knew: a much more active learning mode than many were used to. The concrete techniques of time and contingency management, and the hints regarding test taking were intended to decrease test anxiety, increase students' productivity and capacity to learn, and aid the attainment of Sierra Project goals by implementing

principles of interactionism from the very first day. Teaching students active learning skills was intended to increase the effective use of both class and study time. By introducing principles of time and contingency management, the tools were provided to take active and effective control of their lives: a step toward increased personal maturity.

Students were more interested in learning time management than in learning objective test-taking concepts. It was easier and more relevant to make schedules at the beginning of Fall Quarter than to concentrate on how to take objective tests which were at least a month away. There was a more positive response to concrete techniques which they could try (making a schedule, relaxation) than to more theoretical concepts presented in a lecture format (desensitization, contingency management). Difficulty with the abstract and theoretical exercises was a problem which was to recur in every module.

In creating a module on academic survival skills, there are an enormous number of skills, both remedial and developmental, from which to choose (e.g., writing and reading in the physical sciences, essay test taking, and mathematics anxiety reduction). The skills presented as part of the Sierra curriculum were those which applied to all students. Those seeking more specific skill enhancement were referred to the campus Learning Skills Center.

In developing a module in this area, instructors would do well to ask students to identify particular problem areas. Year in school, academic major, and previous educational background are relevant to designing specific classes. It is important to present skills in such a manner that there is no implication that the learner is unintelligent or deficient in some regard. We pointed out that our students had seldom needed to use these skills in high school; they had "gotten by" on ability. In college, however, organization and planning were essential to accomplishing academic tasks effectively.

The ultimate objective (or hope) of any teacher is that material presented in class will someday be put into practice in the daily lives of students. In most cases teachers must be satisfied with presenting a stimulating class and having faith in the students' inquisitive minds. By teaching students how to *learn* more effectively, we hoped to have a direct impact on their approach to the concept of learning.

The Survival Skills module was chosen because of its relevance to freshmen in a research university, not because it was part of our goals for character development.

## COMMUNITY BUILDING MODULE #2

**Module Introduction**

An important goal of the Sierra Project staff was to have the students develop a psychological sense of community within Sierra Hall. The pre-test results of the Environmental Assessment Inventory (Stokols, 1975) indicated that entering Sierra freshmen had an expectation that the University in general, and the residence hall in particular, would provide high levels of trust and support, with a relative lack of alienation. The presence of high levels of trust, cooperation, and mutual feelings of security and support with very low levels of alienation or hostility were important to us both as ends in themselves, and because on theoretical grounds of their influence on the transition to a higher level of moral reasoning.

The community building module overlapped the most with other sections of the curriculum. Facilitating an atmosphere of openness, trust, and group support was part of the process for each class. Whether the subject matter of the class was survival skills, empathy training, or conflict resolution, our approach to the content was one which would *also* build a psychological sense of community. During the Fall Quarter, classes which contributed to developing a sense of community included group dynamics (F3 and F4), the Simulated Society (SIMSOC Retreat, F5, F6 and F7), and the Group Assessment of Individual Traits (GAIT) exercises (F9 and F12). The delivery of two group dynamics classes is described in this module, the SIMSOC retreat in the module on conflict resolution, and the GAIT in the module on empathy/social perspective taking. All were seen as contributing to a psychological sense of community.

The overlap between modules is illustrated by one of the classes on group dynamics. In this class, students decided what behaviors facilitate positive group functioning and what behaviors are dysfunctional in the context of a group. The orientation away from themselves and toward observing other persons was a natural prelude to the consideration of empathy. Group dynamics overlapped with the community building module, since students interacted in small groups with an instructional goal of achieving more functional “within-group” behavior.

## **Class F3-Identifying Group Dynamics, Group Roles**

### **Overview and Goals**

This class was designed to show the concept of group *process*, and how behaviors and roles of each individual group member has an impact on other group members and on what the group as a whole did or did not accomplish. The freshmen were going to spend much of their in-class time (and certainly much of their out-of-class time) in small group discussions. The intent of the class, therefore, was to help students examine and improve their behavior in groups. Taking part in a group discussion where other members are attentive, listen actively, and do their best to understand what someone is saying before contributing their own comments leads to higher levels of trust and cooperation, in contrast to participation in a group where members interrupt, appear distracted, and comments are distorted.

Another part of the *process* of this class was having the students themselves generate what they considered to be functional and dysfunctional group behaviors rather than the instructor telling them “do this” or “don’t do that.” This was consistent with the goal of having students take a more active control over the content of their education and begin thinking more actively for themselves.

A final goal of this class was to present ways to give positive behavioral feedback. Learning to give specific behavioral descriptions forces students to observe others closely. We had also found that keeping all feedback positive initially helps students relax, and feel more trusting of each other.

### **Delivery**

In the first class on group dynamics the class was asked to list behaviors which would insure that a discussion group would fail. In other words, “How might people act in order to louse up a group?” Some suggestions were obvious: interrupting, blaming someone without giving any alternatives, lying, being inattentive, clowning around, starting conversations with the person sitting next to you, being a blabbermouth, and making insipid remarks. Also listed were more subtle possibilities for dysfunctional group behavior such as being: close-minded, talking only about oneself, and slightly changing the subject.

If we had asked for helpful or more functional group behaviors, first the result would have been more clearly “right” answers. Asking people to list

“lousy” or dysfunctional behaviors is a potentially humorous topic; there are no “right” answers. This exercise was used to get students accustomed to speaking out of class. At this stage in the development of the class as a learning community, students were worried about looking bad or saying something wrong. In addition, students are much less defensive when *they* generate the list of “don’ts.”

After a list of ways people could guarantee the failure of a group had been developed, the class listed behaviors which might be helpful in a group. Some of the behaviors suggested included being humorous when appropriate, staying on the subject, being open-minded, clarifying what people are saying, drawing everybody into the conversation, maintaining an optimal distance from one another, making good eye contact, controlling anxiety, offering ideas, moving toward the objectives that had been set ahead of time, making the group members comfortable with each other, having confidence and trust in the other participants, and actually listening to what other people are saying. Copies were made of these lists and distributed at the start of the next class to remind students of their beliefs about “do’s” and “don’ts” in group behavior.

In order to teach specific behavioral feedback about functional and dysfunctional behavior in a group situation, the Inane Topic exercise (Lange & Jakubowski, 1976) was used. This exercise teaches people to attend to nonverbal communication. Students were asked, “What do you notice about the way people communicate other than what they’re actually saying?” They listed eye contact, voice volume, voice tone, voice speed, fluidity of voice, voice pitch, hand gestures, facial expressions, body posture, and body movement.

Nonverbal behaviors were presented as being on a continuum where behavior at either end seems inappropriate. Using eye contact as an example the person who makes minimal or no eye contact or the person who stares at someone (both ends of the continuum) seem to be behaving inappropriately and are frequently noticed. The same analogy applies to voice volume. In a normal discussion, when someone talks too softly to be heard or talks very loudly, their voice volume tends to be considered inappropriate. For the most part, appropriate nonverbal behaviors tend not to be noticed. The exercise in giving behavioral feedback was designed to teach the students to focus on those behaviors which they typically do not notice and to help them recognize appropriate behavior. *Positive behavioral feedback* means stating what one likes about how a person presents him/herself. Many examples were presented:

“You looked right at me.”

“You seemed relaxed — that is, you were sitting back in the chair and your movements were fluid.”

“You leaned forward.”

“Your eyes lit up.”

“You smiled.”

“I liked that one hand gesture when you were showing how to fold a chair.”

“I could hear every word, yet you were not too loud — your voice volume was appropriate.”

This was the *only* type of feedback allowed in this exercise; neither overt criticisms (“You kept fidgeting.” “You only looked up twice.”) nor covert criticisms (“Once you stopped playing with your pen, you made good eye contact.” “Your facial expression held my interest even though your voice was a monotone.” “You have such a nice bone structure, I’m sure you’d be really nice looking if you lost twenty pounds!”) were permitted. Students were allowed to give only positive feedback to each other because they had a tendency not to know what they do well, focusing instead on what is wrong with them. In order to improve non-verbal behavior, they needed to know both their effective and ineffective behavior without worrying about being attacked or humiliated.

Students were grouped in threes, with each person drawing a little slip of paper with the “inane topic” written on it (for example, “lint,” “grease,” “felt-tip pen,” “folding chairs”). Each person in turn gave a monologue on the “assigned” topic for 90 seconds, then received positive behavioral feedback from the other two. Following this exercise, students were asked what they had learned about giving feedback from the other two. Comments included: “It was hard to be specific.” “You’re right, I only notice the bad stuff.” “This was real easy for me, but I guess I’m really positive a lot.” “It was hard to listen to positive feedback about myself.” The instructor suggested that students begin giving others (and themselves), more positive feedback, especially trying to be *specific*.

Next the staff modeled a group discussion in which students identified nonverbal, functional, and dysfunctional behaviors. Each student was given a copy of the different roles people might play in groups to use as a guide. Staff roles included: getting people back on the track; sleeping occasionally; criticizing other people’s suggestions; or engaging in timekeeping, saying, “We only have five minutes left, let’s hurry.” One person distracted

with humor, one clarified and harmonized, and another gave ideas. One person was very quiet and agreed with just about anything that was said, while another person summarized. (The student staff had been assigned specific roles beforehand and were instructed to be as *subtle* as possible. Otherwise the presentation which was intended to be realistic would become humorous.)

After modeling this discussion, the staff gave feedback to each other first, making sure it was behavioral. Positive and negative feedback were separated. Students were then asked to share their observations. Guided by the staff, students seemed very able to understand and generate behaviorally specific feedback.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Before the year started, the student staff had been trained in giving behavioral feedback and in identifying group dynamics. Before this exercise, however, these skills were reviewed. Since the goal was to model appropriate use of these skills, accuracy was important. The review of the skills took the form of doing the group exercise which would be presented in class and giving feedback to each other. The staff did well on the feedback, but it was difficult to get them to be subtle in the role play. The student staff were typically so functional and responsible that when given the chance to play an obnoxious or dysfunctional role they became engrossed in the role. However, they did recognize the importance of being realistic rather than humorous (after hearing “Be subtle” repeatedly) so the demonstration went well. Students responded positively when asked to give feedback in the manner that they had just seen the student staff do it; modeling seemed a more effective way to teach how to give feedback than simply lecturing about it.

One goal was for the students to begin to look at process in addition to content. Part of what makes or breaks a group discussion is the behavior of the group members and the influences and interactions which occur. But many students had not yet realized this. They continually focused on the content of *what* was said, not how it was said or its impact. Non-contributing members were seen as having no impact on the group because they did not *say* anything. The exercise served not only to open up *process* to those who had not thought about it before, it also started them thinking about their own behavior in a group. The exercise also provided a step toward abstract thinking by looking at the impact and influence of concrete behavior. This was especially important since we were realizing what concrete thinkers the freshmen were and how difficult they found abstract thinking.

## **Class F4-Values Clarification with Focus on Group Dynamics**

### **Overview and Goals**

The previous class had taught students about the existence of group dynamics and group roles. They had given behaviorally specific feedback to themselves and others. This class allowed them to participate in a group discussion on a serious topic (a moral dilemma discussion) where dysfunctional group behavior was more likely to occur. Participants would have strong and often emotionally-charged opinions on the topic under discussion. After their discussion they would practice feedback skills by giving positive feedback to each person in their group and by giving themselves a suggestion for improvement.

Students were asked to share personal opinions on potentially heated topics. There was enough structure and enough awareness of functional and dysfunctional group behaviors that the students were likely to listen to each other. This sharing without negative consequences was designed to help students feel closer, more trusting of each other. Receiving only positive feedback from other group members enhanced these feelings and served to further the development of a psychological sense of community.

The goals for this class included stimulating thinking about moral issues, participating in small group discussions on an issue of their choice, using “functional” group behaviors and avoiding “dysfunctional” behaviors, and practicing giving behaviorally specific feedback to themselves and each other.

### **Delivery**

A values clarification exercise formed the basis for the second class in group dynamics. This exercise provided an opportunity to try out group skills and to practice in giving behavioral feedback. The floor was taped into five grids, each of which was large enough for twenty students to stand in at one time. In response to a series of questions about abortion, euthanasia, killing, sex roles, and financial aid for minorities, the students moved into areas on the grid signifying: “I strongly agree,” “I agree,” “I am neutral,” “I disagree,” “I strongly disagree.” After the initial statement was presented – for example, “It is all right to kill” – statements were made more and more specific, e.g., “If a relative were dying painfully and asked me to help him die sooner, I would.” The assignment was to observe how their values

changed and to recognize at what point they were willing to move into a different grid. All the statements raised moral choices or value issues. This exercise generated much excitement; students were constantly looking to see who was standing where, and seemed to be eagerly awaiting the next statement. Especially with freshmen, taking a *physical* stand seems much more impactful than having them mark their opinions on paper.

Students frequently wanted to stop the exercise and ask each other: “Why are you standing there?” “Why do you strongly agree?” “Why did you disagree with that?” This created an instructional problem: We had made a decision that we would not interrupt the process of taking stands on the issues because each value statement was built upon the one preceding it. Students were asked to try to remember the stands of individuals on different items when forming small groups for discussion. The groups were balanced to insure diversity of opinion.

The separate groups initially talked for 30 minutes about a topic brought up in the values exercise. The *process* as well as the content involved were explored in discussion. Each person described specific behaviors of other people in the group that he or she particularly liked. Each person then shared one behavior of his/her own that might have interfered with effective group process. (Note that this discussion incorporated concepts from the previous session on group dynamics, group roles, and giving feedback. It would not have been effective had the groundwork not been laid for group communication.)

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

The group dynamics exercises required the student staff to serve as role models for giving very specific feedback, keeping positive and negative feedback separate, and being very clear about the way in which feedback was given to each other. These group exercises brought the class closer together. For the first time members of the class were asked to share their thinking about very personal values and to give positive feedback to each other. They drew closer as a group as they started to notice and articulate the positive characteristics of their fellow classmates. The high degree of structure in these exercises contributed to the comfort the students experienced in sharing themselves; without structure, it is doubtful that they would have been so self-disclosive.

The moral issues presented proved to be intriguing, and the students were quite eager to discuss them. We assured them that it was acceptable to experience conflict and to have differing opinions. They could disagree

without being abusive to each other in the process. Any issues which stimulate conflict could be used in this exercise. These might include such standard items (abortion, killing, the death penalty, differing sexual mores, cheating, and lying) or items relevant to the particular group (e.g., whether the university should give special funds to minorities, the fairness of medical school affirmative action admissions procedures, whether students should protest and how, and what are appropriate dating and sex role behaviors within the dormitory).

The items included for each topic should be arranged in a hierarchy from the more general such as "Abortion is okay for anyone" through a range of increasingly more personal and more specific items such as "Someone in your family, or your best friend has just found out she is pregnant. The doctor says she will certainly die if she tries to have this child and that the child will be deformed. She should be allowed an abortion." The intent of this exercise is to create statements which help students recognize the gray areas of their belief systems, and to stimulate their thinking. The effect of the exercise was to force students to rethink their previously taken (and often rigid) moral positions.

### **Community Building Module Commentary**

The two classes described here were part of the larger module designed to create a sense of trust, support and sharing within the hall. These particular classes helped to open communication, and further the sharing of values and beliefs, as well as positive perceptions of each other. They also introduced the students to diversity of opinions, and induced conflict.

In terms of sequencing of experiences, the discussion of the values clarification exercise went smoothly because students had learned in the previous class how to give behavioral feedback and to identify and understand elements of group dynamics. This is one example of how properly sequenced classes build upon previous learning.

The Simulated Society (SIMSOC) retreat and the resulting discussions are described under the Conflict Resolution module, but are also clearly part of the Community Building module. The weekend retreat played an important part in building community. All members of Sierra Hall went to the mountains together away from the distractions of the university (e.g., other friends, telephones, televisions) and with only each other for support and contact. They slept in two large dormitories together, took turns cooking for each other, ate together, and played SIMSOC together. Most

of the community building aspects came from going on a retreat with the group, not from the game itself.

The game did contribute to community building in two major ways. First, students were divided into small groups of ten (Regions), getting to know the others in their Region quite well since they spent about eight hours together in active discussion. Second, group decisions were required. The game is structured to facilitate cooperation within and between the Regions. Having a retreat based on a structured educational experience (like SIMSOC) provided a framework for the students to get to know others and offered a common topic for conversation. As one sign of success by the end of the weekend, each student knew the names of the fifty others from their dorm. (Few other halls could boast this, even at the *end* of the year!)

The Group Assessment of Interpersonal Traits (GAIT) is described in detail under the Social Perspective Taking module but also overlapped with Community Building. In this pre- and post-exercise (F9 and F14), the class was divided into groups of eight. Each member shared a personal concern and was "listened to" by another. The group leaders emphasized confidentiality, maintaining a level of trust with the group, sharing, and respecting the concerns and attitudes of others. After the completion of the in-class exercises, the students often continued their discussions of personal concerns. While the major goal of GAIT was to help students learn listening skills, the *process* was one which served to enhance the psychological sense of community.

The fact that the principal classroom instructor was a psychologist, and that the guiding constructs were based in psychological theory, affected our approach to community building. While theory certainly cannot directly guide an intervention, it provides a framework for understanding more clearly what may be effective and for designing interventions. Building a sense of community, for example, can occur through a variety of classroom processes (regardless of content). A teacher of biology could present material and have students interact in ways that foster a sense of community as a by-product of learning the content. In the Sierra Project, the psychologist set goals for community building and deliberately designed classroom processes toward achieving this goal. Understanding the content-process distinction (what you teach and how you teach it) was especially helpful in community building.

A psychological sense of community would have developed naturally over time, at least to some extent. At the time of the pre-testing, freshmen had indicated that they expected a relatively high level of community.

Accelerating the development of community maximized the impact of other modules. Just as the Survival Skills module attempted to give the students a more satisfactory academic start (and therefore free up more attention for the Sierra class), developing community was a necessary second step. While the attempts at building and improving a psychological sense of community continued throughout the year, the Fall Quarter classes were seen as the most important, and most immediately impactful, intervention undertaken in this area.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODULE #3**

#### **Module Introduction**

For the Conflict Resolution module, our major instructional vehicle was the retreat where students played SIMSOC (Gamson, 1972a, 1972b, and 1978a, 1978b), a highly structured game in which players are assigned roles in a simulated society. The experience (F5) was amplified by the following two classes which focused on discussing the experience (F6 and F7). There was also a class on stealing in the module (F8). Since the SIMSOC retreat (F5) could not be clearly separated from the SIMSOC discussions (F6 and F7), the section's comments on *Instructional Problems and What We Learned* will follow the description of F7.

The goals of the Conflict Resolution module included: (1) inducing cognitive conflict about issues in society, (2) stimulating interpersonal conflict, (3) teaching conflict resolution skills, and (4) demonstrating that conflict and its resolution may have positive outcomes.

Cognitive conflict has been recognized as being a major force in inducing stage transition. Internal cognitive conflict is only one portion of the spectrum. A goal of this module was to teach students to resolve conflicts both within and among themselves. The staff intended to design classes that placed the freshmen into new situations and experiences which could not easily be assimilated into previous patterns of thinking. This would create disequilibrium and later accommodation. This was done gradually over Fall Quarter while at the same time building community so conflict would be in the context of a supportive environment and while they learned skills of empathy, social perspective taking, and conflict resolution.

This group of freshmen avoided cognitive and interpersonal conflict, reflecting their predominant Stage 3 orientation. At this level of moral and ego development, there was a tendency to believe there was always a

“right” answer in any situation or dilemma; having conflict of any type was confusing and upsetting. They valued being “nice.”

Experiencing and resolving *internal* conflict was a goal because of its relationship to stage change. Learning to experience and resolve *external* conflict is an extremely valuable interpersonal skill and in relation to society, as well as theoretically leading to stage change. One very challenging instructional problem was to create a climate where freshmen could realize that many of their values and beliefs were not the same as those of their peers—even peers they liked and respected and further, that moral and values issues did not necessarily have “one right answer.”

### **F5-SIMSOC Game, Weekend Retreat**

#### **Goals and Overview**

The Simulated Society game (SIMSOC, Gamson 1972a, 1972b, 1978a, 1978b) allows the participants to experience many of the issues of society—alienation, laws of supply and demand, the need for the society to support its members, the creation and enforcement of laws, etc. The game is played in a series of 45-minute sessions. Participants are separated into four regions (groups) where they are governed by game rules and required to perform specific tasks such as finding employment, forming political parties, and developing means of communication. Only a privileged few are allowed to travel between regions, so the others are dependent upon secondhand information about what is happening to society as a whole. Within these parameters, students have a great deal of choice about the type and extent of their participation.

The goals for the SIMSOC weekend were to assist students in: (1) knowing each other better and developing a sense of community; (2) thinking about issues in society such as the distribution of money, alienation, interaction between different social groups, conflict, and collective responsibilities; and (3) resolving the conflicts they experienced using principles of fairness and justice.

On the third weekend of the Fall Quarter, after the students had made initial adjustments to being away from home and before the pressures of mid-term examinations began, the class went on the SIMSOC retreat. The physical setting was in a mountain campsite where students lived together in two large open dormitories and were responsible for preparing all meals and cleaning up. All weekend, time was highly structured by playing SIMSOC. This structure helped students feel less concerned about things

like: "What will I do?" "But I don't know anyone." "What if no one talks to me?"

### **Delivery**

Before the retreat the staff had several preliminary tasks to accomplish. In SIMSOC, there are four separate "regions" which are roughly analogous to geographically separate nations. There are also a variety of positions of power and wealth to be assigned to participants. For example, one region (the Red Region) has no money, privileges, or power. The staff decided who would receive positions and to what region each person would be assigned. They gave careful thought to assignments, trying to put students who were not inclined to give up easily into the Red Region, and often giving positions of power to students who were not especially vocal or dominant. Close friends, roommates, and cliques were placed in separate regions so that students were forced to interact with people whom they did not know well. There were a few students who disliked each other, and they were separated so as not to interfere with the process of the game. Other pre-game tasks included gathering materials and making up packets for each participant. These procedures are detailed in the SIMSOC participant's and instructor's manuals (Gamson, 1972a, 1972b, 1978a, 1978b).

Before the retreat the staff also handled all the minor (but essential!) tasks: arranging for the retreat site, choosing menus, obtaining and transporting the food, setting up carpools, making maps, and compiling lists of "what to bring." When the staff arrived at the retreat site, one of their first tasks was to look over all the available rooms and areas to find the best large room with five smaller adjacent meeting areas.

The students had previously received information about the retreat as a whole (when, where, why) but did not hear any details about the SIMSOC game. They knew they would be playing a game that simulated society, and that they would play Friday evening, most of Saturday, and on Sunday morning.

To start, the game staff and students assembled in the larger central area. Each participant received the Participants Manual (Gamson, 1972a) and heard basic rules such as:

- (1) You will be assigned to a region, which is similar to a country.
- (2) There are four regions and you cannot travel from one to another or to come into this room to the Coordinator without a travel pass which will be checked by a staff person. Your four regions

are countries separated by 1500 miles of ocean without telephones and the average person in your country does not have the resources to communicate across that distance.

- (3) There are rules in your books. When you ask the staff questions about rules, they are not allowed to answer directly, but instead will refer you to the appropriate page of your manual.
- (4) There will be 45-minute sessions followed by breaks of about 20 minutes while the staff calculate the National Indicators which show how your society is functioning.
- (5) Even though you will all see each other during the breaks, it will defeat the purpose of the game if you talk about it with people outside your region during that time.

The students then received their packets which contained the Region they were assigned to and, in some cases, their position of power, money, or a travel pass. They were asked to go immediately to their Region to read the rules and to begin the game.

At the onset of the game, student staff members distribute money and positions. Thereafter, the staff may only play observer roles and handle technical calculations. They observe students in the regions, but cannot interact with them; they cannot interpret rules, but can only say “look on page 13.” Thus, once the game is underway, the staff members function as technicians. This is typically frustrating for everyone — the staff want to be involved, and the students want them to interact and share information.

Each time the game is played, the society that is formed is strongly shaped by the participating students. Over the years, our students created such diverse societies as an effective dictatorship that left participants bored, a society that became very cohesive and dynamic, a unification of students against the staff, and a society based on apathy and chaos.

In order to provide a fuller presentation of how SIMSOC develops with college freshmen, the game as it unfolded for 1981 will be described. There were five sessions played over the weekend. The first session was spent getting organized. The Red Region realized very quickly that they had *nothing*—no jobs, money, positions or travel and that they were totally dependent upon the rest of society. When others traveled into the Red Region, the typical interchange was “Well, what have you got here?” “We’ve got nothing. You’ll have to take care of us.” “Oh,”—and the traveler left. By the end of the session, other Regions were only vaguely aware that survival of the society required taking care of dependent groups.

Some students were fearful for society's survival, others (who had received power or travel) spent the session "wheeling and dealing." Most students felt very frustrated over not understanding the rules.

In the second SIMSOC session, many students reported that communication had opened up between the groups. They began to realize that they needed to take a look at the larger perspective; to see the society as a whole in order to survive. Students' interest in the game increased at this point because they understood it better.

In the third session, information began to travel between the regions since a "Roving Reporter" position was created. She gathered news and then offered it to the regions for a fee. Initially she refused to give the Red Region any news since they had no money. They tried pleading, guilt, and indifference. Finally, when it became apparent that they really did not have anything, she began giving them free news. Students soon realized that the National Economic Indicators of their society were dropping rapidly and that their society was somewhat disorganized. They started making laws for themselves and invested money in the National Economy. Because those in power did not understand some of the basic rules of the game, however, not all the students were employed and unemployment had a strong negative impact on the economy. Even though the students' thinking was oriented toward social action, they had not read all the laws and were not cooperating fully. Most students did remain actively involved in playing the game.

In the fourth SIMSOC session, there was a lot of hostility and conflict over power. The Red Region residents (who still didn't have any resources) became very close emotionally and, at this point in the development of the game, were the only enthusiastic group. They also realized that they did have some power — unless they were employed, society as a whole would collapse. When powerful leaders from other regions came in and magnanimously offered to employ them, the Reds put on a show of indifference instead of displaying the gratitude expected. They asked for money and travel passes in exchange for taking employment. The leaders of the other regions realized that they had to accede to these demands to save the society as a whole. The "Luxury Living" option was also initiated which allowed students who had money to "take a vacation" for a session. They could pay a high fee and spend the session in a beautiful park-like area where they were provided with special snacks and could do whatever they wished. Thus, those who were rich could opt to give up their role as functioning members of society. The only restriction was that once they entered "Luxury Living" they had to stay the entire session. In session four,

students understood the rules, everyone was employed, and consequently the Economic Indicators reached a new high.

In the fifth SIMSOC session, society became chaotic. Few people apart from those of considerable power remained active in the game. People broke laws, saying, “Oh, it doesn’t matter, we’ll go ahead and do what we want,” giving up the concept of the game. Everyone was employed. Many students were intensely materialistic, doing whatever they could to get as much money as possible. “Luxury Living” was overloaded with people who wanted to get away from the pressure of society in the game.

At this point there were no challenges left for the society as a whole, and few individual students felt challenged. While there were two more time blocks left for sessions, the staff decided to halt the game after this session. There had been some discussion of stopping after session four, but it was decided that the students should have the experience of session five — living in a society where there was no struggle, no external hazards, and nothing to bind people together.

So when the students gathered for session six, they were told “SIMSOC is now officially over. Please think about your own role and reactions, those of others, and any implications you may wish to draw for living in society as a whole. You are free to talk about this with each other now. We’ll leave the structured discussion until the next class (three days later).”

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Because playing SIMSOC (F5) is not easily separated from the post-game discussions (F6 & F7), all the commentary will be presented after F7.

### **Class F6-SIMSOC Evaluation and Discussion**

#### **Goals and Overview**

This first post-game discussion was designed to enable the students to understand what had happened during the game from the perspective of the different regions. This approach was intended to highlight different perceptions; i.e., since this was to be a “factual” discussion, the students would begin to see that their “facts” frequently contained distortions based on lack of information and projections. This fit the module goal of facilitating disequilibrium — stimulating internal cognitive conflict which requires a rethinking of previously held beliefs and attitudes in order to effect a

satisfactory resolution. In addition, the students were asked to begin to analyze how decisions had been made in the game.

### **Delivery**

In the first class session after the weekend retreat, students sat with their Regions. One Region at a time was asked to describe its perceptions of what had happened in each session of the game. Students appeared fascinated by listening to what had happened in other regions and what others thought was going on around them. While they did not all agree in their perceptions of what had happened during the SIMSOC weekend, at least they were aware of what others thought had happened.

Some were shaken, “You mean you didn’t . . . ?” “I thought you did that because . . . .” “I didn’t realize . . . .” Students were forced to continually readjust their perceptions of what had happened — realizing there was no one accurate version.

The staff chose to hold the discussion of *what* happened first because the freshmen were viewed as being such concrete thinkers. The expectation was that after they had had the opportunity to share the facts, they would be able to discuss the process and to consider more abstract ideas.

For the second step of the post-game discussion and evaluation, students were divided into three groups based on the roles which they had played in the SIMSOC game: (1) those who were initially in power, (2) those who worked their way into power, and (3) those who never really had any power. These categories of participation were described and then students selected the group they thought fit their role most accurately. Each group was asked to discuss how decisions had been made in the game. This proved to be a difficult task assignment, however, since the students tended to revert to discussing *what* had happened rather than *how* decisions had been made. They chose to focus on very concrete facts and details about the weekend. The student staff were constantly redirecting the discussion, e.g., “Yes, I know that Bob wanted Sally to put more of her money into the National Indicators. But right now we’re interested in *how* that happened — what issues became important in convincing Sally and what was the impact of her decision not to do so.”

After a 20-minute small group discussion the whole group came back together to answer the question, “So far, what have you learned from the retreat and the discussion?” In general the students agreed that they knew each other much better as a result of the weekend, but they could not reach any consensus on what they had actually learned from the SIMSOC game.

**Class #7-SIMSOC Evaluation and Discussion****Goals and Overview**

For the second post-game discussion, the goal was to have students practice their (new) skills in giving feedback. This would occur at two levels. They would give individual feedback both to themselves and to other group members which would force them to recall their observations and to present them in a behaviorally specific way. Second, they would observe how these behaviors related to consequences, i.e., the impact of these behaviors on others. The final goal was for students to evaluate the entire experience in terms of what they learned about themselves and about the concept of “society.”

**Delivery**

Students chose a partner they did not know well, but would like to know better. These pairs formed into groups of people who did not know each other well, but who had had contact with each other during SIMSOC. The groups then went to separate rooms. Each student was given several 3" X 5" cards, and asked to write answers to the following questions: “How did I see *each* of the other people in my group behave during the game?” “What was positive about their behavior?” “How did I behave during the game?” “How did I respond?” The instructions were to be specific and to avoid restating *what* people did as opposed to *how* they did it. For example, statements such as the following were encouraged:

“You really followed through on your agreement to organize things and that took a lot of pressure off of me.”

“You seemed to stay actively involved and used your energy and sense of humor to keep yourself and others, including me, from getting bored.”

“You seemed to disrespect the natural laws and it made me wonder how seriously you were taking the game and if I could trust you.”

Statements such as the following were discouraged:

“You were the head of Red.”

“You made a lot of decisions.”

After 15 minutes of writing, feedback began with one person at a time. First, all the members of the group read their statements about him or her. Then the person read his/her own self-perceptions. After all the students had received feedback, the group members were asked to discuss their feelings about participating in the exercise. Each group leader had a copy of the following hints which they could include in the discussion if they chose to do so:

Here are some questions to keep in mind while the group is talking:

What kind of group dynamics are being discussed? Being used?

How did people's first impressions of others change?

How did the way that you evaluated your own behavior compare with the reactions of others?

How objective are people being? Are they separating the roles people played in the game from what they are actually like?

Did they remember that this was a simulation game?

Students did well on this task, being open and specific in their feedback. They reported feeling closer to each other as a result of this feedback exercise.

After 30 minutes of feedback and discussion, the group came back together. They were asked to respond to the general questions, "What have you learned through SIMSOC?" and "What was good about the experience?" Each student in the room was asked to respond individually. Asking people what they learned through SIMSOC evoked several comments. Many students said that while playing SIMSOC they felt a great deal of frustration over not being heard. They felt that within the groups people really did not listen to others' ideas, but rather were busy thinking what to say next. When someone did listen to them, they often did not feel "heard," that is, their meaning or intent was distorted. Comments such as these provided a perfect entree for the instructors to talk about listening and empathy skills. Developing these skills is important to the enhancement of community, and is related theoretically to raising the level of moral reasoning. This exercise, therefore, was an excellent bridge.

Overall, the students were very positive about the experience. Students reported that they felt like a community rather than a group of individuals who recognized each other but did not make much contact. Virtually all of the positive comments were about the community building aspects of the retreat, not about learning more about conflict resolution in society or society in general.

## **Instructional Problems and What We Learned (SIMSOC Retreat and Discussions)**

### **Choosing the Format and Structure**

The format of a weekend retreat followed by two class periods of structured discussion was chosen after lengthy deliberation. While we were certain that we wanted to use the SIMSOC game, three questions were explored at length: What time of year should it be held? Should SIMSOC be condensed into a weekend, or spread out over a period of days (or weeks)? Should the discussions be separated in time from the game? The reasons for proceeding as we did follow.

By choosing to use SIMSOC early in the year, the game could make an important contribution to community building. The students would not know each other well at the time of the retreat and would be forced to interact within a highly structured (and therefore more secure) environment. With the Class of 1979 SIMSOC had been used in the Spring Quarter. By that time, freshmen already had formed impressions about who was worth listening to and who were to become leaders. These impressions influenced the way the game was conducted and tended to minimize conflict, since students knew and accepted their own "roles" within the group. Since a major function of SIMSOC is to illustrate conflict and conflict resolution, Fall Quarter, when students did not yet have strong opinions, seemed more conducive to allowing students to define their own roles. If SIMSOC were to be played with a group that already knew each other well, a good post-game discussion would include, "How was your behavior similar to, or different from, your typical, expected behavior in this group?" "How might you have participated if everyone had been a stranger?" "Give examples of how your previous knowledge and experience with another person influenced your behavior."

The second question involved condensing SIMSOC into a retreat or spreading it out over a series of classes. We had previously tried using SIMSOC for 2 1/2 hours per day over five days. This was done by having the students commit Monday through Friday evenings for one week. (Exceptions were made to attend other classes.) For us, this experience highlighted the advantages of a retreat (especially off campus). Such a location removes the group from daily distractions (phones, friends, their rooms) and essentially forces them to interact both within the actual game session and during their free time. By the end of the weekend they knew each others' names, something which had not happened until early Winter

Quarter the previous year. (Remember, not only are they in class together, they live together in a small dormitory! Students in some other dormitories end their year without knowing all the other residents in their unit.)

After the retreat, students reported having a much closer feeling toward the residence hall, beginning to see Sierra as their “home” and having much more trust than they had had before. Many students said they came back with new friends and were excited about the opportunity they had had. The other advantage of the condensed retreat format was that students were better able to focus on the game. Much of their break time was spent thinking, planning, and strategizing even though there was a prohibition against talking about the game with other Regions over break.

From the viewpoint of community building and avoiding distractions, the weekend retreat proved to be an excellent vehicle. Obviously a disadvantage is the expense. These students had some money available through Housing for retreats of an educational nature and the Food Service provided all meal supplies. Had we been unable to leave campus, a second choice would have been to meet away from the residence hall but on campus from 10-5 Saturday and 10-2 Sunday, sharing lunch each day.

The post-game discussions were held in the two class periods following the weekend retreat. The emotional impact of the game and the stimulation of the weekend had left the students unable to concentrate fully by Sunday afternoon. Because these post-game discussions required serious thinking we wanted the students to have time to calm down, get some emotional distance, and be able to be more objective about the experiences of the weekend. (If the goal had been to focus on emotional responses or to have participants share impressions while they were freshest, discussions immediately following the game might be more appropriate.)

Students said their perceptions changed over time. Comments included: “I hated SIMSOC when I first came back, but later I loved it.” “If you’d asked me right away, I didn’t think I’d learned much, I just had fun. Later I realized I’d learned more than I thought.”

A question not explored was whether to play the game without post-game discussions. While the game itself is important, it would lose much of its educational and thought-provoking value without a well-structured discussion. The content of the discussion would be influenced by the goals for using the game in the first place. Having distance between the game and discussions also allowed the staff time to decide what direction the discussion should take.

While there is clearly no “right answer” to any of these questions involving format, a weekend retreat early in Fall Quarter, away from

campus with post-game discussions the following week best fit our goals.

Playing SIMSOC requires considerable advance preparation. Anyone planning to use this game is advised to read both the instructor's and participant's manuals several times beforehand. During the game, each participant needs a manual (Gamson, 1972a, 1978a) which contains rules, forms, and supplemental readings. The coordinator needs an instructor's manual (Gamson, 1972b, 1978b). It is helpful if each person assisting the coordinator has one as well.

The format that we used was to locate the coordinator in a central area so she could be available for several types of business transactions. The regions should be physically separate from each other so that students cannot hear or see others outside their region. Ideally, there should be about four assistants to monitor travel and roam through the regions during the sessions, helping with calculations and the distribution of materials between sessions. As described, positions and regions were assigned based on the student staffs' perceptions of the students' energy level, persistence, and dominance. The student staff had lived with the freshmen for twenty-five days while the instructor had seen them in a group a total of only twelve hours. Random placement might work best when the staff does not know the participants.

### **Problems That Arose**

In addition to the game itself, the retreat situation produced three issues which the staff noted and tried to get the students to consider. The first issue involved cooking and clean-up duties. The staff noticed that several males avoided volunteering and, when asked to do a task, sneaked away when the requester stopped looking. They acted as if this were smart and seemed to have little awareness or concern that they were part of a group, or that their actions led to more work for their peers. The student staff confronted their behavior, pointing out that when work was avoided it meant that others had to work harder. When confronted as a group, the non-workers responded nonchalantly. When confronted as individuals, some began working, but the staff involved reported feeling like parents. One student said proudly that his mother had always done everything for him, and that no one had ever expected him to do any kitchen or clean-up work.

At this point in the year, freshmen chose not to confront each other about issues like this. Most students realized that some males were not helping but believed that it was the staff's responsibility to do something

about it. A goal of the Sierra Project was for freshmen to assume responsibility for their community; a goal that was met increasingly well over the year. By Spring Quarter, students would confront any behavior which put a strain on the group, and most of these men had changed their attitudes and their behaviors. A second problem involved the unfamiliarity and even frightening newness of a retreat experience for some of the Sierrans who had never "roughed it" in the mountains before.

In presenting the retreat we had simply informed the freshmen that it was part of the class, and that it would occur on a certain date. Entering freshmen are very unlikely to dispute "rules." In addition to its educational component the retreat was presented as a chance to have a trip to the mountains, get to know each other, and play an interesting game about society. There was only a minimum of grumbling and it came mostly from students who lived close by and planned to go home every weekend. We organized menus, carpools, and made lists of what the students should bring. However, we learned at the retreat that we had missed a major area of pre-retreat explanations.

Several Black students who had never gone to the mountains before or experienced anything similar to camping out had a number of problems. The staff members were all used to camping and "roughing it;" it never occurred to us that some students might not enjoy the experience. For some, the trees, insects, darkness, cold, and somewhat primitive conditions (although there was electricity and indoor plumbing) ranged from unpleasant to frightening. We later asked what would have made the experience easier. They said they had heard of mountain resorts, and that they were expecting this place to be fancy, and had had their expectations violated. They suggested that slides be shown of the area and buildings, and that the conditions be described in detail, *before* the trip.

Many of the Anglo students thought this attitude was "stupid." At the retreat the staff helped them think about the effects of different cultural backgrounds and experiences, asking them: "How comfortable would you feel if we sent you to downtown Compton (an all-Black area) for the weekend?" Finally, they were able to see the perspective of the Black non-campers and began to try to include them in activities. The suggestions about describing the experience in detail ahead of time and not assuming students knew what to expect proved very helpful.

The third issue presented a moral dilemma to the staff. Student staff members had seen some freshmen stealing items like T-shirts from the camp storehouse. They had been afraid to confront the students directly during the incident because it was the beginning of the year, they didn't know

the students well, and they were unsure of their real role as student staff. They saw themselves as students and peers yet also felt responsible for the freshmen. They were afraid that confronting the students would lead to more conflict than they cared to handle. They thought informing the instructor and asking her to confront the students would be like calling in a parent or “ratting” on the students. This issue struck hardest with the student staff. They could not decide what to do, yet did not want to ignore the incident. They chose to bring it up at the next staff meeting. Some felt guilty about not having confronted the theft directly. Each was given a chance to share feelings, perceptions, and ideas. While the instructor might have preferred a direct confrontation at the time of the thefts, it was too late. The staff decided to design a class on the topic of stealing and to present it as a moral dilemma. (The details are in F8 – Stealing)

This is an example of the flexibility in class scheduling. An opportunity presented itself, additional goals were established, and a class was developed to meet those goals.

### **Suggestions for Alternative Approaches**

F6 and F7 described the SIMSOC post game discussions as we conducted them. There are an unlimited number of ways to structure these discussions. Formats and questions other than those we used in the evaluation classes following the SIMSOC weekend include:

#### **Other Formats**

Asking each Region to sit in the center of the room (with all others listening) and discuss their perceptions of what happened, their goals as a group, and their reactions.

Videotaping portions of the game, showing the videotapes, and asking: What was happening here? What were you thinking? What else might you have done?

Having the staff who served as observers describe the game from their perspectives.

#### **Other Questions**

What did you think SIMSOC was?

What did you learn? Socially? Interpersonally?

How could you have made the society prosper?

What emotional reactions did you have (e.g., frustration, boredom, excitement, fear)? When? What did you do?

With whom did you communicate? Why?

Who did you trust? Why?

The possible questions and formats are as varied as the populations with whom the game can be used. Identifying the specific goals for a particular SIMSOC experience will help in choosing the format and questions for discussion.

Entering freshmen perform better with more highly structured activities. The time spent providing such structure is well worth the effort in terms of the resulting quality of student involvement. Had there been less structure, the exercise would have dissolved into mass confusion even sooner, and the opportunity for community building would have been lost as well.

The student tended to be concrete and it was difficult to see much abstract thinking about issues of society. They did have experiences that required them to experience both external and cognitive conflict and to make group decisions. Regardless of the cognitive stimulation of SIMSOC, using the game in the retreat format was an excellent vehicle for community building. Many students returned with new friends and were excited about the opportunity to get to know each other.

## **Class F8—Stealing**

### **Goals & Overview**

Student staff had observed several freshmen stealing T-shirts from the camp storehouse during the SIMSOC retreat. This provided the impetus for a class on values. The goals for this class included: (1) exploring values related to stealing, (2) realizing what actions might be taken in different situations, (3) realizing that there are a range of answers others considered “right,” and (4) developing a policy to handle stealing within the dorm. Most of the student staff had another goal — that those students who had stolen would realize it was wrong and not do it again.

### **Delivery**

Masking tape was used to divide the floor into six sections each large enough to accommodate 15-20 people. The sections were labelled “Ignore

it," "Confront the person," "Tell staff," "Tell someone else," "Call the police," and "Other."

Students were told they would be asked to respond to a series of questions about stealing. For each question they would decide what they would be most likely to do in that situation and then would "take a stand" by moving into the section of the floor which best represented their answer. After everyone had decided and taken a stand on one situation, they were asked to look around and observe the positions taken by others. Discussion did not occur *during* the questioning period, but students were asked to remember any comments or questions they had.

The questions used a range of potential thieves and victims. For example: "What would you do if you saw . . ."

someone you didn't know stealing from someone in the dorm?

someone you didn't like stealing from a friend?

a friend stealing from someone you didn't like?

a friend stealing from a friend?

someone you didn't like stealing from your family?

a friend stealing from your family?

The situations were chosen to present such a range of possibilities that students would be very unlikely to give the same response to each. For example, there were several students who repeatedly chose "Ignore it" *until* a situation involving their family was mentioned.

After a statement was read, students were given 30-45 seconds to think and to decide which section best fit their response. Then the leader gave a signal and everyone moved at once. This was done to encourage students to think on their own and to minimize the effects of peer pressure.

After taking a stand on all the issues, students were asked to discuss their reasoning. Answers included: "I wouldn't do anything because they might get me back." "I would tell if they were stealing in the dorm because I would want others to protect my stuff." "It is wrong to steal, and I'd want them to be stopped." "I would not confront them because they might get violent, but I'd sure tell someone else." "I'd never let anyone go against my family, not even my best friend." "Anyone else has to take care of himself." "I would not get involved."

This was the first moral dilemma discussion in the class. Those staff who understood the stages of moral reasoning made sure that arguments from each stage were presented. The discussion was conducted with the

entire group rather than small groups. Students were asked to comment on which issues got them to change their stand and the reasoning behind the change.

As part of the group discussion, students considered what to do about strangers walking through the dormitory, trying to find a balance between ignoring the person and treating the person as a suspect or a thief. As a group, students decided that if they saw a stranger in the dorm they would ask “Can I help you?” If the person seemed suspicious, they would find a staff member or call someone on the phone. They were beginning to see Sierra as a community where they could and would protect each other. Not only did they make this decision, they followed through on it for the rest of the year.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

This class represented the response of the staff to the problem of stealing on the retreat. The instructor believed each individual who had stolen should be confronted directly, asked to discuss the theft, and asked to return the items. Most of the student staff disagreed and were unwilling to tell the instructor *who* the students were. This class came as a compromise to present the issue of stealing without putting anyone directly on the spot. During the class, the staff did mention that the topic had been prompted by recent thefts.

The format of the exercise requiring that each student physically “take-a-stand” worked quite well with this group. They were active, attentive and appeared fascinated by their own choices and those of others. While the “take-a-stand” format leaves students open to choose their response through peer pressure (“Where are my friends standing?”), many students seemed able to formulate their own response and stick to it, even when they ended up in a section with few other people. This was due in part to the instruction to hear the statement, think 30-45 seconds, then move quickly and at the same time. Thus students had already chosen their own answers through an internal decision-making process.

Freshmen as a group are quite opinionated and tend to think in dualistic (right-wrong) terms. Most felt confident that these questions did have a right answer and that they had chosen it. Thus, part of the point of the exercise and ensuing discussion was to expose students to the concept that others also thought they were “right” and that ultimately there may not be one right answer to any of these questions. This exercise was part of an on-going effort to induce disequilibrium.

We were especially pleased that students saw Sierra as a community where residents had responsibility to protect each other. This class produced both the questioning of values and an increased sense of community.

### **Conflict Resolution Module Commentary**

The major goals for the Conflict Resolution module were to (1) stimulate cognitive conflict, (2) stimulate interpersonal conflict, (3) provide practice in resolving conflicts, and (4) indicate that conflict may have positive outcomes.

Students certainly experienced interpersonal conflict during the SIMSOC retreat as they struggled over power, resources and group decisions. While some did not actively engage in the conflict, they certainly were aware of it and could describe it later. Most students experiencing cognitive conflict either during SIMSOC or during the class on stealing, especially when confronted with the notion that there is “no one right answer” to moral dilemmas or most conflict situations. This module was the beginning of a year-long process designed to create conflict and teach the students skills for resolution.

The SIMSOC game was excellent with this group. It is highly structured and therefore presents a *safe* introduction to conflict. In addition, because the students had “roles” they could attribute much of the conflict to the game instead of to their own or others’ personalities.

It became obvious through this module that the students needed more *skills* to achieve goals 3 and 4 (resolving conflict situations and seeing that conflict may have positive outcomes). They needed skills in listening, empathy, social perspective taking, and assertion as well as learning to think more abstractly. Again and again when asked a question requiring an abstract answer (e.g., “*How* were decisions made in your Region?”) they would reply with concrete details (“We decided to get money and travel passes for everyone.”) Conflict with each other was very difficult for students. When conflict arose during SIMSOC, poor listening followed by an aggressive reaction often led to an unpleasant scene.

One of the best outcomes from the module was that students *recognized* their need for acquiring listening and assertion skills, and were therefore very receptive to the idea of the next module—Empathy and Social Perspective Taking.

## **EMPATHY AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE TAKING-MODULE #4**

### **Module Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

The intent of the Empathy and Social Perspective Taking module was to develop the student's ability to understand the point of view of another, to be able to communicate that understanding, and to learn basic listening and communication skills. As with the Community Building module, this module was included both because these abilities are an end in themselves and because empathy and social perspective taking is associated with raising the level of moral reasoning.

After the SIMSOC weekend (see Conflict Resolution module) students complained that others had not listened to them. Several students commented that they had felt a great sense of frustration about not being heard. They thought people had not really listened to each other's ideas, either because they were thinking of something to say, or because they were hearing the ideas, but reinterpreting them in their own way. This proved to be a perfect lead-in to listening skills. The class was motivated to learn (or at least to have others learn) empathy skills at this time. Within the Sierra community students needed to be able to understand (and often accept or tolerate) the points of view of others. This meant they must be able to stop, remove themselves from their own (egocentric) perspective, *listen* to the other person and (hopefully) communicate their understanding. Also these skills clearly are valuable in any context: with friends, family, relationships in general. Even without the rest of the developmental intervention, teaching empathy and social perspective taking skills is valuable. This is especially true for college freshmen who are in a developmental stage that is frequently self-absorbed or egocentric.

In addition to being skills which can be used for living, empathy and social perspective taking are related to developmental change in other ways. Forcing students to take the perspective of others involves both interactionism and (frequently) disequilibrium (see Chapter 2). They must involve themselves with their environment more in order to see the perspectives of others. Also, when they recognize and try to understand points of view that are not the same as their own, they may be pushed into a state of disequilibrium and then resolve this through the process of accommodation.

The theoretical rationale for the inclusion of a module on empathy and social perspective taking in a curriculum on character development is its

relationship to moral reasoning (Whiteley & Associates, 1982). Briefly stated, an increase in capacity for empathy has been found to have a positive association with an increase in level of moral reasoning. In addition to their direct influence on the process of increasing the level of moral reasoning, empathy and social perspective taking are seen as a basis for assertion training, community building, and conflict resolution. We saw this module closely tied to Community Building, that is, it is difficult to imagine the development of an atmosphere that included trust and openness *without* the participants having good skills in empathy and social perspective taking. In terms of the concept of developmental sequencing, empathy is a building block without which growth in other areas would be slowed (e.g. sex roles and race roles).

From the point of view of designing a developmental intervention, we found several established approaches to teaching empathy which derive from the original work by Rogers (1957, 1959), but no such lineage of teaching methodology for social perspective taking and role taking. In developing this module, the GAIT (Goodman, 1972) and Carkhuff (1969) approaches to teaching empathy were employed.

Within this module were six classes. The first class (F9) was the Group Assessment of Interpersonal Traits (GAIT), developed by Goodman (1972), where students were given an opportunity to practice self-disclosure and to listen to a problem of another person. The task was to understand what the other person was saying. A class introducing listening skills (F10) required a rethinking of the positive behaviors included in this topic. A third class (F11) dealt with conflict and with fair and unfair fighting styles; again, students were asked to practice the skills of listening and understanding the point of view of another. The fourth class (F12) involved questioning skills and further practice in listening. The fifth class looked at the connection between thinking and feeling (F13). The final class in the module (F14) had students experience the GAIT for the second time as a post-test.

### **Class F9 – GAIT (Group Assessment of Interpersonal Traits) Pre-Test**

#### **Goals and Overview**

The Group Assessment of Interpersonal Traits (GAIT) is a structured exercise designed to allow students to experience the roles of Understander and Discloser. For this exercise, students form self-selected groups of six to seven. In preparation for this session, each person writes two *interpersonal*

concerns on a 3" X 5" card, one more self-disclosing than the other. One student begins by reading either statement to the group (Discloser role) and then describes this concern in more detail. This concern is "listened to and understood" by another student (Understander role), whose task is to help the Discloser explore the concern, to understand what is said, and to communicate that understanding. The Understander is cautioned not to try to solve the problem. Each person in the group takes each role once during the exercise; each exercise lasts five minutes and is video- or audiotaped. After each person in the group of six or seven had understood and disclosed, the tapes were processed under the direction of a student staff member. This exercise is included in both the Empathy and the Community Building modules. It promotes an atmosphere of openness and trust by having the students share a personal concern with a partner who is instructed to listen in a respectful way. The small groups agree to confidentiality. The feedback is given in a very positive, supportive way.

The goals of the GAIT pre-test are for students: (1) to use their "best" listening skills, (2) to receive feedback from the video- or audiotape and their peers, (3) to practice giving feedback to themselves and others, (4) to consider "listening" as a skill, and (5) to be introduced to perspectives different from their own. Partners for the exercise are formed by a random lettering system. Students are typically paired with individuals to whom they would not normally seek to disclose a personal concern.

### **Delivery**

Students were given an overview of the exercise: within small groups each would have a chance to disclose a personal concern, to be a listener and to receive feedback. The feedback would include comments from their group, and observing themselves on video- or audiotape.

Students formed self-selected groups of six or seven according to their preference to be videotaped or audiotaped. After the groups had moved to the location of their equipment, student staff leaders gave each student a 3" X 5" card and instructed them as follows: GAIT (Group Assessment of Interpersonal Traits) is a method for obtaining an approximate picture of individuals who are in face-to-face "listening situations." You will be asked to spend five minutes with a member of the group exploring some aspect of yourself that you would like to change. You will also be asked to help someone else explore through your listening, understanding, and responding. We call these the "Discloser" and "Understander" roles. Most people have not practiced this type of sharing in unfamiliar situations and may feel a bit

shy before a group. GAIT is designed to aid free expression and respect for feelings. The tight structuring also allows everyone equal time, prevents people from being left out, and keeps the entire session to about 90 minutes. Here is a summary of the entire procedure followed by detailed instructions:

*SUMMARY:* (1) Write two statements on the index card, (2) Draw an identification tag, (3) Do all the five-minute “Discloser” “Understander” pairings, (4) Watch the videotape for each pair, (5) Give feedback, (6) Repeat 4 and 5 until done.

*STATEMENTS* should be brief (one or two sentences), clear (easily understood when read aloud), and direct (undisguised and sincere) descriptions of your own behavior that could be better in relating with a friend, family, lover, work associate, advisor, stranger, parent, the opposite sex, etc. Your statement will only be used to introduce a topic that can be explored for five minutes, i.e., it doesn't have to tell a complete story. Do not phrase it as a question. Writing two statements (More and less personal) will allow you to read the one which is most comfortable. Avoid impersonal, vague, abstract, or joking statements, e.g., focusing mostly on another's behavior, political matters, or hiding behind humor. It will be unfair to your understander if you present impersonal, insincere, or complex statements not related to your current face-to-face relations. Please take about five minutes to write your statements after having all the instructions. Those finished early should remain quiet so others can complete their writing without distraction. As a group, there must be an agreement that anything said in here stays in here, that it will be kept confidential. Why do you think that's important? Does everyone agree to that?

Students also received a letter “A,” “B,” etc. These were used to pair Understander and Discloser. Any pairing order may be used. Here are samples for six, seven, and eight participants.

6		7		8	
Understander	Discloser	Understander	Discloser	Understander	Discloser
A	D	A	D	A	E
B	E	B	E	B	F
C	F	C	F	C	G
D	A	D	G	D	H
E	B	E	A	E	A
F	C	F	B	F	B
		G	C	G	C
				H	D

### Hints for Understanders

Your task is to sit back and listen carefully, not only to words, but also to the feelings that the discloser is trying to communicate. You are also asked to tell the Discloser the important things you hear (give feedback). The goal is to aid the Discloser in exploring and expanding discussion through: (1) telling what you hear, (2) sharing your own immediate reactions, (3) responding in a non-judgemental manner. Five minutes is too short for finding solutions, so avoid telling the Discloser how to change. Please remember that your assignment is only to help the Discloser *explore* a personal issue, not correct it. A good rule is to get in the mood for talking with a friend that you like and *respect*. Try not to let any need to perform in front of the group get in the way of giving your patience and care to the Discloser. Being a superb Understander within a structural group during a five-minute span is extremely difficult, maybe impossible, without years of practice.

You will do a good job if you just move a little in that direction by: (a) accepting Discloser's feelings as shown and without judging them as good or bad, (b) "tuning-in" to what Discloser is trying to tell you, hearing Discloser's personal point of view, (c) telling what you hear without much interference with Discloser's flow of exploration, (d) perhaps giving your immediate personal reactions when useful, related, or non-distracting. Also note that your half-minute summary should focus mostly on what you two *did* more than on the contents of what you talked about. Just describe how far you were able to get on the qualities

listed in the following telegraphic summary of HINTS: Don't judge the Discloser; Tune in to both feelings and words; Get into Discloser's viewpoint-feedback what you hear; Don't distract Discloser's exploration; Give pertinent personal reactions.

### Hints for Disclosers

Many of you will find this task of disclosing and exploring personal matters unusual. Being genuine is frequently confined to familiar situations. Try taking a risk by dealing sincerely with something about yourself that you would like to change, but avoid things that might cause you to become extremely upset. One approach is to think of a personal topic that you could discuss with a close friend, but would not ordinarily discuss in a less private group. In short, take a risk but avoid a great risk unless you are feeling particularly adventurous or strong right now. Other suggestions: Give your Understander time to absorb the initial reading of your statement. Wait quietly for him or her to respond. Because this is a two person activity, avoid long speeches if possible. Try to actively explore your statement: If new thoughts or feelings strike you, express them. Get in the mood to make yourself known to your Understander. Remember that the Understander is asked not to solve issues that you raise, so do not demand solutions. Your conversation will probably be similar to many you have had before, with the exception that it will end in five minutes and you probably won't gain a sense of completion or produce results. Just explore what you wish without worrying about "getting finished." This exercise is designed for you to *start* a personal exploration; finishing it might take hours.

After this preamble the students were told that the first Understander and Discloser would begin with the Discloser reading his or her statement in a *very slow* and clear manner. They would talk for five minutes without interruption from the other participants. The leader would be timing them and would give a 30 second warning. At the end the Understander would give a brief summary of what both people did during the five minutes.

After each pair had been taped, students took a short break and then began the feedback session. Six steps were used in the feedback: (1) students watched or listened to one five-minute interaction; (2) the Understander gave positive behavioral feedback to him or herself, saying what he or she liked about the specific behaviors in listening; (3) the group members gave any additional positive behavioral feedback; (4) the student in the Understander role gave a maximum of two suggestions to him/

herself for change; (5) the Understander commented on what his or her role felt like; and (6) the Discloser commented on what his or her role felt like. This process was repeated for each pair.

The evaluation session for the GAIT was organized with the intent of making it as positive an experience as possible. The entire process took about two and one half hours: one for taping, one for feedback, and the rest for the break and for handling the equipment.

### **Instructional Problems & What We Learned**

Using video- or audiotape proved to be a very powerful tool. The students' attention span increased dramatically, and it made giving *behavioral* feedback easier. Most students thought they had done a very good job of listening (even those who interrupted, gave advice, and moralized). Since we had not yet discussed helpful and non-helpful listening styles in class, this tape showed (students) the listening skills model they tended to use. *Few* students did anything resembling empathy or social perspective taking although most wanted to be helpful and supportive. Overall, students who used the videotape were pleasantly surprised at seeing themselves. Unlike audiotapes, there was seldom the comment, "Oh, I don't sound and look like that."

In other classes students have been told beforehand that being videotaped is often anxiety producing, but that nothing awful would happen. The intent of this was to reassure them, yet tell them to expect a normal amount of anxiety. These attempts at reassurance actually seemed to increase rather than decrease anxiety. This time the videotaping was presented as: "Here's an opportunity to see yourself on T.V.," without mentioning beforehand the possibility of being anxious. During the session if someone appeared quite nervous as the tape was beginning, the leaders made comments like, "It's okay to be anxious, many people are," or "I know you're kind of nervous, but let's just get started anyway and you'll probably forget all about the camera." Most students reported that the latter was true. Once they started talking with their friend, their anxiety decreased.

When using video-tape with students in more advanced counseling skills courses, this author has always found several students who stopped the tape and said, "I just can't listen. I'm too nervous about the tape." Not one of the freshmen did this; once they began listening to their friend's problem, they were able to keep the focus outside of themselves. This may be partially attributable to the freshmen having less involvement in

demonstrating their competence in listening and helping skills. Overall, in presenting the GAIT, the way to minimize anxiety is to present it to the students as an exciting opportunity and as an experience that they can cope with easily.

During the GAIT, students had a chance to listen, to disclose, and to give and receive feedback concerning listening skills. When conducting the GAIT evaluation, it is essential that students focus on the Understander rather than on the Discloser. Students often display a tendency to try to solve the problem for the person when in many instances what the Discloser really wants is a chance to be truly understood by someone and to talk out problems with someone who is a good listener. Being a good listener does not always mean making the person feel better immediately. It does mean understanding the person's perspective and communicating that understanding. This theme appears in the next four classes.

Feedback was purposefully structured in a positive way. Most students were easily able to criticize themselves in general, and were so self-critical that they had a great deal of difficulty seeing anything positive in their work. Therefore, the instructors deliberately constructed a supportive environment on the assumption that students would benefit most from observing their skills in a realistic and positive perspective. We believed that changing one's behavior involves knowing what one already does well in addition to recognizing errors. After being reminded of the content of the previous lesson in behavioral feedback skills, the class was able to make excellent use of these skills, giving clear, specific, well thought-out feedback rather than vague responses like, "You really did a good job."

Access to the videotape equipment was important to the success of the feedback exercise. When able to see themselves on television, students are more stimulated and give better feedback. Group leaders of the GAIT need to understand group dynamics and to be able to encourage those who are too critical of themselves or others to see positive aspects.

The GAIT process could have lasted even longer with questions like: "How do you react to seeing yourself (hearing yourself)?" "Is this a true representation of you?" "What would you have done differently if this person had come to talk and there were no group or no taping?" etc.

## Class F10—Identification of a Listening Skills Model

### Goals and Overview

This class was intended to help the students realize that listening involved a set of learnable skills and that their “natural” response was not always the most helpful one. Through listing positives and negatives from their own experiences of being listened to, members of the class would develop an actual model for effective, empathic listening. They could then use this model to evaluate their own and others’ responses.

Goals for the students included: 1) identifying which listening skills they liked and disliked in others, 2) using social perspective taking to realize that other people might feel the same and that those positive skills would be appropriate for anyone to use when listening, 3) identifying positive and negative skills of a taped counselor, and 4) practicing using the positive skills and eliminating the negative behaviors.

### Delivery

At the start of this class, students were asked to imagine that they had an important problem or concern that they wanted to discuss with a friend. Then they were asked to list what they would *not* like to hear or have happen in response. All comments were written on the board. From past experience we knew that when *students* generated this list of negatives, they were much more likely to see them as poor listening styles than if the staff made up the list. For example, if the instructor said, “I don’t think giving advice immediately is usually helpful,” many students would have said, “Well *I* think that’s a good thing to do” or, “But you should give advice when . . . .” Instead the students were listing what *they* would not like, what would not *feel* good to them. For example, once they said they didn’t like immediate advice from their friends, we couldn’t present the concept of empathy, of taking another person’s position. “So it wouldn’t feel good to you and you wouldn’t want it. How do you think it feels to *other* people?” Most students realized they had been applying a double standard; they wanted one thing and gave another.

Once students had generated their list of undesirable responses it was very easy to continually refer back to it. In later listening exercises when they began to give advice or moralize, the staff for example, could say, “Is that what you would like to hear if you were in that situation?” This reinforced the concept of empathy. They were told that during empathy

training the responses on this list were “off-limits,” and they agreed to that rule.

The next task for students was to consider the question: “If I had a problem, and wanted to talk to a friend about it, what would I *like* to have happen?” This exercise helped us introduce some of the basic skills of empathy and its communication. The positive list included paraphrasing, reflection of feelings, good attending behavior, trust, caring, honesty, and confidentiality. This list was *much* harder for students to generate. Several commented that it looked easier to listen “wrong” than “right.” Copies of both positive and negative lists were distributed during the following class. These lists formed an important basis of the presentation of the listening skills module.

After students had listed the positives and negatives of listening, two staff members put on a demonstration intended to incorporate items from each list. One disclosed a concern about not having many friends and the other illustrated a range of listening responses. (Including “that’s not that big a deal, you’ll get over it,” “why that happened to me once,” “join a club,” and “you look upset about it.” The Listener tried to be somewhat subtle and to act caring and “helpful” throughout the demonstration. This helped the students separate motive (I want to help) from practice (one’s “natural” responses may not be helpful). Students used the two lists they had generated to give feedback about the positives and negatives of the Listener’s responses.

After the demonstration of listening, students were asked to break into groups of four, choosing people that they did not know very well. They were given 3” X 5” cards and asked to list some problems or concerns that they might be willing to talk about. As Person A talked, Person B listened, trying to use the list of positive responses. The other two people observed the listening process. After a two or three-minute period with one person talking and one person listening, there was feedback. The listener first gave positive self-feedback, then suggested one or two possibilities for change. The observers gave positive feedback, and then were allowed for the first time to give one suggestion for change. Each person took each role.

When all the groups had finished this exercise, everyone came back into the large group and discussed why this kind of listening skill would *not* work. Learning to use the empathic listening skills model is extremely uncomfortable, awkward, and frustrating. They can *see* the skills but can’t reproduce them. The most common reasons why freshmen believed this would *not* work were: “It doesn’t feel good. It’s not the *real* me.” “Why if I ever just repeated something that another person had just said they’d say, ‘I just said that, Bozo,’” and “It takes too long to think of what I

want to say back. It's mechanical." The staff responded, "You're right. It doesn't feel good. It is awkward because it is not how you have listened before." "Just because it is the *real* you or the most spontaneous response does not mean it is the best. Besides, you *learned* to listen the way you do now. It is not *genetic*. Try it and see how the other person responds. How did *you* just respond in the practice?" and "If you keep practicing it, your responses will come more quickly and feel more natural."

Students were asked to "give it a try" in the next few classes, to learn the skills before they rejected them. Other responses included, "Just because you've *learned* it does not mean it is necessarily the most effective way that you might listen or communicate your understanding to people. Remember the first list that you generated? How many of us tend to give advice, or to tell the person they should not be upset? Your motives are to help the person, but those responses are something you *learned*. You as a group of students said that is not always the most effective way to listen and that is not always what the person who wanted to talk would like to hear."

The frequent student rejoinder was, "Well, it seems mechanical." The staff response was, "That is very true, it is quite mechanical because it is something you have not practiced. Just as when you were learning to bowl, you find yourself thinking about all the different steps of bowling and not having a smooth flowing motion. Once you have practiced enough on all of the individual steps, then you can start integrating and it becomes a very natural movement to you. The same analogy fits with listening skills. When you begin to practice them, they do feel awkward, they do feel unnatural, but after you have practiced them enough, they will simply become a part of the way you talk."

When the students said to the teacher, "This won't work because it is too unnatural, everyone will just laugh at me," or "People will wonder why I'm repeating what they're saying." The instructor paraphrased everything the student said. For example, the instructor said, "You think if you go out and do it, other people will immediately see what you are doing and make fun of you for it." Another student said, "Yeah, it is so artificial and just seems so awkward that I can't imagine myself knowing how to do it," and the teacher responded, "It is hard to believe you could ever be comfortable and flowing when you are doing this." After several of these interchanges the instructor pointed out that she had been using paraphrasing to be sure she understood the student and that the paraphrasing looked so natural that *no one* noticed. Some students began to

believe that they could really practice and learn paraphrasing. They were assigned to observe the listening skills of others during the week.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

This class clearly reflects our attempts to convince freshmen that empathic listening was effective and that they could learn skills to improve their current listening ability. Perhaps at no other time during the year were we as directly persuasive about our own beliefs. This goal forced us into a delicate balance in this class. Through generating the list of negative listening responses, the class could see how their current style was not necessarily the best. *But* we wanted to avoid having them feel badly: “I’ve been doing it all wrong and I’m bad.” “Boy, I’ve been a lousy listener. I do all those things on that list.” For several students, recognizing that their motives had been good took away some of the negative feeling.

The sequence of thinking about listening, developing a model of effective listening, seeing a demonstration, trying it themselves, and discussing their discomfort worked very well. The process gave the students a chance to think, experience, and evaluate. In addition, the constant referral back to “Well, how would you feel if someone said that of you?” forced the students to use empathy and social perspective taking.

### **Class F11—Using Listening Skills for Conflict Resolution: Fair and Unfair Fighting**

#### **Goals and Overviews**

This class covered conflict resolution, fair and unfair fighting, and listening to others and understanding their point of view. Many people find that they can understand and empathetically relate to the point of view of another, and can communicate that understanding, as long as there is no conflict involved. When two people are discussing something that has meaning to both of them and conflict develops, then empathy and social perspective taking suddenly disappear.

Most Sierra students were at the Stage 3 in moral development. A key developmental issue for Stage 3 individuals is learning to broaden their frame of reference beyond peer and immediate family groups when reasoning about proper behavior and choosing values. Our students would frequently dismiss without consideration any frame of reference or point of view of

those with different beliefs, values, or lifestyles. Conflict with peers or immediate family members can produce anxiety, and the Sierra freshmen would go to great lengths to avoid rather than confront conflict.

### **Delivery**

The class began with a short description of the differences between unconstructive and creative conflict. Examples of models of fair and unfair fighting, as defined by Bach and Bernard (1971), were presented. Students then generated a list of conflicts they thought might exist between people in the class. To start them off, the student staff gave them five:

1. One academic major is (Social Ecology) really easy compared to another (Biology).
2. Religion is just a crutch, an opiate to the masses.
3. Minorities should receive special support.
4. The Sierra Class isn't worth anything.
5. It's not all right to get angry at someone.

The students added eight more conflicts:

6. Guns should be outlawed.
7. Capital punishment is an effective deterrent to crime.
8. Journal writing is helpful.
9. Grades in school are meaningless.
10. Living in sin is good.
11. Marijuana should be legalized.
12. Mercy killing should be legalized.
13. Abortion is an acceptable form of birth control.

Students chose several issues they had strong feelings about. The class was then split into groups of eight, including three people who were in favor of the chosen issue, three who were opposed to the issue, and one or two who were to listen to and evaluate the fight. The three students on each side were allowed five minutes to discuss their beliefs among themselves. Then the six students were given twenty-five minutes to argue their

positions. They were all encouraged to contribute rather than letting one or two carry the argument. At the end of the time the evaluators shared their observations about *how* people argued, and in what styles they chose to fight.

### **Instructional Problems & What We Learned**

Again students found it easier to give feedback about the content of the arguments (e.g., “You made a really good point when you said . . . .”) than about the process (e.g., “You could wait until she finished talking, then relate your point directly to something she had said. You were acting as if you weren’t changing the topic at all, even though you always took a different direction than she had.”) Student staff were assigned to every group and their major task was to ask during the feedback period, “But *how* did she argue? Describe her *style*.” Perhaps demonstration for the students modeling feedback about fighting styles would have been helpful.

Students did seem to use listening skills and more fair fighting styles during their discussions. They had been focusing on these skills for several class sessions and knew they would be receiving feedback after the exercise.

By providing structure for the discussions, even the typically quieter students were able to participate and to present their own opinions. Others in the group were aware that the goal of “arguing fairly” was considered more important than “winning the argument” in this exercise.

## **Class F12— Continuation of Listening and Questioning Skills**

### **Goals and Overview**

As a continuation of the previous classes on listening and empathy, this class was designed so students could see and try actual listening skills: paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and open-ended questioning. The goal was for them to recognize the skills and to begin trying to use them. It was emphasized that good listening is *learned*, and that students could gain skills to use in every day life.

### **Delivery**

Students were given the lists of good and bad responses that had been generated in F10. They were reminded that the good skills *do* have some value — that they could be used in conflicts, in talking with friends who

have problems, in understanding somebody else's point of view, in helping someone understand themselves, and in conversation in general. The intent was for students to see these skills as useful in daily living as well as in the class. We emphasized that while several examples related to discussing personal problems, the skills certainly weren't restricted to that.

Students were then taught the skill of questioning and the difference between open-ended and closed-ended questions. Closed questions are those that typically lead to a Yes-No answer: "Do you live in Irvine?" "Do you live at the beach?" "Would you *like* to live at the beach?" "Can you, can't you, will you, should you, could you . . .?" Open ended questions start with "how, where, when, why, what, which . . ." and allow the respondent a wider range in which to answer. "What's it like living in \_\_\_\_\_?" Students were cautioned, though, that when someone truly doesn't want to talk, open-ended questions won't guarantee that they will talk; when somebody is really eager to communicate, closed questions won't guarantee that they'll be quiet. Open-ended questions *maximize* the chance of getting information from the other person.

Students formed pairs for an exercise in which the goals were to get as much information as possible about their partner and to learn the difference between closed and open-ended questions. For one minute, the first person simply asked closed questions and the other person responded. Then they switched roles (They were told to answer as they normally would – not just to say "Yes/No/Maybe" – if they typically would add more.) Then each got a chance to ask open-ended questions for one minute and get responses. After the exercises we asked "what did you learn or notice about closed- and open-ended questions?" Students indicated that it was difficult to separate them. When asking closed questions, many said they felt like interrogators, with the pressure always on them to generate a new question. They said open-ended questions were more like conversation. We encouraged them to observe themselves and each other during the following week to see what types of questions were asked.

A demonstration film *Identifying the Problem* (Hosford, 1973) was shown. In this simulated counseling experience, the counselor used only paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and questions as an approach to understanding the client. While the film is a good illustration of these skills, another advantage of the film is that the counseling *wasn't* flawless; the students saw that counselors are not perfect. Rather, they saw a person who had fairly good skills, but who made some errors. In addition to demonstrating counseling skills, the content of the film was relevant because the student being interviewed was depressed. Many freshmen go through at least a minor

depression towards the end of Fall Quarter or especially at the beginning of Winter Quarter. While the concept of depression was introduced, class time was too limited to allow a focus on it.

Students were asked to note what the counselor did that was effective or ineffective. Due in part to their recent training, they were able to give accurate feedback. Their strongest initial reactions were to some of the counselor's distracting nonverbal behaviors — that he leaned forward too intently and said “uh huh” continually. In fact, their reaction was so strong that several students began mocking him during the film. The staff had to ask them to try to ignore the distractions and focus on his other responses. Despite these mannerisms, students noticed that the counselor was doing well; he was asking an appropriate number of open-ended questions, was warm, caring, sincere, listened very accurately, checked his perception when unsure, and responded to feelings as well as thoughts. Several students pointed out how natural his use of paraphrasing and reflections seemed.

The conclusion of the class was devoted to integrating all of the skills presented thus far by practicing conversations with others. A good conversation was characterized as including three skills: asking open-ended questions, paraphrasing and reflecting what the other person had said, and self-disclosing at the appropriate time. Students found a partner and “practiced conversational skills” for five minutes. They were told to include all the skills even though it might feel awkward. An example was given of a conversation using all the skills: Student is on a bus and a stranger boards and sits down next to her, “Hi! I notice you got on the bus at UCI. What do you do there?” (Open-ended question) “Oh, I work in the Dean of Students’ Office.” “Dean of Students’ Office?” (paraphrasing), “Yes, I’m Assistant Dean of Students there.” “Really, that must be fascinating. What kinds of things do you in that job?” (Open-ended questioning) “Oh, I spend a lot of the time trying to help students solve problems that they have, and I spend a lot of time dealing with other administrators and other people on the campus.” “You know just this last year I’ve become an intern in one of the programs on campus and I find myself spending a lot of time meeting administrators now, too. That’s something that’s really new for me” (self-disclosing).

At this point the conversation could continue about administrators. While in the process of a conversation one can ask questions, really listen to what the person is trying to say and try to understand what they are talking about. At some point the two people will hit upon a subject where there are some mutual interests. Then they can be self-disclosive and share information with each other. This is not the kind of conversation where “Person A” says

a fact that is somewhat related to what Person B said while both constantly worry about what to say next. Rather a good conversation is a combination of empathy and a real sharing of oneself. For homework, students were asked to have conversations with people outside of the Sierra dormitory, applying their new skills. They were also asked not to use this information against each other; that is, saying something like, "Oh, I see you're asking me open-ended questions and paraphrasing. Isn't it time for some self-disclosure?" in a sarcastic tone of voice.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

By this class students were tiring of listening skills. Using a film helped hold their attention in a way that another *live* demonstration would not have done. Also, shifting to the use of listening skills in every day life, not just when someone has a problem, helped. During this class the students heard a *short* lecture and practiced in pairs. This is a good example of using format changes to hold the freshmen's attention.

Another film that could be used is Carl Rogers's *On Hurt & Anger* (Rogers, 1979). In this film Rogers talks with a Black man who is dying of leukemia. The film shows a superb use of reflection of feeling, paraphrasing, and good attending behavior. As a matter of fact, those are the only skills used except for a few questions. The drawback is that Rogers is so superb. The counselor's performance in the Hosford film was good, though flawed, and would be easier for a group of non-counselors (and probably most counselors) to identify with, i.e., his performance is within reach. The choice of a film would clearly depend on the particular instructional goals.

## **Class F13—Relation of Thinking, Feeling, and Behavior**

### **Goals and Overview**

A goal of the Empathy and Social Perspective-Taking module was to help the freshmen understand how others perceive the world. This class was designed to show them how thinking, feeling, and behavior interrelate and how this interrelationship leads each person to different perceptions of, and reactions to, situations (and to life!). Special focus was given to how upsetting feelings are created. They listened to a lecture explaining the concepts, thought about concepts in relation to themselves, and then used empathy and listening skills while others talked about their own (different) thinking patterns. This class was designed to demonstrate how individuals

can have more control over their emotional responses and improve their abilities for empathy and social perspective taking by understanding more fully the emotional responses of others.

### Delivery

The class started with a review of the homework — asking what happened when they tried to have conversations with other people. Some reported that the other person had talked expansively, regardless of the use of closed questions. Others said that having conversational skills made them feel more at ease — realizing that one was not just born either a good or bad conversationalist. Several students reported treating the skills as a game but still giving them a try.

A short lecture was given, billed as “How to Make Yourself Miserable.” The goal was to help students use this information to enhance their understanding of themselves and others. The concepts presented were based on Albert Ellis’ (1977) theory that the way one thinks affects the way one feels, that one can become extremely upset as a result of one’s cognitions. Ellis believes that how people create emotional responses to situations may be illustrated by use of Points A, B, and C. Point A is a situation or an incident. For example, the student just received her grades and has been put on probation. That is point A. Point C includes the feelings and behavior in response to this situation. The students were asked, “How might you feel and act?” One typical example was, “Oh, I’d be so depressed. I’d just feel awful about it. I’d stay in my room and cry.” It was pointed out to the students that most people believe that A causes C: for example, going on probation *makes* you depressed. In fact, what Ellis believes is that it is not the *situation* that makes you upset but what you tell yourself about the situation and about yourself. Between Point A and Point C is what you *think*, Point B. Then the students were asked “What would you need to say to yourself the second you found out you were on probation to make yourself truly depressed and to make yourself feel terrible?” Students came up with thoughts like, “Oh my God, I’m a failure. I’m on probation this quarter. I know I’ll never be able to do better and it probably means I’ll have to drop out of school. I’m going to end up being a candy girl at Sears the rest of my life. My parents are going to hate me. They’ve put all this money into me and I’m the only child in the family that’s gone to college. How can I disappoint them like that? How can I disappoint myself like this? There goes my career down the drain. I’ll never be what I want in life.” All of this thinking at point B can lead to depression at point C.

Another example given was: “A girlfriend or boyfriend breaks up with you (Point A) and your response (Point C) is anger and rage at the person for doing it. What would you have to say at Point B that would lead you from somebody who has broken-up with you to being enraged? (Point C)” Students responded with: “How could she do that to me? It’s not *fair!* See all the things I’ve done for her. She can’t do that. What’s wrong with that bitch?”

Ellis believes human beings engage in three types of thinking: irrational, rational, and rationalization. Irrational thinking distorts what is really true in a situation and/or exaggerates the catastrophic qualities (“I couldn’t stand it if . . .” “What if . . .?” “It’s awful”). Irrational thinking can lead to excessive anger, depression, or anxiety that is out of proportion to the situation. Rationalizations are also thoughts that are lies and exaggerations, but in the opposite direction: one feigns indifference to situations that one in fact really cares about. (“I couldn’t care less if they don’t like me.” “It’s no big deal.” “I didn’t like her anyway.”) Rational thinking is accurate and in perspective. It may lead one to feel mildly angry, sad, or nervous, but blocks *excessive* emotional response. Thinking rationally will permit normal emotional reactions, but will prevent reactions so strong that they impair functioning.

The basic concept was to encourage the students to start seeing that they in fact do have some control over their emotional responses to situations. This kind of cognitive restructuring does not promote being unemotional in response to situations, but rather reacting at an appropriate emotional level. The student may be very sad and frustrated that she didn’t get good grades, but not so much so that she stays in her room for three weeks and ends up killing herself. Or he would not be so angry over the break-up of a relationship that he hurts himself, or someone else, or gives himself a stress related illness. Our group of freshmen were not especially responsive to the concept that thinking is influential in shaping their feelings.

After the lecture students were asked to write responses to three questions:

1. Describe in detail one situation where you got excessively upset (enraged, depressed, or very anxious.) How did you feel and act?
2. What irrational thoughts did you have, what did you say to yourself that upset you!
3. What could you have thought that was still true but that would have made you less upset (rational thought)?

An answer to question 3 for the bad grades might be: “I really did fail this quarter. I did very poorly. I am very disappointed in how poorly I did, but it doesn’t mean that I have to fail in every other thing that I ever do. Even if I did I could still live with myself. That’s certainly not my choice. I don’t want to fail. I’ll do everything I can to change the situation, but suffering over it isn’t going to make it go away.”

A rational response to the circumstances of the boyfriend or girlfriend cited in the lecture might be: “I’m really mad that she broke up with me. I think that I gave her a whole lot, and I didn’t get much back in response. It’s really frustrating to me that this happens now, but it’s not worth tearing myself into little bits over it and being this angry. Raging and storming around is not going to make the situation any better. I may want to try and see what I can do to change this situation, but I’m not going to get myself so bent out of shape that I do something I will regret later. But I am still mad!”

After ten minutes of writing answers to the questions noted above, students broke into small groups to share what they had written. Each took turns as Listener and Discloser. The Discloser read and talked about what he or she had written. The listener helped the person speaking clarify his or her thinking and tried to understand what the person was talking about. They were allowed to use only paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and open-ended questioning. The goal was to help students observe the patterns of thinking which get them upset, how *other* people’s thinking patterns upset them, and the kinds of thoughts other people found upsetting. In addition, this exercise provided another opportunity for practicing listening skills.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Using examples that were common to the freshmen experience, the lecturer was able to hold student attention while exploring the concept that thinking creates feelings. This concept was foreign to most of the students.

Past experience with teaching Ellis’ Rational Emotive Theory (Ellis, 1977) to freshmen showed that many would understand it immediately; some with the “ah-hah” reaction. But for at least 25% of the students these concepts made no sense. They simply did not believe they could have control over their emotions by changing their thinking.

Restricting the students to paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and open-ended questioning was essential. As they heard others begin to describe their own irrational thinking and upsetting situations, the Listeners wanted to “make it better fast.” They didn’t want to try to understand or empathize.

For most, their first reaction was to tell the Discloser, “You shouldn’t feel that way” and to give advice. Constant monitoring and forceful reminding to use the skills was necessary.

Another common error the students made was to project onto their partner what they might be saying to themselves that was upsetting. In fact, each individual had already developed his or her own unique style of getting upset. For example very often the Listener would say, “Oh, you must be thinking that your parents won’t care about you anymore” when actually that was not the Discloser’s concern and was not something that would have upset the Discloser. Once again this is an example where the content of the lecture itself, “How to Make Yourself Miserable,” might not tie in very clearly to listening skills or development of empathy by itself. The *way* that it was used and the process by which we presented it made it very applicable to social perspective taking. Asking students to learn the concepts and to explore how they and others upset themselves in the context of the listening, self-disclosing format made the experience very valuable and relevant to empathy and social perspective-taking.

### **Class F14—GAIT Post-test**

#### **Goals and Overview**

In the last class of the series on empathy and social perspective taking, the GAIT (Goodman, 1972) was given again. In this way, students had a chance to evaluate how their skills had changed over a period of time and to describe any changes they may have observed. The goals included: 1) Re-evaluating their own listening skills using knowledge gained from the previous five classes, 2) realizing more clearly the errors they had made in the first GAIT, 3) sharing personal information with other students.

#### **Delivery**

Students formed new groups and repeated the GAIT with exactly the same instructions as before (F9).

#### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Only 12 percent of the students said they did less than a moderately good job of listening on the initial GAIT. This was interesting because the staff

evaluated their listening skills as very poor. It would have been helpful to have them go back and look at their initial tapes after all the classes on listening skills to see if they would have rated themselves as high again. Immediately after the first tape they had not recognized responses that were not helpful like moralizing, advice giving, and telling people they shouldn't feel the way they did. Many of the students' initial high ratings of themselves may have come from not having really thought about what constitutes good listening skills. While several students did *listen* well (they *heard* what was said), their responses were not in any way close to being *empathic* responses. By the second GAIT, students used far fewer of the "listening errors." While they did not use many paraphrases or reflections of feelings as would have been optimal, they did ask good questions.

Ninety percent of the students said their listening skills had improved by this time. Quite a few appreciated seeing the way they had changed from the last GAIT both in use of skills and in level of confidence in front of the videotape.

### **Empathy and Social Perspective Taking Module Commentary**

Maintaining the students' interest in learning empathy skills was a difficult problem. Many of the freshmen who initially rated themselves as good listeners found that a continued focus on listening was repetitious after the first presentation. Although it was helpful to use the videotape and the film, and to vary the discussions and the size of the groups, many of the students commented, "Do we have to do that again? I already know how to listen."

Freshmen (and probably most others) find it easier to see another person's perspective when there is little emotional involvement. When there was conflict, or when the Discloser was upset, the students had more of a tendency to distort the other's meaning, to project, or to resort to less functional listening behaviors (e.g., advising). Even though students had said they would *not* like to hear advice or to have the other person try to make light of their problems, they found it difficult to abandon these modes of "listening." Forcing the students to stay with the topic, even if they felt it was pointless and repetitive, resulted in an overall improvement in their ability to sit back and really listen. This would not have happened if we had stopped after one or two sessions.

By the end of this module the students were much better listeners. Most of the change came from eliminating the dysfunctional responses listed in F10. After they stopped "trying to make it better right away" they were able to relax and actually hear what the person said. They were willing to

wait longer before jumping in with their own comments and asked fewer tangential questions. Also, they were better able to summarize what the Discloser had said during the time they were listening.

Optimally, in improving their listening skills students should remember the role-playing demonstrations of listening skills and mentally refer to their own lists of desirable and undesirable listening responses. Even more importantly, we wanted students to understand that the “real me” style of listening or reacting is learned behavior. Our intent was to encourage students to try these listening skills, learn to use them well, see how these skills fit into each individual’s personal style, and then reject those skills if necessary, but only after giving those skills a fair chance.

The principal instructor, who had taught graduate courses in empathy skills, found that the freshmen learned these skills more quickly and less defensively than graduate students. Freshmen approached it more as a game and had less investment in “doing well and looking good.” Therefore, they were more willing to try out these skills in the class and in other contexts.

Students need to be cautioned that as their ability to listen well, empathize, and engage in empathy and social perspective taking improves, they may find more people wanting to talk to them. They may also become *extremely* frustrated because others often do not listen well or try to empathize; instead, as the students try to talk with others, they get advice, topic changes, or worse. They may be encouraged, however, to talk to their friends about what they want (“Right now I just want you to *listen*. I’m not really ready for any advice yet”). We told them we hoped they wouldn’t abandon their new empathy skills because others did not listen well.

Parenthetically, some of the students who learned these skills quickly were those for whom English was a second language. They explained that while learning English, they had constantly checked meaning to make sure they were understanding other people. Also, they were less likely to make assumptions about what someone meant in English, preferring to ask questions until they were certain they understood.

This module made use of the staff as role models who could listen well, empathize, and take the student’s perspective. The instructor used paraphrasing and restating in the class to be sure she understood the students’ comments. This was part of her teaching style, and while she did this throughout the year, it was pointed out to the students explicitly during this module. In student staff training use of empathy and listening skills had been emphasized from the start. Having all of these individuals available as role models who shared the same beliefs and skills about listening and empathy was invaluable.

## **Class F15—Evaluation**

### **Goals and Overview**

In this class students were to: 1) fill out a written evaluation of the classes for Fall Quarter, 2) discuss both content and process of the classes and to make suggestions, and 3) hear an introduction to the Winter Quarter course.

### **Delivery**

First students filled out a detailed written evaluation for the Fall Quarter course. They rated each class on its level of interest to them and how useful or helpful it had been. They also commented about the quarter as a whole and had space provided for open-ended comments on each specific class and on the whole course. Copies of the evaluation appear in Appendix B.

Next, a staff member who mainly dealt with administrative details for the project and who attended class very rarely conducted the discussion. She asked the students to answer: What was OK about the class? What would be better? What behavior changes would they like to see in the staff? What behavior changes could they (the students) make that would be helpful? Students generally commented that they liked the class but asked the staff to provide more variety for the next quarter. They had found the Survival Skills too basic and had become tired of Listening Skills. They felt in retrospect that the retreat had been of more value than they originally had thought. Students agreed that they would be more attentive during class and more respectful to the presenters. They also decided that the student staff should not have to be solely responsible for keeping order and quiet; that they should be responsible for themselves and for each other. Students heard a description of the Winter Quarter curriculum. Field studies as an option in addition to the class were introduced. Students were told that they could receive two units of field study credit by volunteering for a field placement in the community, meeting with the field study coordinator on a regular basis and completing written reports of their work. The field study coordinator presented this material and told interested students to contact her after class. (See Chapter 9 for more information on the field study option.) Triple I-D groups (III-D) were described to the students and they heard that the class as a whole would meet one night per week and their Triple I-D group would choose its own weekly meeting time. (See Chapter 6 for a detailed description of Triple I-D groups.) Topic

areas mentioned for Winter Quarter's class included sex roles, interpersonal and intimate relationships, assertion and socialization. Finally, students voted on when the Winter Quarter class would meet.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Having students fill out a written evaluation before they are asked to discuss their reactions to the quarter provided a much more well thought out discussion. They had each formed their own opinions independently and were therefore less likely to succumb to peer pressure about their likes and dislikes. Also the written evaluation provides the students with a clear overview of what they had studied and experienced during the quarter. We found their evaluations and comments to be very helpful both in shaping curriculum for the rest of the year and also in redesigning Fall Quarter's curriculum for the next year.

An outside staff member was brought in to conduct the discussion because we hoped the students would feel more free to express their comments without worrying as much about hurting the feelings of the staff who had been involved in designing and delivering the class. The discussion was lively and many students participated, but it is unclear whether this would have happened if one of the regular staff had conducted the discussion.

### **FALL QUARTER COMMENTARY**

The Fall Quarter curriculum was the most highly structured of the year. The class met as a whole group two nights per week and went on a weekend retreat. Four modules were included in the curriculum. Survival Skills was offered first in an attempt to teach the freshmen skills and attitudes that would help make them better learners at the university and would allow them to have more attention available for the Sierra Class. Next Community Building was initiated. This module did not stand on its own, but rather was woven into the presentations for much of the rest of the quarter. Creating high levels of trust, support and mutual respect in Sierra Hall was important for the students' own comfort levels, for its relationship to increasing the level of moral development, and in helping the students experience conflict with each other. The module had two classes devoted solely to Community Building and the concept of Community Building was considered in the design of many other classes with different topics.

Once the students were beginning to know each other, they were exposed to Conflict Resolution. This module was designed to allow them to experience both internal and external conflict and to begin to understand the process of conflict resolution on an interpersonal and societal basis. During this module, students pointed out that they did not listen well to each other which was the perfect introduction to the next module, Empathy and Social Perspective Taking. Students began to try to take the point of view of others and also to improve their own abilities to listen and to participate in groups.

Initially, students were very obedient in class. As the quarter progressed several began testing the limits; e.g., coming late, being inattentive, etc. After the discussion of in-class behavior, students were more respectful and attentive. They were also the most difficult to work with as a large group, especially because any misbehaving student could find some peer support for that behavior. When they were all together there were too many distractions available. They seemed to work best in small groups when there was a clear task provided for them; another example of how important structure was initially. Students reported liking best those classes whose purpose was clear and that related to the other modules already taught. They did especially well when they heard the goals for the class at the beginning, were reminded of them during the class, and heard a summary at the end of what they were supposed to have learned.

To the staff, Fall Quarter seemed organized and had a clearly articulated set of purposes. We knew the goals of each module and each class and thought the sequencing made both practical and educational sense. During Fall Quarter staff frequently felt they were walking a fine line in relation to student behavior. Our long-term goal was for the students to be more active and responsible in their own education. When students misbehaved, staff had to decide whether to act as authority figures or hope that the students would eventually see the light. For example, each week several students would hide in their rooms just before class and pretend they were not coming to class. They waited for a student staff member to “come and find them and drag them to class.” (Had they really planned to skip class, they could have left the dormitory.) The staff members decided to treat it as a game and play along, hoping the students would eventually tire of it (which they did). Later the students said they had been nervous about going to class and that having the staff member seek them out and go with them to class had made them feel more comfortable. They said that the student staff’s willingness to be responsible for them initially helped them become responsible for themselves in the long run. Overall during Fall

Quarter the staff was willing to provide whatever structure and direction seemed necessary in aiding the students to participate in the class.

Initially student staff members were uncertain about their abilities to lead small group discussions and to present concepts in class. The instructor helped them choose experiences that were within their skill level and helped them increase their level of participation and responsibility each week. Student staff who felt uncomfortable conducting small groups were always paired with a co-leader who did feel comfortable. By the end of Fall Quarter each student staff member had developed good group leadership skills and at least adequate presentation skills. Some were still nervous, but the students seemed to recognize this and be more supportive during their presentations.

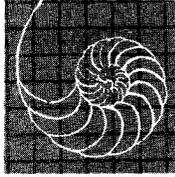
In terms of the goals for the quarter, students had gotten to know each other and were developing a strong sense of community. Their listening and conflict resolution skills had improved rapidly. Some students had learned the skills necessary to do well academically while others had not.

Fall Quarter's structure and organization allowed us to teach many skills in a short amount of time. However, we still harbored a goal of helping the students take a more active role in their own education. To this end, the classes offered in Winter and Spring were somewhat less formal and relied more on in-class discussion groups and on the weekly Triple I-D groups which are described in Chapter 6. Content also became more fluid as the modules overlapped more. These shifts in both content and format reflect the transition from Fall to Winter Quarter in the Sierra curriculum.

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## WINTER QUARTER

*Janet Clark Loxley*

Major goals for students in Winter Quarter included: 1) understanding the concept of socialization and how it applies to them; 2) understanding the role of gender in socialization and how it may influence values, beliefs, and behaviors; 3) acquiring the view of themselves as engaged in a developmental process; 4) examining the impact of socialization, realizing that change is possible, and beginning to be more self-directed; and 5) acquiring and using assertion skills.

During Winter Quarter there were two major shifts in format. There was less structure than in Fall Quarter, and the students spent half their class time in flexible, smaller discussion groups. One of our goals for the entire year was to encourage more active student involvement and responsibility for their own education. During the Fall Quarter the class had met in two 2-hour sessions each week that had been organized and conducted by the staff. The modules were clearly divided so that each module (except Community Building) was separate and distinct from the others. During Winter Quarter the modules were overlapping and not always sequential. As in fall, the content seldom related to only one module. The students and student staff leaders were allowed to choose their own topics and structure. The topics for the weekly 2-hour small group discussions were varied, but typically related directly to the curriculum.

During Winter and Spring Quarters each student participated in both the weekly class and the weekly discussion (Triple I-D) group meetings. Triple I-D stands for *Intensive Interpersonal Interaction* and *Discussion* (III-D). This label for the group meetings was created to help the groups sound more appealing than “discussion groups,” and less threatening than “encounter groups.” It communicated to the students that they would have an opportunity to share their feelings, beliefs, and values with each other through

interacting and discussing ideas. The groups were much more oriented toward sharing of values, ideals, and philosophies than a typical encounter group would be. (Incidentally, none of the students were concerned about the Triple I-D groups turning into encounter groups — they had not heard of encounter groups!)

Each group had eight freshmen and was co-lead by two of the student staff. During the Fall Quarter we had continually asked the freshmen to break into groups with students they did not know well in an attempt to have everyone get to know each other, at least on an acquaintance level. In Winter Quarter we hoped that by meeting with the same group regularly, this smaller number of students would achieve a close psychological sense of community, developing a sense of trust and caring for each other.

Three tasks were assigned to these groups: (1) Participating in exercises or discussions of topics (e.g., moral dilemmas) generated by either student leaders or the group members; (2) continuing to discuss topics raised in the regular class meetings; and (3) preparing a class to be delivered by that group in the Spring Quarter. An overriding goal for the Triple I-D groups was to enhance the psychological sense of community among group members by developing a sense of trust, openness, and identification with the group.

During the first class meeting of Winter, Triple I-D groups were described and students were asked to find seven other students with whom they felt comfortable, but did not know very well. To preserve diversity of membership and uninhibited discussion, the staff encouraged roommates and close friends to be in different Triple I-D groups. There were some exceptions. The first year of the Sierra Project we had asked students of different ethnic groups to distribute themselves among the Triple I-D groups. Feedback from these students indicated that by doing so we had left some of them in a position where they felt very isolated. They thought they would have been more effective in functioning within a Triple I-D group if they had been allowed to be in a group with some people they were close to, typically someone of their own race. Though we believed that being in the same group with a roommate or close friend could inhibit discussion, occasionally we had students who seemed especially supportive and protective of each other and who we believed would function better if allowed to be in the same group. The judgments of the student staff who lived with the freshmen were extremely valuable in assuring that each group had a compatible, diverse membership in an arrangement which we hoped would build a high level of openness, trust, and community.

The first task of a Triple I-D group was to decide on the pair of student staff leaders with whom they would like to work. They were presented

with a list of possible pairs and asked to come to a consensus on first, second and third choices. The staff then took the students' choice lists and moved to another room to make assignments. While all groups did not get their first choice, each group received one of the sets of leaders they had requested. This was another way of giving the students a more active role.

Each Triple I-D group was expected to organize a class presentation sometime during the remaining two quarters. They were to choose their topic from a range of issues including role expectations, sex roles, racial roles, philosophies of life, how people get to be the way they are, and how people can take greater control of their lives. Details of the actual functioning of these groups and their class meetings will be found in Chapter 7.

The weekly classes in Winter Quarter related to three modules: Socialization, Assertion Training, and Sex Roles. As mentioned previously the module arrangement was more fluid than in fall, with the modules frequently overlapping as the table below indicates.

**Table 6.1**

**SCHEDULE OF WINTER QUARTER CLASSES**

<u>Class Session</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Module</u>
W1	Development Theory	Socialization
W2	Conception of Life-style	Socialization Life & Career Planning
W3	Sexism Videotape	Sex Roles Socialization
W4	Values and Assertion	Socialization Assertion
W5	Assertion Lecture	Assertion
W6	Assertion Training Obstacle Course	Assertion
W7	Needs in Relationships	Socialization Sex Roles
W8	Auction of Values in Relationships	Socialization Sex Roles
W9	Men's Lives Film	Sex Roles Socialization
W10	Evaluation	

As in Chapter 5 this chapter will describe each class in three sections: *Goals and Overview*, *Actual Delivery*, and *Instructional Problems and What We Learned*. Each module will have an overview describing goals and structure and a commentary. Again, because of the overlap and interplay among modules, a class will be described under one module and then mentioned again in any others to which it is related. Our goal with this chapter, as with the other chapters in Section II, is to describe in detail what we did, but also, more importantly, to illustrate how we thought about, planned, and decided on the subject matter. We visualize educators using the basis of a class or most of a module, but not an entire quarter (or year), since no one's goal or target population would be identical to ours.

## SOCIALIZATION MODULE #5

### Module Introduction

Socialization is commonly equated with approaches to indoctrination with an intended result of producing conformity with the state's, the teacher's, or the school's values (Rest, 1974, p. 242). In the Sierra Project, our use of the term is different. It is employed to denote teaching students more about the influences which have been exerted on their development by the broader society, and about the process of human development. It is our intent to help them examine their cultural stereotypes, particularly those of sex and race roles. The socialization module was planned to help freshmen explore the psychological world in which they live, and to gain a clearer understanding of the social factors which have influenced their thoughts and behavior. This is a prelude to challenging their thinking, promoting disequilibrium, and aiding in the transition to Stage 4. It is premature to attempt to move a group such as these Sierra Project students immediately to Stage 4 issues without first providing opportunity for full exploration within Stage 3.

Winter Quarter classes on socialization included: presentations of developmental theory and self-theory (W1), a panel of staff and students answering questions about their own socialization (W2), a videotape on sexism (W3), a film on sex roles (W9), a class on values development (W4), and two classes on relationships; one focusing on needs and the other on values (W7, W8). There is an overlap with the Sex Roles module and classes W3 and W9 which are described under their respective modules. Spring quarter offered an interview with a mature couple, an exercise on racial values and their development, and interviews on religion and patriotism.

Thus, the topic of socialization covered a range of issues, addressing such questions as: What am I like? What are other people like? How did we get to be the way we are?

More specifically, students examined race roles, sex roles, socioeconomic status, and religion as socializing factors which had influenced their values and relationships. The Socialization Module was intended to help students understand how the process of socialization occurs and what particular factors influence them: e.g., how individuals grow up in certain family and cultural environments. Had more instructional time been available, we would have included an examination of the role in socialization of urban/rural environments, birth order, family size, neighborhood, parental scripting, and more information on family interaction patterns.

## **Class W1—Development Theory**

### **Goals and Overview**

One goal of the Socialization Module was to increase understanding of how people have come to be the way they are. The goal of this specific class was to expose the students to life-span developmental theory, and to provide them with a framework within which to enrich consideration of the events which occur in their lives as they approached adulthood. The class did *not* include specific stages of moral and ego development for two primary reasons. First we did not want to contaminate our survey design research by teaching the theory. Second we did not want the students to make negative comparisons of themselves based on a sketchy explanation of stage theory. Even among the student staff there was still the idea that “Stage 4’s” are better than “Stage 3’s.” No matter how frequently a lecturer might say, “No, they simply have a different way of viewing the world,” we knew the students would find it very difficult to be objective about their own levels of development. Another goal of this class was to give students an understanding of *internal* cognitive conflict in order that they might realize what was happening to them and to view it as a positive experience.

### **Delivery**

This class was delivered as a lecture by a faculty member whose special interest area was human life-span development. She presented her own personal ways of understanding this perspective without tying it to any

specific developmental theory. As an introduction she compared the developmental model with two other psychological traditions: the clinical model (using Freud as an example) and the behavioral model.

After a brief outline of developmental theory she then talked about different reasons students could have given for choosing the Sierra experience. Quoting from the letter the freshmen had received informing them about Sierra, she pointed out the educational opportunities which were available, and how each person could focus on something slightly different to meet their own needs. Examples mentioned in the letter included: feelings of belonging and being cared for, the chance to be oneself, changing oneself without being judged or ridiculed, communicating, personal and group development, closeness, and self-discovery, as well as a list of specific class topics to be covered. She pointed out that different opportunities were appealing depending on a person's history and current stage of development; Sierra was designed to appeal to students on a range of developmentally relevant stages and issues.

The lecturer pointed out that students had all entered Sierra with individual differences in needs and interests. She said people probably felt quite similar to each other in many ways, but that they also needed to learn to understand and respect differences. As an example of individual (and sometimes conflicting) differences, she read excerpts from student comments evaluating the fall quarter's curriculum:

Week 1:

How could material have been presented better?

“Leave out Sierra history.”

What did you especially like?

“History of Sierra.”

Week 2:

What was especially good about this class?

“Contingency management.”

“New points of view.”

What could have been improved?

“Time management was too long.”

“More time.”

“Class was too long.”

“Had it in high school.”

Week 3:

What would have made these presentations better?

“More time on anxiety reduction.”

“Less time on anxiety reduction.”

SIMSOC:

How do you see this fitting in with the rest of the quarter’s class?

“Doesn’t fit in very well.”

“Fits in very well.”

When would be the best time to do this?

“As early as possible in the quarter.”

“Closer to winter quarter.”

“During spring quarter.”

“Never.”

She invited students to consider the problem of trying to plan a class that meets everyone’s needs and interests, and to recognize why they might be interested in some topic that just did not appeal to their friends.

The last part of the lecture focused on the nature of change and included functions of the environment, ways individuals can change, and the concept of internal conflict. She described the environment as a source of stimulation and a context for action, pointing out the interactive effect of how one’s own actions produce a new environment to which one then responds. The major ways in which an individual can change include: addition or substitution (e.g., of new or different perspectives), differentiation (e.g., acquiring more control or confidence), internal conflict (e.g., using confusion, uncertainty, and questioning as a valuable process whereby you modify a previous way of thinking, feeling, or acting and then construct a new way).

Internal conflict was labelled the hardest and most important producer of change. The process of internal conflict which produces positive change was described as: 1) being aware that a basic conflict exists; 2) seeing this conflict as a problem; 3) responding to the conflict by problem solving rather than using escape, avoidance, regression, or reinterpretation as a

means of “getting rid of the conflict;” and 4) coming up with a more adequate conceptualization. To summarize, she informed students that the Sierra class was frequently designed to throw students into internal conflict about what they believed; that while they might experience discomfort, the end product would be growth.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

The academic lecture proved to be a poor way to communicate concepts of developmental theory. Freshmen are able to respond to this instructional format in their regular classes. They can sit through hour-long, sometimes boring lectures, taking copious notes since they know how they will be tested. In Sierra, however, when the students found themselves bored, they did not have the threat of formal examinations to force them to be attentive. They listened to the concepts, but most of them had a difficult time making the connection between a lecture presentation of developmental concepts and themselves. When they did not understand or were frustrated, they stopped listening and thinking.

The lecturer should have started by presenting the goals for the presentation so the students would have known what they were being asked to learn. She might have used an interactional lecture style, asking them questions and helping them participate. She also could have used *many* more specific examples about how the theory related to the class and the students, going back and forth between general theory and concrete examples. When developmental concepts were presented abstractly, few students (or student staff) were able to connect them to their own lives. Since our goal was to have freshmen learn that humans develop in a somewhat orderly way, any of the major developmental theories would have been appropriate. Perhaps Erikson’s stages of psychological development would have been a good choice for freshmen because psychosocial stages lend themselves so easily to examples. The combination of describing the stages and illustrating *how* people move to new levels would have met our goals.

We realized immediately that this lecture was confusing to the students and planned to develop classes that would present the same ideas in other ways (see Chapter 7, classes S1 and S3). We learned that when bringing in an outside speaker, it was essential to spend time explaining to that person how to teach effectively to this group of freshmen in this type of class. These suggestions would include presenting goals clearly before and after, remembering that the freshmen are mainly *concrete* thinkers, and that their attention spans are short.

## **Class W2—Conceptions of Life-style, Socialization Panel**

### **Goals and Overview**

The second class in the Socialization Module presented a panel of six staff members and two students who answered questions about their own socialization and life-styles. The goals of the socialization panel included: demonstrating self-disclosure by having staff members discuss personal questions, having the students think about topics which related to their own socialization, and demonstrating development from a life-cycle perspective.

The panel of men and women was chosen for diversity. The panel members (from 19 to 35 years of age) included people who were married, single, divorced, parents, or childless. There were Anglos, Blacks, and a Chicano; some were students, most worked at UC Irvine. The panel would have been improved by the inclusion of wider age range and more participants from outside the university. Several members of the panel had made major career shifts in their lifetimes or had done poorly in their undergraduate field. We chose some people the students knew well and others they had never met. This class also fit into the Life and Career Planning module which is described in more detail in Chapter 7.

### **Delivery**

In preparation for the socialization panel, the Triple I-D groups generated lists of questions they wanted answered regarding the topics of socialization and lifestyles. (Experience had shown that on-the-spot questions yielded poor results.) Before the panel presentation the student questions were compiled into categories, typed, and copied. The panel members saw the questions before the session, and during the presentation each student had a copy of the questions. This insured that the questions would be responded to in an organized manner and that a range of issues would be explored. Once the question and answer period was underway, students were able to come up with excellent and spontaneous questions. Students were especially interested in issues concerning marriage, family life, life-styles, and careers.

The panel was seated at a long table in front of the class. A student staff moderator asked each person to speak for five minutes describing what his/her life was currently like and how he/she got to that point. Then students began asking questions from their sheets, directing the questions to

specific individuals or to the group in general. The moderator helped to balance time spent on different topic areas and fielded away questions that were not related to socialization (e.g., “Is Columbia’s engineering program better than UCI’s?”).

In their initial comments and answers the panel members were quite self-disclosive. This seemed to facilitate the students asking more personal questions. Good questions that the students had written included:

“What has it been like being in an inter-racial marriage?”

“What would you like to change about yourself?”

“Why don’t you have children?”

“Why aren’t you married? Do you feel pressure?”

“Have you ever had a major problem or block, and how did you overcome it?”

“What was your biggest disappointment? Triumph?”

“How do you and your wife split family responsibilities?”

“Are you able to fulfill both roles, career and motherhood?”

“Who other than your parents have been most influential?”

“How have (bad) experiences with others influenced your faith in people?”

“How did going to a parochial school influence your development as a person?”

“How did you get out of the male role expectations of the Chicano culture?”

“Were you really conscious of sex-role stereotyping as you were growing up?”

“Did you follow the trends of your ‘peer group’?”

“Do you think people in general make you feel good or bad about yourself?”

“Are you afraid of getting old or are you looking forward to it?”

At the end of this class, we asked the freshmen what they had learned. Comments included: “I can see better where I am going.” “I can’t believe someone wouldn’t want to have children. Why, they won’t have any grandchildren then!” All the panel members stayed after class and answered

questions students had been unable or unwilling to ask before the whole group.

While the immediate purpose for including this panel in the socialization module was to enable students to hear firsthand of the experiences that had shaped other people's lives, this class also served to open students' minds toward alternative lifestyles.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

The most difficult part of presenting a panel in this context is helping students ask questions that are germane to the topic and are broad enough to have some meaning for their lives. This was done well by informing the students about the topic and generating the questions *before* the class under the guidance of the student staff. It was reinforced when the moderator set aside questions which did not relate to socialization or human development. Given a format which allows them to question and interact, freshmen do a good job structuring questions to fit their interests; given permission to question themselves and each other, they do so eagerly. They do require structure or they tend to drift toward irrelevant issues. Once again, we saw that the freshmen were intrigued by people with different lifestyles. In choosing the panel, we tried not to include uncommon or bizarre lifestyles. Actually, the staff thought the panel was a relatively conservative group despite a few divorces, working women, and decisions not to have children. The students, however, found themselves confronted with people who were happy *not* doing things "the right way." This panel produced conflict because many of our students held extremely traditional views on "how to live." We were pleased to have chosen a panel who were living lives within a "normal," yet slightly different range, lives the students could imagine themselves living.

Since Sierra freshmen had an extremely narrow view of relationships, marriage, family, success, and happiness, they found the panel members' comments to be thought-provoking. Surprisingly, many students were nervous about asking personal questions of "grown-ups" even though they had clear permission to do so. Some also acted shy about meeting the panel members afterwards; hanging around, looking interested, listening, but never getting close enough to actually meet the people. Perhaps having a small-group time with panel members would have been catalytic.

## Class W4— Values and Assertion

### Goals and Overview

This class was designed to accomplish the transition from socialization to assertion training. Our premise was that socialization shows us how people develop and what influences their choices. This implies that people *learn* to become the way they are. Connected to this model of human development is the concept that in addition to being a product of forces around us we can direct our own learning. Assertion training is viewed as one way that people can change their typical, habitual behavior. Within this class we wanted students to see how their values were similar to, and different from, their own parents. We wanted them to realize the range of institutions and external sources that influenced their own development and to see how socialization impacts the way people interact with each other especially in regards to their assertive or non-assertive behaviors. We also wanted them to begin thinking about their own assertion skills and more specifically about situations they handled well and ones which were difficult for them. The class is considered part of both the Socialization and the Assertion modules.

### Delivery

The class began with a five-minute lecture relating socialization and assertion. The basic message was, “We have been studying socialization and how people become the way they are. We have been looking at human development in general and at sex roles as one type of socialization. One theme that keeps emerging is that development and growth invite learning. Each of us has learned to be the way we are. This is hopeful because then we can also *learn* to be different; we have some control over what we think, how we feel, and how we act. A goal for this class is for you to understand how people (and you) have become the way you are, but we also want you to understand a variety of ways that people (and you) can change. One approach to helping people change is through assertion training. When we interact with other people we are using assertion in some form. Most people have learned only a limited number of ways to act. In the next several classes we are going to examine assertion so you will understand what it is and what it is not, and how it relates to values and beliefs. You will also be able to learn and practice some new behaviors.”

Next students were introduced to examples of assertion-related situations by completing the College Student Self-Expression Scale (Glassi, Delo, Glassi, & Bastien, 1974). They were told, "This is a pre-test. You must complete this before we present assertion training so that you can identify your own assertion issues and so that at the post-test time you can see if you changed." Students filled them out quickly and seemed to enjoy this exercise.

Students were divided into groups of eight, and the staff gave instructions for the next exercise. Each student received a list of 34 values (see Appendix A), and they were instructed to select five values which were most like their parents and five which were most different. They were given five minutes to record their responses. Then each small group was asked:

How do your values match those of your parents?

How are they different?

How do you think you attained those that are the same as your parents.

How do you think that you attained those that are different?

How does it happen that they are different?

How are the values of this society transmitted?

These questions were discussed for about fifteen minutes. The exercise was designed to help students become more aware of the explicit and implicit values which they held, and to begin considering how they had acquired those values. The student staff had to work hard to keep them focused on the task as the freshmen tended to compare values with each other and argue their relative merits, ignoring the underlying socialization issues.

Following this exercise, students returned to the large group and were asked to generate a list of institutions that transmit values: mechanisms of socialization other than their immediate families. The list generated by the class included gangs, peer groups, religion, extended families, comic books, music, school, older or more important people, newspapers, books, being in love, work, clubs, the possibility of death, sub-cultural groups, recreational activities, and television. We pointed out that socializing agents extended well beyond the immediate family and asked them to consider how this had affected the development of their values, especially values that were different from their parents.

Without explanation, the topic shifted. One of the Triple I-D groups delivered a skit which they had developed about assertion issues of importance to students: their styles of meeting and getting to know each other in a party scene, and their styles of living together on a day-to-day basis.

Students role-played a party scene showing people who were pushy, timid, shallow, loud, pleasant, and assertive. They portrayed stereotypes to illustrate clearly their points. Then they showed a range of roommate pairs handling conflict in their own personal styles. Because role-playing in a skit is fun, their tendency was to present overly long scenes. Relatively briefer scenes were more effective in raising issues without boring or distracting the audience.

Next the class responded to a series of questions which included: “How did the characters get to be the way they were portrayed in the skit?” “What are the assertion issues?” “Since people have different backgrounds, and therefore see and handle issues differently, how does this affect all of us living together?” Initially the class gave superficial answers (“Well, they acted like that because that’s how they were brought up.”). Subsequent probing (“What specifically might have happened?”) led to more concrete answers such as, “All of her good friends in junior high school were loud and the only way she got any attention was by being louder.” Students decided that through the socialization process they have been and are exposed to different opinions, and are pressured (e.g., by peers and parents) to choose certain ones.

When asked to generate the assertion issues illustrated in the party skits students mentioned being afraid to approach others, trying hard to be liked by agreeing with everyone, being disrespectful and inconsiderate especially when drunk, gossiping, and criticizing others. From the day-to-day living scenes they recognized that people not only had different values and preferences about *how* to live, they also communicated them in different styles. When faced with conflict (over noise, cleanliness, entertaining friends, room decor, race, smoking, music, privacy), they could hold it in, gossip, blow-up, argue non-constructively, or be direct.

The class ended with the statement that the next time the class met they would hear more about assertion and would have the opportunity to practice new behaviors. They were asked to identify assertion situations which arose for them during the week.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Again it proved to be difficult to have the freshmen discuss socialization in an abstract way—they constantly reverted to concrete detail, but the staff was prepared! Before class we discussed potential difficulties the students would encounter and the staff practiced asking questions designed to move students from concrete detail to abstract thinking. Not all students

were able to do this but they did begin to realize that we were not concerned with discussing concrete detail (i.e., which values were better).

We had learned through experience with staff that when using “skits” to illustrate concepts that the “skit givers” typically began as having fun, became less subtle, and extended their presentations. While this was exciting for the presenters, the audience tended to become distracted and to lose sight of the point of the skit. The Triple I-D group leaders were able to caution their groups about this. The outcome was a decision to use blatant, stereotyped examples and to work from a script. Still (to the audience) the skits were too long. However, the value of involvement of the Triple I-D groups in designing and delivering these skits far outweighed any inconvenience to the other students. These groups were excited about the topic, were proud of their presentations, and were beginning to involve themselves actively in their educational experiences.

## **Class W7—Needs in Relationships**

### **Goals and Overview**

As part of the Socialization Module, this class was designed to encourage students to begin thinking about their relationships from two perspectives: 1) what personal needs were being met in relationships, and 2) how they behaved differently in various relationships. This dual perspective allowed students to examine their relationships over a period of time and to assess how their needs changed. By having an historical framework students would be able to see their changing relationships from a developmental perspective. Another goal of the class was to help them understand Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as it relates to relationships. Again, this class dovetailed with the overall questions for the Socialization Module: “How do people get to be the way they are,” and “How can people change to be the way they want to be?”

### **Delivery**

First this class was tied to the Socialization Module’s themes so the students would understand *why* this class was being taught and why it was being taught *at this time*. Two student staff members said, “This quarter we’ve been looking at socialization, especially at what factors influence people in becoming the way they are and how much people can change. Clearly a major factor in socialization is the type and the quality of

relationships we develop through our lives. For the next two weeks we're going to look at our past and present relationships to see what we give, what we get, and how these relationships have influenced us. You can probably already see what an interactive process this is. As change occurs, you seek out different types of relationships. These relationships then change you so you seek out . . . . Because the topic of "relationships" is so large, we have decided to focus it in two ways: by having you consider some very specific questions and by having you learn about how one person (Abraham Maslow) has described human needs.

Next students were given a handout depicting Maslow's need hierarchy and a modified version of Maslow (Table 6.2).

We explained Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs; that humans first meet physiological needs, then needs for safety, for love and belonging, then self-esteem, and lastly for self-actualization. We presented students with the perspective that many people, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, must spend most of their time and attention meeting *Basic* needs; trying to provide food, shelter and safety for themselves and perhaps for a family. It is easy for someone who has these needs met to say, "Well I don't understand why he is not more concerned about developing a more *intimate* relationship," or "You know, she does not even notice the beautiful environment nature has provided us." We encouraged the students to imagine what it must feel like and what the world must look like from each level of the hierarchy.

Next we pointed out that choice of relationships could in some ways parallel this model; that all of our initial relationships help meet *Basic* needs and as those needs were met we could expand into *Growth* needs. As Maslow's hierarchy was tied to relationships, students thought most of their current relationships focused on meeting love and belonging needs, perhaps because they had moved from a protective environment at home to an institution that also met most of their physiological and safety needs.

Next, students were given a chart which was to be used as a time-line.

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Birth    3 years    6 years    9 years    12 years    15 years    18 years

They were to represent each significant relationship by putting an X at the age it started and a line with an arrow for as long as it continued. They were to include family, best friends, enemies, teachers; anyone significant through early childhood, elementary, junior high, senior high school, and college.

**Table 6.2**

**GROWTH NEEDS**

truth	justice
goodness	simplicity
beauty	order
aliveness	richness
individuality	playfulness
perfection	effortlessness
necessity	self-sufficiency
completion	meaningfulness

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self-esteem  
esteem by others

---

love and belongingness

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**BASIC NEEDS**

*safety and security*

air, water, food  
shelter, sleep, sex

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The external environment preconditions for need satisfaction:

freedom  
justice  
orderliness  
challenge/stimulation

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\*Growth needs are of equal importance, not hierarchical

In addition, they were to note why each relationship was significant and what needs it fulfilled. They were given 15 minutes; enough time to stimulate their thinking and get them interested in the task without leaving anyone bored.

Students were divided into groups of six with a student leader and given instructions. After developing their charts each was given an opportunity to share and discuss. The staff guided the groups using the following questions:

How do relationships on your chart relate to needs, especially as defined by Maslow?

What aspects of relationships have been important at different times?

What needs were met on each side?

What is the next step in current relationships?

What are the next goals for future relationships?

Students made one large chart encompassing all the individual charts and the staff member helped them tie the information to concepts of human life-span development.

The last portion of the class was spent in preparation for the next session. The whole group reconvened and each person, including the staff, received a 5" × 8" card. They were told that in the next class there was going to be an auction. They were going to bid on relationships described by other people in the class and to select the description that appealed to them the most. On one side they would be asked to write, "What do I value in myself in a relationship?" and on the other side, "What do I value about people I want to be friends with, i.e., what am I looking for?" Each card (and student) was assigned a code number and the staff collected cards and made a list of names and numbers.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Again, students found concrete thinking easier than abstract thinking. They filled out the charts easily, illustrating their significant relationships. In the discussion they wanted to share details ("Well, Jim was my best friend in junior high, and we always played sports together and kind of talked about girls but never did anything."), but they found it difficult to tie this level of description into a developmental perspective. ("In junior high what I wanted was to be secure and to belong, and I would have been friends with just about anyone who would hang out with me." "As I've aged, I'm

more secure with myself and, therefore, more selective in choosing my friends.”)

The Maslow hierarchy (especially with the Table 6.2 handout) proved to be facilitative. It was simple, clear, understandable, and easily tied to relationships. Having this model helped focus the discussion, which was important because “relationships” is such a broad topic. Our intention was to have the students view relationships as one aspect of socialization and to see how needs and behavior changed through different stages of development.

## **Class W8— Auction of Values in Relationships**

### **Goals and Overviews**

This was the second class to focus directly on relationships. We wanted the students to consider what they had to offer and what they wanted in different types of relationships. As one aspect of the year’s goals, we wanted them to see that they could be more active in *choosing* relationships and in changing themselves. We also wanted them to see the variety of roles they currently played with their peers and to evaluate these roles.

### **Delivery**

This class focused on values and needs that we express and have met in our relationships. In the previous class, students had been given a 5" × 8" card. On one side of the card they had answered the question: “What do I value about the people I want to be friends with? What am I looking for?” The student staff collected the cards, numbered them, and made a list of matching names and numbers so that only they would know who had written about what subject.

Before class the values from the cards were compiled, typed, and duplicated so that each student would have a list of everyone’s answers. They could tell the sex of a person, what that person was willing to offer, and what was wanted in return, but they did not know *who* the person was. They were told: “Read over your sheet and decide which ones have the qualities you would be looking for in a relationship.” They were given ten minutes to study the sheets.

Next the auction was explained to them. “We will read each person’s card off one at a time. If you want that card you must call out before someone else does in order to get it. We will read every card once. Any

leftover cards will be distributed randomly. After that, you will have time to exchange cards if you choose to do so.”

As the staff read each card, students who were interested called out and claimed the card (and the person who wrote it). For example, a female’s card said, “What I have to offer is that I’m understanding, I’m sensitive, I’m crazy, I have a sense of humor, and what I’m looking for is love, understanding, and respect.” Several students yelled out that they wanted this person. There was not a formal bidding system; the card went to the person who spoke first, or loudest, or was judged subjectively to want it the most.

Answers to, “What do I have to offer?” included “love, affection, sensitivity, humor, kindness, compassion, confidentiality, lasting ability, trust, ability to talk and listen, acceptance, self confidence, flexibility, seriousness, confronting, intelligence, creativity, respectful, ambitious, loyal, comforting, and honesty.” Students had taken this task quite seriously; there were not any “joke” answers. The responses to “What am I looking for?” were very similar to “What do I have to offer?” with slightly more emphasis on “trust, ability to listen, closeness, companionship, and honesty.”

After each student had bid on one of the cards, we revealed the corresponding names. The students were asked to get together with the people who had chosen them and the people they had chosen (in many cases these were the same) and then to form a small group with one staff person per group. In the group students first talked with each other about why they had chosen a particular card: What it was about that relationship that appealed to them and what factors they had weighed in making the decision. Students were excited to see who they had chosen and were eager to discuss why that choice had been made. In this discussion they typically expanded on what they were looking for in relationships, and the staff person kept helping them make distinctions between types of relationships, especially between friends, loved ones or partners.

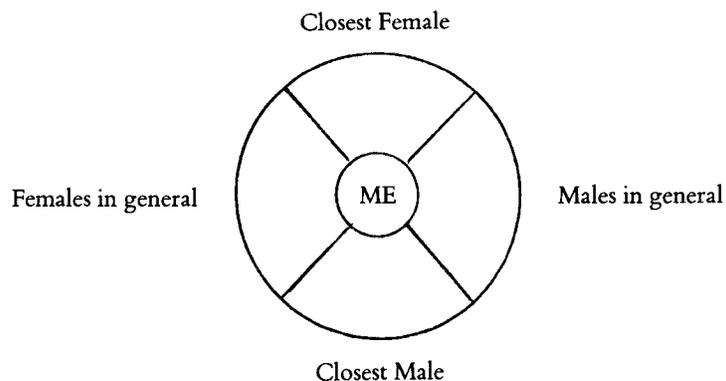
Next each student filled out a “wheel form” (Diagrams 6.1 & 6.2) to explore peer relationships. In each section they were to describe themselves in that type of relationship; e.g., for “closest females my age” they would write how they act, feel, think, and what is expected of them in relationship to their closest female friend. Some students did not have a close male or female friend. The staff told them they didn’t have to fill out that section, but suggested that the student might want to consider developing that type of relationship as a goal. After filling out the forms, the group shared what they had written. The staff members then tried to have students discuss relationships more generally, guided by the following questions:

**Diagram 6.1**

**HOW I RELATE TO OTHER PEOPLE**

Imagine that a trained observer follows you around and watches how you act with different people.

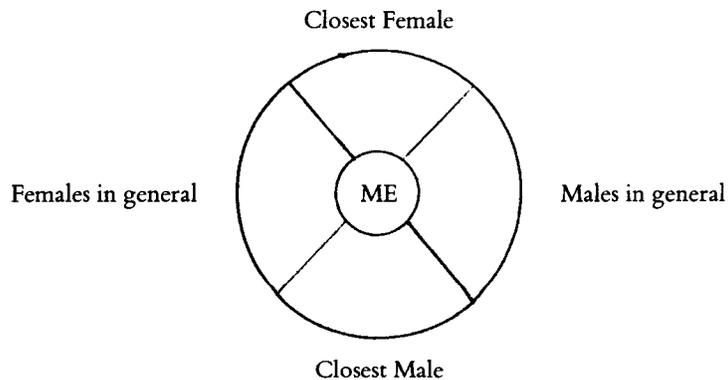
In each empty space write at least three adjectives or terms that the observer might use to describe YOUR behavior.



**Diagram 6.2**

**HOW I RELATE TO OTHER PEOPLE**

The trained observer is back and following you around again. In each empty space, write what you would like the observer to see; that is, what ways would you like to relate to these people.



- What different alternatives are available in relationships?
- What restrictions are there? Why do these restrictions exist?
- What restrictions do you think are necessary? Unnecessary?
- What are the differences in having a close friend of the same sex and one of the opposite sex?
- Can you really have a “platonic” relationship?
- What is OK?
  - Having close opposite-sex friends?
  - Hugging opposite-sex friends?
  - Necking with close opposite-sex friends?
  - Being sexual with them?
  - Having close same-sex friends?
  - Hugging close same-sex friends?
  - Necking with close same-sex friends?
  - Being sexual with close same-sex friends?
- With whom should you share intimate details of your life?
- (Why) is it best to have *one* close opposite-sex person?
- Who should have the power in these relationships?

Near the end of class, we asked the small groups to return to the large group for a conclusion and wrap-up discussion. Surprisingly, each group commented that they had not had enough time and requested permission to continue the small group discussions (which we gave immediately).

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

The auction was confusing to us; the staff was never able to devise an ideal format for the bidding system or a fair way of distributing the cards. As it happened, the more vocal and assertive students got what they wanted. This did not seem to interfere with the post-auction discussion, however. Students who did not get what they wanted simply explained to the group what they *were* looking for in a relationship. The most valuable parts of this exercise were filling out the cards (“What do I have to offer?”) and the discussion which followed. The actual “auction” was of interest mainly because students examined what everyone else had written and

were forced to choose “the best.” This led them to be more *active* in their approach which we hoped would generalize to actual relationship choice.

Most of the freshmen had never thought about what they had to offer and what they were looking for. They also tended to choose friends who were available and who liked them, typically not a very active process. The staff was pleasantly surprised by the serious manner which students filled out their cards. We were especially pleased that several of the male students who tended to joke and generally avoid personal topics had actually examined both themselves and the nature of their relationships.

One year in the Sierra class we had not included the person's gender on the sheet listing all the responses. Even though we were thinking of relationships as covering the range from acquaintances to lovers, our freshmen seemed to be focusing only on “lovers.” Several of the men were upset to discover they had been chosen by another man. Whether or not to include the person's gender as information on the sheet depends on individual goals. If one of our goals were to examine the male's concerns about intimacy with other males and “homophobia,” then not listing gender and having some men end up being chosen by other men would help achieve that goal. In this class, our overriding goal was to have the students be as open as possible in the discussions about themselves in the context of their relationships. We decided to list gender on the sheet so that the students could choose a person of whatever sex they would feel the most comfortable with. Again, there is no right or wrong way to structure this exercise; it is a question of goals for the class.

The major change we would make in this class would be to summarize it or tie it together better. In the two classes on relationships (W7 & W8) students covered a range of topics (personal needs, values, roles, examination of oneself and of others). While we presented goals at the start of each class, we did not tie the material back to the goals. One possibility would be to ask, “What did you learn from all this focus on relationships? What did you learn about socialization? What are you going to do with all this information?” Another possibility would be to have them set goals for themselves within their current relationships and for future relationship choices. Another avenue would be to ask them, “Why do you think we taught this? What do you think that we hoped you would learn?” There are clearly many ways to help students integrate this information, and the impact of this material would be much greater if integration occurred.

## SOCIALIZATION MODULE COMMENTARY

The Socialization Module had classes in both Winter and Spring Quarters. For Winter, classes had focused on developmental theory, factors that influence growth and behavior, and the connection of relationships to needs. In addition the classes on sex roles were considered part of this module. Overall, the goal of the module was to help students recognize that developmental processes exist, to identify factors that had been active in their own socialization, and to develop a belief that they could have impact on their *own* socialization.

While the concept of the module was clear to the staff, in presentation to the students it looked like a series of pieces that were not necessarily connected. Except for the introductory lecture on developmental theory (W1) students found each class interesting and participated actively. However, had they been asked, "What is the module theme and how does this class fit in?" they would have responded, "Huh?" As a result of the Socialization Module they were thinking about lifestyles, about the influence of belief systems on behavior, and about reasons for choosing relationships. They were not seeing these as connected to the process of socialization and recognizing that people's developmental issues and needs change over time. Presenting an overview of the module and its goals as well as the goals of each class would have been helpful.

As a result of the socialization classes from Winter and Spring Quarters *combined*, students did achieve most of the module goals. Reading both module descriptions will provide an excellent example of how we worked when we realized our goals were not being met. Being able to present the same concepts in a different manner at a later time was one of the luxuries of teaching a year-long class.

## ASSERTION TRAINING MODULE #8

### Module Introduction

The goals of the assertion training module included: 1) Understanding the differences between assertive, unassertive, and aggressive behavior; 2) identifying personal rights; 3) identifying situations where it is difficult to be assertive; and 4) learning how to resolve conflicting situations through obtaining one's own legitimate rights without violating the rights of others. The model of assertion training used in the Sierra Project is based on

Lange and Jakubowski (1976). The rationale for using assertion training in a character development intervention and how it is specifically employed is detailed in Whiteley and Associates (1982).

Assertion training was presented in Winter Quarter. By that time, many students had experienced difficulty in relating to others assertively, and acquiring the skill was more relevant. All of the students lived in the same dormitory and they were in constant contact with each other. During the Fall Quarter, many students had “tolerated” behaviors of others that bothered them. By Winter Quarter, students were more eager to confront each other, but they were not sure of how to go about it. They had acquired the motivation to learn assertive behavior.

Their most common strategies in conflict situations were to avoid the person or the situation in an unassertive manner, or to yell at, berate, or ridicule the person in an aggressive manner. Complaining to the Resident Assistant or to other students without approaching the person directly was also typical behavior. We wanted students to be able to initiate discussion on conflict *before* the issue causing the conflict had been blown out of proportion.

The concept of personal rights was central to the discussion of assertive behavior. Many of the interpersonal problems in Sierra Hall related directly to a conflict of personal rights. Students frequently denied themselves the rights to make and refuse requests, or to decide how to use their own time and property. Our presentation of assertion training also focused on the personal rights of the other person. Through this, students were able to see that both parties have exactly the same personal rights relating to assertive behavior, and that these rights are often in conflict. This also supports empathy and social perspective taking.

The Assertion Training module contained three classes: W4— Values and Assertions, including the assertion pre-test (described in the Socialization Module); W5— Assertion Lecture; and W6— Assertion Obstacle Training Course. These classes were taught in sequence without intervening classes. The sequencing reflects our goals; students began with self-assessment, learned the theory and then tied theory to practice.

### **Class W5— Assertion Lecture**

#### **Goals and Overview**

Using a lecture format, the goal of this class was for students to learn to discriminate between unassertive, assertive, and aggressive behaviors, to

understand the concept of personal (assertion) rights, and to relate these rights to behavior. They were exposed to the concepts in a lecture format, then asked to *use* the concepts by recognizing personal rights and generating possible assertive, unassertive, and aggressive responses to assertion situations provided by the lecturer. They were also presented with the basic structure for role playing/behavior rehearsal.

### **Delivery**

Many of the freshmen had heard a short introductory lecture on assertiveness during the regular University orientation programs prior to the start of classes in Fall Quarter. When they saw "Assertion Training" among the classes for winter, they responded, "but I've already had that; I know it." We asked the lecturer to begin by saying, "Many of you have already been exposed to the basic concepts of assertiveness and are worried about being bored tonight. I'd like you to think of the first part of my lecture as a review. I believe that being assertive is a very complex task; even if you've *heard* some of the information before, you still may not be *acting* assertively."

He began by defining assertive, unassertive, and aggressive behavior based on the Lange and Jakubowski (1976) material. Assertive behavior is defined as a direct, honest, open, and appropriate communication of one's own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. This was differentiated from unassertive behavior which is often indirect or dishonest and ignores one's own rights. Aggressive behavior included expressing or acting on thought or feelings, but in a way that puts down, blames, ridicules, or abuses other people, denying their rights. While aggressive behavior may be direct, honest, or open, it is always labelled as inappropriate. To clarify the definitions, he described a stimulus situation. "One person, Sarah, liked to play her stereo while studying and falling asleep. Her roommate, Sally, found loud music distracting while studying and could not fall asleep with even the most quiet music." Students were asked to generate examples of unassertive, assertive, and aggressive responses that Sally might use. Student examples included:

#### *Unassertive:*

Says nothing, but looks up whenever Sarah turns on the stereo.

"I'm having a hard time sleeping."

"I like Montovani better than Kiss."

*Aggressive:*

"You're so inconsiderate and selfish. Didn't your mother teach you anything?"

"I can't believe your taste in music. It's so adolescent."

"If you don't turn that stereo off now, I'm going to break all your !#\*%!#\*! records."

*Assertive:*

"Sarah, I've been having a hard time studying and sleeping with the music. Let's talk about it."

"I know your music helps you study and fall asleep, but it's really distracting to me. I've been too anxious to mention it before, but it's really bothering me and I'd like to work something out with you."

After unassertive, aggressive, and assertive responses were generated, the concept of personal rights was explained. These included the right to be treated with dignity and respect; the right to decide what to do with your own body, time, and property; the right to make, refuse, and accept requests; and the right to have and express thoughts, feelings, and opinions. They are described not as God-given or legal rights, but as assumptions we make about how we would like to be treated and how to treat others. If each of us believes in these rights and acts accordingly, we will behave *assertively* with each other.

In a shorter presentation, the rights are listed and explained. With more time, the instructor may go through a series of steps that allow the participants to generate these rights. First they are asked what rights a person has who has been arrested but not convicted. They will usually respond initially with legal rights (remain silent, one phone call, have an attorney). Finally someone will say, "the right to be treated as innocent until proven guilty." "Ah hah," you say, "and how would we be treating that innocent person?" This leads into rights more similar to those of assertive behavior; e.g., to be treated with respect and dignity, to make requests, to give opinions, to be safe from physical harm. Next the presenter might ask what rights children have in general, or what rights the students themselves have in a dating situation. From these lists, rights which support assertive behavior can be identified. Interestingly, while students are excellent at generating lists of rights for prisoners and children, and have an intellectual appreciation of the rights of others in a dating situation many are unable to accept those rights for themselves.

After personal rights were explained, the assertion stimulus film (Jakubowski, 1973) was used to allow students the chance to explore these concepts. This film contains a series of vignettes about individuals trying to violate others' rights by making it difficult for them to act assertively. Each vignette shows one person who is talking directly into the camera making it easy to imagine the person is talking directly to you. Students were asked to imagine themselves in each situation. They formed into triads. After watching each vignette they were asked to identify which personal rights were violated and to generate possible assertive, unassertive, and aggressive responses. This gave each student the opportunity to generate his/her own answers rather than take a passive/observer role. These were then shared with the large group under the supervision of the instructor.

Stimulus situations from the film that were the most effective with freshmen included: being asked repeatedly to take notes for another student, a waitress who brings chicken salad instead of shrimp salad and then argues against an exchange; a man who asks for a date in a pathetic guilt-inducing style; and a woman who is too angry to be reasoned with. There is also a later film, *The Assertive College Student* (R. Whiteley, 1978), which portrays situations relevant to college students (e.g., approaching professors to request an incomplete, or adding courses just before the deadline; requesting letters of recommendation; dealing with close friends about privacy and quiet for studying, etc.). Both films present stimulus situations which are relevant for college students.

Most of the students' answers showed that they understood the basic definitions of assertive behavior and personal rights. Next one student was asked to choose a personal situation to role-play with the instructor in front of the class. The trainer helped him clarify the assertive issues in the situation the student chose: meeting women and asking for dates. Then the trainer illustrated all the steps of role playing. Behavioral rehearsal, role playing, and practicing being assertive in situations were presented as effective ways to change a person's behavior. For homework, students were asked to identify situations in which they were typically unassertive or aggressive. They were asked *not* to point out the unassertive or aggressive behaviors of others (e.g., "Boy that was sure unassertive! Didn't you learn anything in class?").

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

As mentioned previously, most of the freshmen had heard a basic introduction to assertion before school started and thought, "I know

assertion.” We worked around this in two ways: choosing a very dynamic speaker unknown to any of them so that they were more likely to see this as a “new experience” and having him address concerns directly in his opening remarks.

The students were *very* excited and responsive. They loved giving examples of unassertive and aggressive responses since each example brought laughter, applause, and positive support from their peers. This was done in a low-risk manner since students were not asked to demonstrate how *they* would handle the situation. The lecturer was quite skillful in controlling the students’ excitement and energy, and focusing them on learning the concepts and on appropriate (correct) answers.

## **Class W6—Assertion Training Obstacle Course**

### **Goals and Overview**

The major goal for this class was to give the students the opportunity to practice assertive behaviors and to receive feedback. We wanted them to learn to discriminate assertive from unassertive and aggressive behavior in themselves; and hoped that they would be able to develop new assertive responses for common assertion-related situations. As a process goal, we wanted to offer high degrees of both structure and stimulation.

During the first year of the Sierra Project, we had asked students to describe situations in which they had difficulty being assertive and to practice assertive behaviors in small groups of peers. They either avoided the task entirely by chatting, or did poorly while practicing. Feedback was often vague or excessively critical. Furthermore, students had difficulty deciding exactly what to practice and frequently spent most of their time describing the situation rather than acting it out. In order to provide the opportunity to practice with more structure, we developed an assertion training obstacle course. This obstacle course offered students the chance to practice assertion in the most realistic situations we could create and it forced active participation.

### **Delivery**

For this class, students practiced assertive behavior with feedback in real-live situations. We chose eight assertion related situations that freshmen might face: talking with a professor about a grade, asking a noisy neighbor to be quieter, turning down a date, phoning parents with news of poor

grades, initiating a conversation with a stranger on a bus, making overtures of friendship, refusing to lend a car, and asking to talk with a friend about a problem. The situations varied in terms of levels of intimacy with the person involved; and whether the asserter was required to initiate or to respond.

We tried to make each situation in the obstacle course as realistic as possible in terms of both the people that the students would be asked to interact with and in terms of the actual setting. For example, in initiating conversations with a stranger on a bus, we backed a Volkswagen bus up to the front of Sierra Hall and had a stranger sit in it. One at a time the students stepped into the bus and began a conversation with this stranger. Other roles were portrayed realistically by using actual professors, parents, strangers or people the students knew.

At the start of the class students were first divided into teams of six, and then into two subgroups within each team. Each subgroup was given a direction sheet telling them which situations to practice and in what order. The class as a whole was told, "Tonight you will have the chance to actually try out the assertion skills you have been hearing about in class through an assertions obstacle course. Around the dorm we have set up eight real-life assertion situations. Your team of six will experience all eight situations, and each of your small groups of three will handle four assertion obstacles. At the end of class you will be able to hear from the rest of your team about the situations they encountered. You will receive instructions telling you the order of the situations. When you approach a situation you will see a large sign describing the assertion obstacle you will encounter. For example, one sign says:

Inside this door you will find the professor from a course you just completed. You thought you had earned a "B+," but a "C" appeared on your grades.

Your task is to enter this room and approach the professor *assertively* about your grade.

You will enter the situation one at a time, try an assertive behavior, receive feedback from the staff member, try it a second time, get more feedback, and then you will be finished. When your group has completed an obstacle, consult your instruction sheet and move on. Remember, we are not telling you that you *should* always act in an assertive manner, but rather that it usually feels better to know you *could* act that way, that you have a choice."

Each team of three students was then confronted by four of the eight obstacles. The teams approached the location in Sierra Hall where a situation was set and read a large sign explaining the assertion obstacle. Then, one at a time, students would enter the room. Inside was a stimulus person playing the role described. The student walked in, tried to act assertively, and then received behavioral feedback from a student staff member in the room.

On the first trial, the stimulus person was always cooperative; a principle of behavior rehearsal. This made practicing new behaviors less threatening. If the student had difficulty being assertive, the stimulus person would be cooperative during the second trial. If the student did well the first time, the stimulus person made the task more difficult by adding one or two negative comments.

After each trial the student staff person gave behavioral feedback in a specified manner: 1) the student is asked what (s)he thought (s)he did well; 2) the staff person adds other positives; 3) the student is asked for one thing (s)he would like to do differently; 4) the staff person makes one suggestion. This model forces students to evaluate themselves instead of passively relying on others for feedback. The student staff person was also responsible for helping start the role play and for stopping it before the exercise became too long to examine.

While we asked students to handle these situations in what was defined as an assertive manner, we made it clear that we were not dictating particular behaviors. Rather, these role plays gave them practice so they *could* behave assertively if they chose to. The only people who saw a person in a situation were the stimulus person and the student staff member. We decided it would be better to have students handle the situation without their team observing them in order to eliminate possible personal embarrassment for them, and also to free them from concern about assessment by their peers so they could concentrate on the task. While waiting outside the door for their turn to be assertive in the situation, the students clapped and cheered as each person entered and exited. To add an element of competition, students were rated on their assertiveness by the staff member. The team which collected the most assertive points was treated by the staff to a special gourmet dinner.

The obstacle course was extremely popular; many students asked to have it repeated so they could experience the other four situations. While we could not do this due to the lack of time, we did suggest that they create their own assertion obstacles and practice with each other. Many students helped their teammates practice the situations they had not been able to try.

At the end, all of the students gathered back in the main room. The staff quickly totaled the team's points and awarded first, second, and third prizes. The students were so excited about the experience that most of them stayed after class to tell their friends what had happened to them in each scene.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

The assertion obstacle course was our most complex instructional undertaking of the year. The staff needed to: identify assertion issues of relevance to freshmen; translate them into manageable scenes; set up each scene with outside stimulus people, props, and instructions; train the student staff in coaching; and communicate to freshmen what they were to do and when, where, and how they should do it.

This class needed to be very well organized, or it could have easily deteriorated into chaos with groups of students standing around bored or unsure of what to do. Several weeks before this class each staff person had a list of tasks ranging from "photocopying instructions for coaching" to "make sure the posts in the roadway are removed and the police are notified so the Volkswagon bus can be driven into the residence hall complex." The student staff members were magnificent; they each followed through on their organizational tasks and learned to be excellent coaches through practicing. They felt amply rewarded by the student responses; seeing individual behaviors change in a positive direction right in the practice situation due to their coaching, as well as hearing the overall excitement generated by the freshmen in response to the class.

Student interest and reported learning was so positive that we realized that the competitive element of prizes was not necessary. The task itself was rewarding. We also decided that the course should be offered over two classes so that students could experience all of the situations. (The assertion obstacle course is currently offered as part of a week-long orientation program for freshmen at UC Irvine: It has continued to be popular with student staff and the participants.) The most important parts of structuring this are training the stimulus person about how to respond in a way that makes the situation realistic, and training the coaches on how to structure the situation and give appropriate behavioral feedback.

Much of what we learned about effective teaching is detailed in the actual description of this class. The obstacle course gave students a chance to try out the concepts they had learned from the lectures, and to get individualized immediate feedback. Because the obstacle course was so

different in structure from previous experiences, and the situations carefully selected to fit freshmen, this was an extremely exciting class for students and staff.

### **Assertion Training Module Commentary**

The Assertion Training module was one of our most successful modules. Its length was a good balance between our perception of the students' needs and of their interest level. Students seemed to rate themselves as much more able to use assertion skills than their performance on the Obstacle Course showed. The sequencing of assessment, teaching the theory, and then practicing matched both our goals and the interest and needs of the students.

Assertion is important not only as an interpersonal skill but also for its impact on quality of thinking. The model we used emphasized the *rights* of others as well as the rights of oneself. Using this model of assertion necessitates some minimal level of empathy and social perspective taking. It also teaches that there is no "one right way to say it" and that the user must learn to think.

Assertion holds different appeals for people at different levels of moral reasoning (see Whiteley and Associates, 1982). One might choose to be assertive, "because it works and no one gets as mad at you as if you were aggressive," "because they will be more likely to be assertive back to you," "because good people do it," "because being assertive leads to a better quality relationship and a better chance at fairness for those concerned." We tried to include all of these reasons in the assertion presentations.

The staff would have devoted more class time to assertion training but they felt limited by the students' tolerance. However, in retrospect, expanding the Obstacle Course for a second class would have been positive for everyone. Even though this module was only three classes long, its goals, structure, content, and sequencing reflect some of our best thinking.

### **Sex Roles Module #6**

#### **Module Introduction**

For the Sex Roles module, our goal was to help students see the different stages of sex role development, to relate those stages to their own lives, and to assess their own personal sex role socialization. Freshmen usually do not tend to think about sex roles either in a global sense or in personal terms.

They are aware that men and women behave somewhat differently and, if questioned, they can list concrete differences. They have even more difficulty describing how sex roles develop, or observing the pervasive impacts of traditional sex-role stereotyping. They also have little awareness of sex role behavior as something that can be changed.

The Sex Roles Module was closely tied to issues of socialization. For this reason, sex roles could be presented in a separate module or subsumed under socialization. We chose to cover the particular aspects of male and female sex roles independently in two classes, one (W3) using the videotape developed for public television on sexism, *Going Past Go: An Essay on Sexism* (Public Television Library, 1977), and the other (W9) using the film *Men's Lives* (Hanig & Roberts, 1974). In addition, sex roles were touched on by the socialization panel (W2) and in several classes on male/female relationships (W7, W8) as noted below.

### **Class W3—Sexism Videotape**

#### **Goals and Overview**

This class was designed to demonstrate how sex roles influence an individual's socialization. We wanted the students to examine in a general way what behaviors were valued for males and females of different ages. The major goal was to have them learn about the general *process* of socialization by sex roles rather than to focus on specific issues ("Should women . . .?"). We also planned to avoid focusing on "women's rights" in this class, knowing that these freshmen as a group were quite conservative and traditional. We hoped to approach the topic of sex roles in a cognitive, non-emotional manner, viewing sex role socialization as a developmental process.

The vehicle we used was a videotape on sexism, *Going Past Go: An Essay on Sexism*, produced by the Public Television Library, (1977). The videotape itself focuses on sexism in the educational system. It shows children's text books with traditional male and female roles and describes sex-typed literature used in junior high and high schools. This was especially appropriate to use with freshmen. They were shown classroom materials which they had used in previous schooling from a new perspective. The tape confronted them with how pervasively (and often subtly) traditional sex role values were communicated.

In order to maximize the educational impact of the videotape, the students needed to be instructed about how to use this videotape as an

educational experience. Before showing the videotape on sexism, we gave a short presentation on how to watch an educational television program.

### **Delivery**

First, we tried to tie this class to the past week's class, the socialization panel, and to describe the evening's goals. The speaker said:

"Still pursuing the goal of seeing how we get to be the way we are, this class will elaborate on one particular aspect of socialization: sex-roles. The goal is for you to be able to see the different stages of development, both those which you have already passed through and those which are yet to come. Remember last week when some of you said the panel was helpful because you could see where you might be going? We want you to understand the more generalized view of socialization by sex roles and eventually begin to think about your own personal socialization and how it has affected the way you are today. You will be able to tie these general issues of development to yourself and to the people around you. Remember that sex roles are only one part of the whole process of socialization, of how individuals get to be the way they are." Next we discussed how and how not to watch an educational television show.

We pointed out that when watching "regular" television one just sits back and is entertained, and that while there was some entertainment value to this videotape, it certainly could not compete with current popular TV shows. They were asked instead to focus on the educational value of the show. Included in the presentation were suggestions that students: (1) actively seek the answers to certain questions while watching, (2) articulate their reactions to topics and statements; (3) avoid focusing on technical details; (4) address the overall message of the program, as opposed to being picky about any one comment or idea that they did not particularly like; (5) look for the *meaning* of the videotape and not at the acting within it; and, (6) take notes while watching the tape.

A very simple form was devised for students to use while taking notes. (We had discovered that an "official note taking form" results in more notes than simply saying, "Now take out some paper and take notes on this film." The form included: "Points or issues I agreed with," "Points or issues I disagreed with," "People or things that were similar to me," "What did I see as the overall theme of this film?" (remember there is no *right* answer),

“What was the biggest issue raised for me by the film?” “Why is this important to me?” “How would my parents have reacted to this film?”

After this “lecture,” students were given the forms and we showed the videotape. Then students formed small groups and were asked their general reactions. They then discussed what they thought was the overall theme? The leaders had several discussion questions:

1. What are the valued behaviors for males and females at different ages: childhood, early grades, freshmen in high school, senior in high school, early adulthood, middle age, old age?
2. How do these values and behaviors come to be? That is, what is the nature of the socialization process? What are the differential effects of family, peers, institutions, and the media?
3. What are the roles of individual choices and the expectations of others?
4. What would your parents’ position be on these issues? How does it happen that you and they have different/similar positions?

The questions were designed to help the students focus on the major issues of sex role socialization rather than to encourage debates on specific points such as whether children’s books should show women being more active and independent. After the small group discussions, staff announced that they were available if people were still interested in talking after class. Several students sought them out and continued the discussions. Student staff members reported that students continued to discuss sex roles during the next week, but that the discussion tended to be concrete rather than exploring the socialization process.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned?**

Preparing “official note-taking forms” and describing to the students how to watch an educational television program were effective instructional approaches. The students had something to focus on while watching the videotape; they knew what to look for rather than being asked to react to the entire presentation.

The videotape was helpful in attaining the instructional goal of introducing socialization in a factual but stimulating manner. While many of the staff felt strongly about the unfairness and oppression of traditional sex roles we believed that the freshmen needed a more general (and less biased) introduction. We were surprised (given all the media attention to women’s issues) that

this was their *first* discussion of the impact of sex roles for many of our students. It was an eye opener for them on (what we considered) very basic issues; e.g., that boys and girls are treated differently, have different expectations placed upon them, and different opportunities provided and therefore develop different attitudes and behaviors.

Although the students often laughed at the more blatant examples presented in the videotape, this was the first time many of them had observed or discussed how their sex-role choices had been influenced by their educational experiences. Many now expressed shock that “the schools can get away with using that textbook.” They looked back on their own education and tried to remember what the books said and depicted about men and women, boys and girls.

As was true during Fall Quarter, most students found it difficult to discuss abstract concepts (e.g., how institutions influenced socialization). Again and again, they returned to *concrete* detail (“Well, but women *are* more likely to be in the kitchen, so it’s okay to show that in books,” or “We didn’t use that book, we used \_\_\_\_\_”). From the staff’s point of view this often led to heated discussions on minor and unimportant points. The students had enjoyed themselves in this class while the staff became quite frustrated. We wanted the students to focus on and be able to understand the concept of sex-role socialization.

Another frustration was over the student’s seeming inability to relate these concepts to their *own* lives. They could see that men and women were different in some ways and could (vaguely) understand that families and institutions influenced these differences. They would not see how sex-role socialization affected them personally.

## **Class W9—Men’s Lives Film**

### **Goals and Overviews**

Sex roles have received the most publicity related to women. The general goal of this class was to increase understanding of the impact of socialization on *men*; what factors influence men to become the way they are. The film *Men’s Lives* (Hanig & Roberts, 1974) was used as a stimulus. This film examines the influence of socialization on men, how they develop sex roles, and the benefits and liabilities of these roles. In the film series people are interviewed and scenes of sex-role socialization

are depicted. We wanted the students to be able to understand the perspectives of the different characters in the film regardless of whether or not they agreed with them. We hoped this understanding would include why the characters were the way they were, and what would happen if the characters tried to change. We also wanted the students to consider general sex-role issues raised for men including: competition, pressures to “succeed,” risks of showing emotions, and rules for relationships. Our goal in this class was to have the students think about sex roles and relationships from the point of view of others, a task which is both more distant and abstract as a prelude to them applying these issues to their own lives.

This class was presented at the end of two academic quarters and, in addition to the content goals, there was a major *process* goal: that the students would use what they had learned through the earlier classes. This included empathy and social perspective taking, knowledge about socialization in general, conflict resolution skills, and assertion training.

### Delivery

At the start of class students were given a handout and told: “Tonight we are going to see a film that was made by two men in their early twenties. Josh and Will grew up in the Midwest and made this film in an effort to examine the roots of becoming men — how men’s sex roles are acquired. On this sheet is a list of many of the characters in the film and their main points of view. As you watch the film, focus especially on the two characters that are on your sheet. You may also focus on any other characters that appeal to you. Try to assess the attitudes of your characters on:

- What it is like to be a man
- Competition
- Success
- Men showing emotions
- Responsibility and decisions making in the family

Also consider:

- Why are these people the way they are?
- How did they get to be that way?
- Why don’t they change?

—What would they have to give up if they changed? What would happen?”

“After the film you will be in a small group to discuss these questions, trying to understand the different points of view presented in the film.”

This structure was provided to give students an understanding of what would be asked of them after viewing the film. It also helped structure their viewing of this educational film, preventing them from sitting back and being passively entertained.

Students received a sheet containing a two-sentence summary of the point of view of twelve major characters from the film. Before class, the staff had circled two characters on each sheet insuring that all characters had equal numbers of observers, and that each student was assigned one character who appeared early in the film and one who appeared near the end. Students were to watch and try to identify with the characters circled on their sheet. As the film was showing and a new character appeared, students with that character tended to reach with “Oh, he’s *mine!*” “There he is!”

When the film was over, students spent twenty minutes in groups with the others assigned to their same character. This way, for example, they met with all the other “high school dancer” or “Black basketball coach” characters. They were asked to discuss “themselves” and to reach a consensus on what that character was like and why. The intent was for them to fully explore the point of view of their character before having to relay that perspective to the rest of the class. The staff forced the students to concentrate on the questions from the sheet, though initially the students wanted to talk about the film as a whole.

Next, the students formed new small groups for a role-play exercise in which each character was represented. The assignment was to imagine that all the characters were getting together and having a discussion. *In character*, the group was to discuss what the lives of these different men were like, how they had come to be the way they were, and the pressures and rewards they experienced. Students were also given signs saying “ME” or “(character)” to allow them to express either their own point of view or a “character’s” point of view. This helped everyone know *whose* perspective was being presented and allowed students to present their character’s perspective without worrying about the other students’ reactions. Often, they even adopted the character’s style when voicing an opinion, and many students found themselves understanding the character so well that they were staunchly defending a position that they (in their own life) totally opposed.

Before the small group role-play/discussion, they were also told, "Just as the people in the film had different points of view, so will different people in your group. We hope you will also think about: How did the students in your group get to be the way they are?" and "What makes your opinions valid for you?" After the group discussions, students were told that if anyone was interested one of the staff would be available later in the week for a structured, continued discussion of sex roles.

In general, the students seemed fascinated by the new perspectives their characters gave them, but found it difficult to generalize about sex roles or to relate this perspective to their own lives.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Assigning characters from the film to watch for and providing specific questions to be answered was very helpful in focusing the students' attention. Again, we knew that simply telling them to watch the film and be ready for a discussion later would not have worked as well. These students had grown up watching television and movies and their typical response to educational films was to sit back and wait to be entertained. Having been assigned their own "characters" gave them an investment in the process and allowed them to be more actively involved.

In the previous year, the students had divided into groups to role play their different characters immediately following the film. The "like characters" had no chance to interact with each other first and to consolidate their impressions of the characters. Without this chance to discuss their characters among themselves, many students floundered and lost a sense of their characters in the mixed group. The "like-character" groups also created a strong identification with, and appreciation for, the characters.

Even though the *Men's Lives* film is now a decade old and the mid-western setting seemed strange to our California freshmen, it does provide an excellent presentation of basic issues in the sex-role socialization of men.

### **Sex Roles Module Commentary**

Before undertaking this module, it was important for the staff to discuss their own conceptions of sex roles. From the descriptions of the classes, it is probably obvious that we saw the traditional sex roles as limiting and stress-inducing. The staff viewed a healthy adult in our society as more androgynous, possessing positive traits typically associated with men *and* with women (Bem, 1974; Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1974a, 1974b). The

beliefs of the staff certainly influenced goals for these classes. The intent was to help students recognize the pressures and limits of traditional sex roles and, at a minimum, to understand how the process of socialization by gender had affected them.

We considered it necessary to inform students about the biases of both the professional and student staff as well as communicating some of the negative aspects and consequences of becoming more androgynous. For example, in *Men's Lives*, one character was a male ballet dancer/gymnast who was a high school student. He described how other people (especially boys his age) criticized him for not conforming to acceptable male adolescent roles. Another example cited in class was the potential consequence for freshmen women students asking directly for dates. They certainly would be likely to encounter men who did not find this appealing or acceptable behavior.

Traditional sex roles create a pattern of predictable behavior and consistent expectations among people of both sexes even though they are personally limiting and can be stress-producing. Changing sex role behavior from what is acceptable in one's current environment may not be immediately (or ever) rewarded, and students needed to be told that initially. It is probably much easier for a 32 year-old divorced woman with a Ph.D. and many options open to her, to adopt behavior that is traditionally male than it is for an 18 year-old single woman living with her peers at a university where most students are from middle-class, politically conservative families.

In the first year of the Sierra Project, freshmen were interested in sex roles, but became bored with the topic after about four weeks. This year with the Class of 1981 the Sex Roles Module was shortened and the two particular sex role classes were separated in time, giving the students a chance to consider men's and women's issues separately. Both years we realized that these groups of freshmen were not especially aware of women's issues. We had expected that with heightened media focus on sexism, this topic might be unnecessary. On the contrary, both women and men seemed to find the issue interesting, challenging, and informative.

The staff members were so keenly aware of sex role issues (perhaps this was a factor in selection?) that we were all surprised how unaware and unconcerned the freshmen were initially. We were unsure whether this was due to their age, their largely conservative background, or, in some cases, their cultural background. We constantly heard comments like, "Well, I'd never let *my* wife work," or "She could do volunteer work, but I'll support my family." We tried to point out to these male students that this would be an important factor to discuss before marriage, and that most of the women

they were now dating were unlikely to be interested in a partnership which contained this restriction. The students seemed to think these things “would just work out after they got married.”

When discussing sex roles in the small groups, the staff had an especially difficult time keeping students on *major* issues in the small groups. The freshmen were inclined to engage in extended and heated discussions of topics like, “Should the man open the car door on a date?” instead of focusing on more pervasive issues of sex role socialization. For example, freshmen considered sexism in the work world and the pressure on men to achieve and perform to be irrelevant issues. The student staff continually related the issues raised back to underlying sex role socialization. When a female student talked about a man she was interested in dating, a student staff member pointed out how her socialization prevented her from asking him directly; consequently limiting her choices and behavior. When a tall male student did not want to play on the Sierra Hall basketball team, the staff talked with him about the pressures on men to live up to a certain image.

While these two classes on sex roles helped students see the different stages of sex-role development, they did not seem to stimulate them to relate this to *major* aspects of their own lives or to rethink their views of sex role socialization. At this point the staff needed to remind each other that it was difficult for most of the freshmen to think abstractly, and that it was certainly all right if the students had different points of view than the staff. Even though its impact was not as extensive as we had hoped, we would still present this module in basically the same manner in the future.

## **Class W10—Evaluation**

### **Goals and Overview**

In this brief class students were to 1) fill out a written evaluation of the classes for Winter Quarter, 2) have the opportunity to discuss these classes and make suggestions, and 3) hear an introduction to the Spring Quarter class.

### **Delivery**

First students completed a detailed written evaluation for the Winter Quarter classes. They rated each class on its level of interest to them and on how useful or helpful it had been. There was space provided for open-

ended comments and what they liked most and least about every class. They also commented about the quarter as a whole and about their Triple I-D groups. A copy of the evaluation appears in Appendix B.

While in Fall Quarter an outside person had been brought in to conduct a structured discussion, in Winter Quarter one of the staff simply asked the group: "Well, since you have just filled out the evaluations and are thinking about the class, tell us what you thought of it: What did you like and what suggestions do you have for us?" This reflects our shift to less structure and to more responsibility placed on students during Winter Quarter. Generally students commented they liked their Triple I-D groups and also liked the fact that the class only met one evening per week which left them more time to study. They had been interested in the classes for the quarter, but had a difficult time seeing how these classes fit together into any organized whole. They still did not understand the concepts from developmental theory that had been presented.

Next students heard a description of the Spring Quarter curriculum. The class would continue to meet one night per week and students would remain in the same Triple I-D groups but they could pick new meeting times. Field study would continue to be offered, and students who had participated in it in Winter Quarter could continue. In addition, any students who wanted to begin field studies in the Spring were asked to contact the field study coordinator. Within the classes they would hear more about self- and developmental-theories, would look intensively at issues of race roles, and the rest of the quarter would be devoted to the presentations of their own Triple I-D group. Finally, the class voted on the night for the class to meet in Spring Quarter.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

Filling out the written evaluation first enabled the students to review each class and the quarter as a whole in their minds before the discussion. This helped them make comments which were clear, direct, and to the point. We were especially glad that they reacted to the quarter as a whole, and asked us for more clarification of our goals and our reasons for presenting specific classes.

Even before this evaluation, the staff had been aware that students still did not understand self- and developmental-theory and had planned to offer two more classes aimed at helping the students understand and apply these concepts. The students said in their evaluation that this had been confusing. We told them they would have another chance to understand it.

They felt at that point that the staff had really been paying attention to them and truly cared about what they were learning.

### **WINTER QUARTER COMMENTARY**

Winter Quarter had been much less structured than Fall Quarter. The students had spent one evening per week in class and had met with their small discussion group (Triple I-D group) at the time of their choice during the week. Within these small groups, the leader and group members could decide weekly topics for discussion. The only rule that applied to the small groups was that they must prepare one class session to deliver to the whole group. The beginning of the quarter focused on socialization. Then the Sex Roles and Assertion Modules were introduced, these frequently overlapped with the Socialization Module. In Fall Quarter there had been a clear distinction between modules (with the exception of the Community Building Module) while in Winter Quarter it was less clear where one module stopped and another one started.

This change in structure sometimes meant less clarity for the students. They frequently were not sure what they were being asked to learn or to experience. Within the Triple I-D groups, student staff reported that the students spent quite a bit of time trying to decide what to talk about and often asked the student staff person to decide for them. The staff had been forewarned about this possibility. They refused to decide for the group, but they did offer some structure such as, "Let's make a list of topics that people are interested in, including topics related to what is being presented in class. Then we can decide each week what the next week's topic will be so we don't waste so much time at the beginning of every session. Of course, if someone has another idea when we get together, the group could decide to use that topic instead. How does that sound?" This provided the students enough structure to allow them to use the group time well.

Because of the freedom allowed to these Triple I-D groups, each group worked very differently. Some groups simply discussed a topic related to the class each week. Others focused on getting to know each other (and recognizing similarities and differences). Because there had been so much emphasis on socialization in class, one group decided to go to the homes of several group members, meet their families, see their neighborhoods, and generally try to imagine what it must have been like growing up in that setting. (Remember that over 90% of the students came from Orange or Los Angeles County). Then they discussed what it was they had observed about the home environment that might have made that person what they

currently were. (Most of the parents became quite involved, making a meal for the group, and generally seeming pleased that their child was bringing home college friends.) Each Triple I-D group was ethnically diverse and by going to other group members' homes, many students were seeing an area and a living situation they had never been exposed to before. Another example of the creativity shown by students was in an all-women's Triple I-D group. These women decided to watch a pornographic movie being shown on campus and then came back and discussed what image of women (and men) was shown and what impact seeing films like that might have. When groups participated in experiences like visiting each other's homes or seeing films together, they spent well beyond the required two hours per week in their group.

The student staff were able to help students provide more definition to what constituted "educational" experiences. Sometimes students would say "Well, let's all go see a (currently popular) movie together." The staff person would point out that while it might be fun, it really did not fit under the rules for Triple I-D groups; the group could go to the movie together but it would not count as class time.

The Community Building Module was not addressed formally during Winter Quarter. Clearly though, class activities had a positive impact on continuing to build and maintain the psychological sense of community which had developed initially. The Triple I-D groups allowed students to get to know eight others quite well. Classes on assertion gave them skills to deal more effectively with each other in their day-to-day living. Focus on sex roles and on socialization (hopefully) helped them be more respectful to those who were different than themselves. Looking at relationships and relationship choices may have made them more actively aware of the relationships they were forming and wanted to form within the dormitory. Community was built and supported through the process of class delivery and through some of the content.

By Winter Quarter, students were less "obedient." This meant they asked more questions, stated their opinions when they were different than the staff's, and some also tested the limits in class on a regular basis (e.g., by reading the newspaper or a book and then waiting to see what the staff would do). While it may be easier to "teach" a docile group, as students became less obedient, many of them increased their level of energy and of active participation which certainly made teaching more stimulating. Again, helping students take a more active role in their education requires the staff to walk a fine line between too much and too little structure. The students continued using their skills for listening in small groups, and were quite

respectful and attentive to each other. When things got “out of hand” in a discussion, students were just as likely as staff to tell others to “listen-up” (a favorite student expression). They were still generally concrete thinkers who would think abstractly only under pressure from the staff through a set of carefully phrased questions. With a few exceptions, the students identified strongly with Sierra Hall. They even designed and bought matching T-shirts which they frequently wore to class or to dormitory events. (One year the T-shirt read “Sierra – the dorm with class.”)

Having the formal portion of the curriculum delivered only two hours per week greatly reduced for the staff the amount of preparation and thinking time involved in the class. More time could be devoted in the curriculum planning meetings to discussing how the Triple I-D groups were going and to talking about staff concerns. For the student staff, the most difficult task of Winter Quarter was helping the Triple I-D groups start. They wanted to help the students make the group an educational experience, but did not really want to be the group “leaders.” They did know, however, that they were ultimately responsible for keeping the group on track. By having two student staff members in each group, they could share responsibility and could also talk with each other about how to best handle situations that arose.

Goals for the Winter Quarter had included understanding socialization and sex roles and how these concepts apply to themselves, seeing themselves in a developmental process and beginning to be more self directed. Students did understand the concrete examples given, and could apply these to their own lives. They still did not really understand the more abstract concepts of socialization, and were not thinking in developmental terms. Realizing this, the staff designed classes for the beginning of Spring Quarter to address these issues.

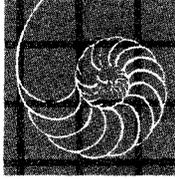
Overall, Winter Quarter went quite well. Both staff and students seemed to be enjoying much of the class, and the students were more actively involved. One suggestion to ourselves was to give the students a much clearer explanation of how the modules overlapped and of the goals for each module as well as for each class.

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## **SPRING QUARTER CURRICULUM**

*Janet Clark Loxley*

The major Sierra Project goals for Spring Quarter were for the freshmen to: learn how ethnicity is related to socialization and how it affects current beliefs, values, and behaviors; experience a more active role in shaping their education through class planning; begin future life planning; and evaluate the Sierra experience and the relationships they had developed. We also wanted to provide closure for the year's experiences.

The spring format remained similar to that of winter. Students met each week for two hours in the large group and for two hours in their Triple I-D groups. The option of field study through community service continued during Spring Quarter. The classes covered parts of four modules: Socialization, Life and Career Planning, Race Roles, and Community Building. The major focus of spring was the classes planned by each Triple I-D group. These student-planned classes were considered part of the Community Building module because of the interaction and cooperation required for class preparation and delivery. As in Winter Quarter, many classes contributed to more than one module; there was not the clear distinction between modules that had been present in Fall Quarter. Table 7.1 reveals the sequence of classes during Spring Quarter and connects the theme of each class to its appropriate module or modules.

During Winter and Spring quarters, each Triple I-D group (see Chapter 6 for a discussion of Triple I-D groups) was asked to take responsibility for the planning and delivery of a class. This assignment raised the instructional problem of how to structure student involvement so that the experience would be an educational one for both the presenters and the recipients. The first year we had provided very little structure. The consequence was student-planned classes which ranged from a demonstration of hypnosis to

Table 7.1

**SCHEDULE OF SPRING QUARTER CLASSES**

<i>Class Session</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Module</i>
S1	Self Theory	Socialization
S2	Myrdal Interview	Socialization Community Building (Student-planned Class)
S3	Self-theory Exercises	Socialization
S4	Racial Values and Their Development	Race Roles
S5	Racial Values and Their Development	Race Roles
S6	Journal-keeping Presentation	Community Building (Student-planned Class)
S7	Sexuality Panels	Community Building (Student-planned Class) Sex Roles
S8	Interviews on Religion and Patriotism	Community Building Socialization (Student-planned Class)
	Decision-Making	Life and Career Planning
S9	Women's Health Care Issues Relationships	Community Building (Student-planned Classes)
S10	Evaluation and Saying Goodbye	Community Building

a talent/no talent night where students performed entertaining acts. For the latter, the group's stated goal was to bring students closer together and to experience sharing interests with each other. While this goal was accomplished, the staff had expected something of a more educational nature. While the students had been involved in shaping their education (or at least what happened in that class), the staff learned a significant lesson; namely, that student planned classes required much more structure than had been provided.

During the second year of the Sierra Project with the Class of 1980, much more structure was offered by saying (“We want your group to plan a class that relates to one of the following issues . . . ,”), then students received a list of topics to choose from with the option that they could choose another topic with our approval. Topics offered included assertion, racial issues, socialization, sex roles, freshman concerns, education, values, relationships, and planning.

As significant progress from the previous year, classes developed by the class of 1980 included: effective journal keeping, types of intimate relationships, women’s health care issues, religion and patriotism, human sexuality, and an interview with a mature couple.

The structure provided by the staff kept the student-planned classes in line with overall instructional goals for the year. Students also wasted less time trying to decide *what* topic to present and therefore were able to use that time planning *how* to define and present it. They frequently commented that they had not realized how difficult it was to engage in class planning. Several students suggested that we have freshmen in subsequent years plan some classes early in the year so they would be more appreciative of our presentations and experience another opportunity for perspective taking. Spring Quarter was chosen because we thought the students would be more at ease personally, and more attentive and respectful to each other. We also thought their skill level for planning and delivering a class would be better, an assessment which turned out to be correct.

Sequencing of six of the ten classes within Spring Quarter was more random than in Fall or Winter Quarters where there was a carefully planned order. The two classes on self theory (S1 and S3) were scheduled near the beginning of the quarter since they were designed to finish the socialization module from Winter Quarter. The two race roles classes (S4 and S5) were also to be offered in the first half of the quarter and on adjourning weeks (since one flowed into the next). This left the students at least six weeks to plan and present a class on what they learned. Students were told what dates were available and the Triple I-D groups chose dates with comments such as, “Let’s get it over with, we’ll go first” or “We need all the time we can get, let’s wait.”

## **SOCIALIZATION MODULE #5**

The Socialization Module began in Winter Quarter with classes on developmental theory, life styles, and relationships. The goal of the module was to help students recognize the factors that had shaped their own

development and the development of those around them. From understanding the socialization process, students would recognize more of the options open to them, and develop a belief that they could have an impact on their *own* process of socialization. In Spring Quarter there was a special focus on self theory; understanding how people's perception of themselves is involved in an interactive process with the environment and with other people. Three classes contributed to the Socialization module in Spring Quarter: a lecture on self theory (S1), an interview by a Triple I-D group with Nobel Prize winners Gunnar and Alva Myrdal (S2), and three exercises related to self theory (S3). In addition, the two classes in the Race Role Module (S4 and S5) were clearly related to the intents of the Socialization Module. While the other classes presented by Triple I-D groups are described in the Community Building Module, several also overlap with Socialization; the panel on sexuality (S7), interviews with people of different ages on religion and patriotism (S8), and a skit and discussions about relationships (S9). The theme and goals of the Socialization Module clearly dominated Spring Quarter.

### **Class S1—Self-Theory**

#### **Goals and Overview**

During Winter Quarter a lecture on developmental theory had been presented by one of UCI's faculty members. As discussed previously, few of the students understood this lecture and virtually none were able to apply it to themselves. Because understanding developmental theory would aid in understanding the socialization process, this concept was presented again, incorporating suggestions from Winter Quarter's presentation. The instructional goal was for students to see how people change throughout their life span.

#### **Delivery**

A student member presented an initial 20 minute lecture on life-span developmental theory based loosely on Erikson (Erikson, 1968). The intent was to communicate to the students that their task was to learn as much as possible about themselves, their development, and how they see the world. Looking at people and theories outside of themselves was described as part of that learning process. This lecture was followed by an opportunity for students to ask questions.

## **Instructional Problems and What We Learned**

This class was conducted in a lecture format, although with more student interaction than had occurred in the Winter Quarter lecture on human development. Many of the students still said it “went over their heads.” This was puzzling given how bright this group was and how well most of them were doing in an academically rigorous university. Our hypothesis was that they were not accustomed to thinking on a theoretical level about personal development, nor were they used to a lecture format in this class. They also did not have an accompanying textbook to which they could refer. (Frequently in regular classes when the lectures are unclear, a complementary text helps students understand the concepts.) Suggestions for better delivery will be found in the commentary on the Socialization Module in this chapter.

### **Class S2—Myrdal Interview**

#### **Goals and Overview**

This class was the first student-planned class to be offered. As mentioned before, student-planned classes were seen as part of the Community Building Module but this one was also clearly tied to the Socialization Module. The students’ goals included: showing models of two people who were successful at their own careers and at their marriage; exposing students to people who were from a different culture and who had dedicated themselves to helping others; and stimulating thinking on controversial topics.

#### **Delivery**

After choosing socialization as their general topic, a Triple I-D group interviewed Gunnar Myrdal, an internationally known economist and Nobel Prize winner, and Alva Myrdal, a former member of the Swedish Parliament and soon to be Nobel Prize winner. At the time of the interview both were in their seventies. The students prepared a series of questions and gave these to the Myrdals. After seeing the questions, the Myrdals consented to have a videotape made of them in which the students would ask them these questions.

After the Triple I-D group had made the videotape, they planned how to use it in class. Before the tape was shown, they explained to the class who the Myrdals were, how each was an accomplished and famous person from

Sweden, and how they were also a married couple who had spent most of their lives together and had raised a family.

Then they asked students to watch the video-tape and take notes on any issues that impressed them. The students heard that after the video-tape, discussion groups would be formed on topics of interest. On the video-tape, the Triple I-D group members asked the following prepared questions:

1. How do you keep changing—avoid falling into traps and not changing.
2. How do you view the future?
3. Socialization: How did you get the way you are?
4. For what reasons did you choose your career?
5. What is the purpose of life?
6. How do you keep the balance in your dichotomy; future *vs* present, realism *vs* idealism?
7. What made you decide to go into a potential career (uncommon for women) and how did you face the prejudices against you?
8. What is your philosophy on life and how did the many environments you were in help mold you?
9. What advice would you give us to structure our lives?
10. In this culture we are now becoming aware of the way we treat elderly people. How are older people treated in Sweden? How can we as young people learn from older people, and what can this society do for older people.
11. What one thing would you change about your life if you could live it over?
12. How has your exposure to different cultures and environments affected your view of the world? How have you adjusted to the tremendous changes you have seen in your life?

These were very thoughtful questions which covered a wide range of issues that had already been presented in classes on socialization, values, and sex roles. Students listened *very* attentively. After watching the interview, the questions were used as the basis for discussion groups led by Triple I-D group members. These topics included disarmament; racial relations on a personal, societal, and international level; elderly people and changes in life and relationships; especially how to maintain long, happy marriages.

Students chose their own groups and most discussions went well beyond the class time.

### **Instructional Problems and What We Learned?**

A University staff member who knew about the Sierra class knew that Gunnar and Alva Myrdal were to be in the area and helped the students make contact with them. This was a priceless opportunity for the students, who were fascinated by each of the Myrdals. The difference in age and in cultural background made clear many of the points previously presented about life-span, human development and the socialization process in general.

Having the students generate questions before the interview (which had been done at the Myrdals' request) allowed for questions with much more depth. The students spent several hours thinking about what they might want to know, then constructed probing — yet respectful — questions clearly tied to the goals of the class. In addition, in the process of creating these questions many of the students realized that they themselves did not have the answers and were provoked into self-examination.

The enthusiasm of the Triple I-D group members for the Myrdals and for this project was apparent to the whole class. The entire group listened respectfully. By using a videotape format, the student presenters had a chance to think about how they wanted to involve the class after the tape was made.

Rather than having students discuss the tape itself or the Myrdals, we chose to hold a discussion after the video-tape where students were asked to discuss controversial topics generated by the tape. Within each group, students included comments about what the Myrdals had said, or what they had learned from viewing the tape. The level of moral reasoning exhibited by the Myrdals was consistently quite high, and their presence was felt in the discussion group. They were marvelous role models and stimulated the students' thinking. Choosing controversial topics resulted in thoughtful and heated discussions. The video-tape itself had given students much more insight into life-span human development than had the two lectures!

### **Class S3— Self-theory Exercises**

#### **Goals and Overview**

Self theory had been presented in two lectures (S1 and W1). Students had remarked that both lectures had “gone over their heads.” This class was

designed to present the concepts in a more concrete way and then to relate them back to a more abstract theory. The general goal was to illustrate how people's perceptions of themselves and the world develop over the life span, and how they are influenced by experiences with the environment and with other people. This was congruent with our goals for the Socialization Module: that the students understand who they are and how they came to be that way. In this class, students participated in three different exercises: seeing how the behavior of others affects their own behavior and self-perception, examining several popular songs and deciding about the writer's self-perception and view of the world, and receiving feedback on how they were perceived by others. With the description of each exercise, specific goals will be elaborated.

### **Delivery**

The group was told that they would be participating in three exercises designed to help them understand self theory. The first two were to be done in small groups and the last with the whole group. The first exercise was designed by a freshman in the class who had been concerned about students not understanding self theory. It was intended to communicate how treatment by peers affects one's own feelings and behavior, to illustrate the impact of one's perceptions of others on their behavior, and more generally, to initiate thinking about how one's behavior and self-perception are affected by experiences with those in the surrounding environment (part of the socialization process).

Students were divided into groups of eight and each had a gummed label stuck on his/her forehead. They were told that they would be involved in a group discussion on assigned topics and that during the discussion they were to treat each person according to the instructions on their label. (Labels included: IGNORE ME, AGREE WITH ME, TREAT ME AS A LEADER, ARGUE WITH ME, LISTEN ATTENTIVELY TO ME.) The students were not to know what their own labels said. They were told the goal was not to guess the label; rather, they were to observe what they learned about themselves from the way they were treated by others, and how their own behavior affected others.

After the labels were in place, they were given fifteen minutes to discuss one of the following topics: (Most groups ended up talking about at least two topics in this time period.)

- (1) What is there to do at UCI?

- (2) What activities do I enjoy the most?
- (3) Is it right or wrong to smoke dope?
- (4) Should religious groups be allowed to recruit members on campus?

Even while deciding which topics to pick, the assignment was to interact with each other according to roles. The labels did seem to have an effect. Those labelled "IGNORE ME" typically tried hard to stay in the discussion but finally gave up stating their own ideas, continuing to treat others in the "appropriate" manner. "ARGUE WITH ME's" tended to become angry and louder. The other three labels (AGREE, LEADER AND LISTEN) seemed to produce wearers who talked more. (Remember that they did not know their own labels.)

After their "discussion," the students were asked to answer the following questions according to how each of them had felt personally:

How did I react to the way I was treated?

What were my feelings, my thoughts?

What did I do?

Did my behavior change?

How did the way other people treat me affect the way I felt about myself?

How did I feel about treating others according to their labels?

How did the way I treat others affect their behavior?

The questions were intended to stimulate thinking about the ways in which individual behavior and one's experience of oneself is shaped or affected by experiences with those in the surrounding environment. Then students were asked how they thought this fifteen-minute exercise (which had had a demonstrable effect on some of their behaviors and perceptions) might be reflective of the socialization process in general.

The second exercise involved examining the music of several popular songwriters as an indication of their self theories. The intent of this exercise was to provide an opportunity for freshmen to examine someone other than themselves or their immediate peers, and to try to determine how those people perceived themselves and their world. By doing this for someone distant from themselves, it was hoped that they would learn a process for discovering the self-theory of others, and a process of analysis that subsequently they might be able to apply to themselves.

In their groups of eight, the freshmen received copies of the lyrics and heard the following four songs:

“Where You Lead,” by Carol King; “At Seventeen,” by Janis Ian; “Don’t Stop,” by Christine McVie of Fleetwood Mac; and “That’s the Way I’ve Always Heard it Should Be,” by Carley Simon and Jacob Brackman.

These songs were already known to most of the students. (Remember, it was 1977.) Students were asked to decide each writer’s position on the following points:

Optimistic versus pessimistic, internally controlled versus externally controlled, dominant versus submissive, male versus female, and intrapersonal versus societal viewpoint.

They were asked to describe how each songwriter felt about him/herself and about the world in general. This exercise interested many of the students who had never stopped to consider that songwriters’ personalities and beliefs might be reflected in their work. The role of the student staff person in the group was to keep the students on the topic.

The third exercise involved the entire class meeting as a group. Students were instructed to choose adjectives to be used to describe themselves, and to describe other students in the class. During the exercise, the adjectives would be handed out. The information gained from this activity was then to be related to one’s sense of self, how it had developed, and what experiences served to maintain it.

First students were given a blank sheet of paper and asked to write five to ten “I am \_\_\_\_\_” statements (e.g., “I am *a woman*,” “I am *tall*,” “I am *funny*”). We purposely gave minimal instructions so their responses would not be limited. Next each student received fifteen gummed labels (2" × 3"). They were told to write the following adjectives on ten separate labels: trustworthy, intelligent, humorous, friendly, sensitive, sexy, dominant, responsible, interesting and open. They were to choose the adjectives for the last five labels with only one restriction, the adjectives must be positive.

Students were reminded that they knew each other quite well, and using that knowledge, they were to find the person each adjective fit best and put that adjective on that person’s back. All the students stood up and began

milling around the room, looking at the adjectives, at the other people, and placing the labels on others' backs. This maintained the anonymity of the giver *and* allowed all students to stay focused on their *giving* role since they could not see any of the labels they were being given. This process took about ten to fifteen minutes to complete. In this time 675 labels (45 people with 15 labels each) were distributed. Some students received 25 or 30 labels while a few had only three or four. (The student staff made it a point to distribute appropriate labels to students who were receiving very few.)

Once all the labels were distributed, students sat down and (with assistance) removed all their own labels. Reactions were varied: neutral, mildly pleased, disbelief, excitement, confusion. Students broke into groups of about 15 and were each given a chance to tell the group what labels they had received and what their reactions to them had been. Then they were asked the following questions:

How did people seem to perceive you?

How does this compare with how you perceive yourself?

If you don't understand some of the labels, ask other group members about their perceptions of you.

What labels would you have most liked to have received?

Why did or why didn't you get those?

How could you change so that people might perceive you the way you would like?

Why do you care what others think?

Do you think that you received the labels on the basis of race or sex?

Have you gotten feedback on some of your more positive qualities?

How could you receive and give information about qualities that are not so positive . . . perhaps in your Triple I-D group?

These questions related to the socialization issues of: Who are you? What is your sense of self? How did this develop?

### **Instructional Problems and Resources**

In the first exercise (forehead labels) the students should have been instructed to be subtle in their responses to others. Without this instruction, it became easy for the students to guess their own labels (which most of

them did). Also fifteen minutes was too long. A ten-minute discussion where students were asked to be as subtle as they could, would be more effective. Modeling, for example, showing the difference between ignoring someone in an obvious manner (no eye contact, interrupt them) and a subtle manner (vague eye contact, neutral facial expression, moving on to someone else without comment when the speaker has finished) would also be helpful.

During the discussion students had a difficult time moving away from concrete detail. They wanted to talk about, "Who said and did what to whom when" while the instructional goal was to increase their understanding of the impact of treatment of others on one's self perception. The student staff leaders gave them some time to talk about the concrete details initially, then continually brought the discussion back to the issues and questions which matched the goals for the class. Leaders of this exercise need to remember the distinctions between concrete and abstract thinking, and help the group members do the same.

Exercise two (analysis of songs and songwriters) went well and did not present any instructional problems. It would be important to pick more current songs or songs known by many of the participants as this seemed to increase their interest greatly. The student staff was invaluable for this as a resource for choosing relevant songs. (Left to the professional staff, the songs chosen might have been "slightly" out-of-date.) Also, choosing songs popular to the different ethnic groups represented would add another level of contrast (e.g., to compare a late '70's popular Black female songwriter's view of relationships with that of Joni Mitchell's).

The same problem with concrete thinking emerged. Students would comment "well in line 14 she says '\_\_\_\_\_'" and the leader would have to ask, "And how does that fit her perception of \_\_\_\_\_?"

Exercise three (stickers on the back) proved to be a good vehicle for helping students give each other feedback and comparing or contrasting their self-perceptions with others' comments. It could have been tied together even better by having the students put all the information on a form like:

*My Descriptions of Myself:*

I am _____	I am _____
I am _____	I am _____
I am _____	I am _____
I am _____	I am _____

*Adjectives Others Used to Describe Me:**Additional Comments They Made in the Small Group:**My Conclusions:*


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This class would be best started by explaining that the intent of the three exercises was to further understand about how people perceive themselves, *and* how the response they receive from the external world affects these self-perceptions. Each exercise contributes to the overall goal for the class.

After all three exercises had been completed participants would be asked:

What did you learn about yourself? — not specific details or adjectives, but about how you perceive yourself and how this is influenced by others?

What did you learn about self theory?

How would you define self theory?

What questions were raised (especially in the song analysis exercise) that you find unanswered in yourself?

How does this class fit into the Socialization Module?

**Socialization Module Commentary**

The classes contributing to the Socialization Module in Spring Quarter had focused mainly on perceptions of self, its development, and its relationship

to behavior. In Winter Quarter the module had examined developmental theory, lifestyles and relationships. The general goal was to help students understand the socialization process, how people become the way they are, and how internal and external factors influence this process. This module contributed to one of the year-long project goals: Students becoming aware of those factors over which they had some control and beginning to shift to a more active approach to life.

By the end of the year the Socialization Module had contributed to the following desired outcomes: 1) students were more aware of the options available to them, especially within lifestyle and relationships, 2) they were beginning to realize there was “no one right way” to live; 3) they realized they could still like and respect those who had been socialized differently than they; 4) they could identify blatant and subtle pressures involved in the socialization process; 5) they were aware that gender, race, religion, family, friends, etc., had a significant impact on them and on those around them. In general, students were quite able to describe themselves and others in a concrete manner and to relate that to the ways they had grown up.

On the other hand, the students continually had difficulty with more theoretical or abstract descriptions of the socialization process. They could not describe developmental stages and relate these to themselves or to others. This is reflective of the freshmen in general. By the end of the year many were still concrete thinkers and found abstraction difficult.

The class with three exercises on self theory would have been a good *introduction* to self-theory. It could have been followed by a description of the stages of human development, identifying key issues at each stage and relating them back to themes that emerged in class. For example, Janis Ian’s song (“At Seventeen”) traces several major issues of development. The two labeling exercises illustrated how our sense of self is influenced by the socialization process. Using this class as an introduction to socialization would be especially effective if the purpose were carefully explained to the students at the start:

Tonight we are going to do three exercises. While each will be interesting and have value in and of itself, we also want you to be thinking of each exercise in a larger context. As people age and mature, they face different issues at different times. For example, small children learn to take care of themselves by dressing themselves and getting beyond diapers. All of you are learning to live away from your own families. Your sex, race, family, people around you, and other factors certainly influence *what* issues you deal with and how you feel about

yourself in the process. During the exercises, we would like you to be thinking about, “What are major issues in people’s lives as they grow?” “What are major issues in my life now?” “How do I perceive myself?” “How did I come to be this way?” and “How am I influenced by others?”

After the exercises, the leader could ask, “Well, what are major issues?” The students will probably give some concrete answers like “getting a job,” “supporting and raising a family,” “finishing school.” The leader should use one developmental theory (e.g., Erikson’s) and help refocus the answers to fit into the general stages. For example, if the students said “finding a loved one” was a major issue the leader could point out how that is reflective of Erikson’s stage of intimacy-vs-isolation.

Erikson’s theory could be presented as only *one* of the ways theorists have looked at human development. Other theories could be presented (e.g., Loevinger, Kohlberg, Freud) and (as much as possible) related back to what had been generated by students in the discussion. Finally, the contribution of theories to understanding human development would be discussed.

In terms of teaching socialization, the combination of lectures, presentations by people from outside the class who serve as models, and structural exercises provided a good instructional balance. In general, however, this module went quite well. Additional suggestions include providing readings for the more theoretical concepts, and making even closer connections between each class and the goals for the entire module and academic year.

## **RACE ROLES MODULE #7**

### **Module Introduction**

There were two classes on race roles, including the development of values and stereotypes. Staff members had discussed presenting classes on race roles for the first two years of the Sierra Project, but it had not been done because of the uncertainty about how to present this subject matter effectively. Then a racial incident occurred in one of the discussion groups following the interview with a mature couple. An Anglo student said that all the students on EOP (a financial aid and special opportunity program) were dumb Blacks and that it was unfair that these students received special consideration. She did not realize that the three Black women in her group were all EOP students. They were shocked and angry at her insensitivity

and stereotyping, but were not able to confront her at the time. They sought out one of the staff members to discuss what had happened and to get help in developing a class on race roles. The classes were developed in as timely a manner as possible.

Just as the staff had not developed classes on race roles, the students had seldom talked about racial issues outside of their own ethnic groups. Many of the Anglo students who came from conservative middle-class homes held rigidly stereotyped views about different ethnic groups, but saw the Third-World students in the dorm as exceptions (“Well, Chicanos are really \_\_\_\_\_, but not Juan. He’s OK and is just not like the rest of them”). Most students felt it was wrong to share these beliefs; that others would not like them. This made the educational process difficult. Students were encouraged to recognize that they *all* held racial stereotypes. Once this recognition was confronted and discussed, they could examine the development and validity of each stereotypic belief. As mentioned before, well over half of the class were members of ethnic groups, with about equal numbers of Blacks, Asian-Americans, and Mexican-Americans.

The first goal for the race roles classes was to indicate how prejudice and personal stereotypes may often come from conflicting values and backgrounds. The second goal was for the students to become aware of their personal stereotypes and to begin examining them. The third goal was to facilitate an exchange of information about different ethnic and cultural issues. We wanted the students to learn about values within different ethnic groups, how these values developed, what stereotypes of each group the students held, and how stereotypes are frequently related to differing values. The intent of this module was to open up discussion of racial issues; further, we hoped that when students began to recognize their own values or stereotypes they would enter into a process of re-examination.

Clearly, these two classes could be presented as part of the Socialization Module. The goals for them were congruent with the goals for socialization: examining what people are like and how they have come to be that way. However, we chose to present it as a separate module since the composition of Sierra Hall made ethnic identity a major factor in the Sierra Project. Also, these two classes could easily be presented as a unit without reference to the socialization process. They could be used for the goal of better understanding among races and for promoting racial awareness. They could also be used to help a group discuss racial concerns in a “safe” way. This could easily be done without focus on the socialization process. Again, as with any other classes detailed in this book, there is no “right way” to present them or “ideal set of goals.” A major purpose of this book is to

encourage readers to set goals specific to their own populations and needs and to adapt whatever of this material seems appropriate.

## **Class S4—Racial Values and Their Development**

### **Goals and Overview**

This class was designed after a racial insult based on stereotyping had occurred. The goals were for students to examine stereotypes about their own and other ethnic groups, to begin talking openly about racial issues, to define major values and the development of these values for their own ethnic group, and to begin to relate ethnic values to stereotypes. Our belief was that stereotypes frequently related to value conflicts between ethnic groups. This first class was mainly focused on exploring one's own ethnic group.

### **Delivery**

In the first class on race roles, students broke into their own ethnic groups. Most of the students were able to make a clear choice between **Anglo, Mexican-American, Black, and Asian**. However, this choice was difficult for some students who had racially mixed backgrounds or who had been raised in neighborhoods where most people were of a different ethnic background than themselves. For example, one student who "looked" Japanese joined the Anglo group. His father was Anglo, he had grown up in an Anglo neighborhood and had attended Anglo schools.

The Filipino students felt that they did not belong to any of the groups, but agreed to join the Asian group. Each ethnic group was given large sheets of paper and told they were going to make a three columned chart. In the first column they were asked to list the major values of their own ethnic group. They were told that there were no "right answers." A value written down as true for the culture in general may not be true for one or several people in the group. To help with this task, they were given a list of areas in which ethnic groups might have values:

Education	What is status	How to help others?
Money	What is the meaning of life?	Sex
Time	When are you successful?	How to be considerate

How men/women relate	How do you get ahead?	Showing emotions
Family life	Religion	Touching
Men's roles	God	Being affectionate
Women's roles	Leisure	Treatment of the elderly
Child-rearing	What careers have value?	What is the meaning of a job?
Death	Mental health	Mobility: social and physical
Eating	Physical appearance	

After the students had listed their group's values in the first column, they were asked to list commonly-held stereotypes about their own racial group in the second column. In the third column, they were to put anything they knew about how these values had actually originated.

While developing the chart, students were asked to look for connections between values and stereotypes. Stereotypes frequently develop as a consequence of conflicting values between ethnic groups. For example the students reported that in their stereotypic view, a major Anglo value is punctuality: a belief that being on time shows responsibility for oneself and respect for others. Similarly, they reported the stereotype that the Mexican-American views punctuality differently: being on time is important, but many other activities are more important. If a Mexican-American was talking to a friend and had an agreement to meet someone else at that time, the current interaction would take priority: it would be more disrespectful to leave one's friend due to "time" than to be late for another meeting.

Thus, if an Anglo student and a Mexican-American student were each being consistent with their own values, an opportunity for negative stereotypical labeling occurs. The Anglo can say "she's so irresponsible and unaware," and the Mexican-American can say "she's so rigid; always run by that thing strapped to her wrist." We encouraged the students to find instances where acting in accordance with their own value systems might justify stereotyping (positive or negative) by people with different value systems. We also encouraged them to share whatever they knew of the history of their ethnic group that clarified how values developed (e.g., the pioneer spirit, slavery). In most cases, students were appalled by their own lack of knowledge of their respective ethnic histories.

After completing the chart for their own ethnic groups, students were asked to list stereotypes of each of the other ethnic groups. They were to think about how the stereotypes and the behaviors connected to them were related to the values for their own group (and to their own personal values). Initially this was a difficult assignment especially for the Anglos who reported that they had been trained not to voice stereotypes. The staff emphasized that the assignment to students was to list commonly-held stereotypes that were not necessarily their own (a statement which helped the students feel more comfortable). They then became so involved in the exercise that it extended far beyond the 45 minutes we had allotted; students stayed within their group for the whole class and many students stayed after class for several hours.

While the students were making up their lists, they rather quickly noted that there were differences in values within racial groups according to socio-economic status, urban versus rural background, and religious affiliations. Some students reported that religious background and socioeconomic status had more impact than ethnic identity on shaping their views. The staff helped groups see these factors as another instance of the influence of socialization.

## **Class S5—Racial Values and Their Development**

### **Goals and Overview**

While the previous class had focused on examining one's ethnic group, this class focused on students sharing information with other ethnic groups. The goal was to increase awareness of stereotypes held by others about their own ethnic groups and to compare these with the list they had developed to describe themselves. We also wanted them to see the values of the other groups and to begin to understand how these values had developed, especially the historical perspective and the relationship between values and stereotypes. On a more concrete level we wanted them to begin to talk about race and ethnicity in front of each other within the context of a supportive environment.

### **Delivery**

Students were asked to sit with members of their own ethnic groups on the four sides of the room. The instructor stated that this topic could be

tension-producing and that a goal for the class was to increase understanding of other ethnic groups *and* about the process of stereotyping. They were asked to remember that when groups presented their lists of stereotypes about each other that these *were* stereotypes. They were not necessarily the opinions of the group members, but had been generated in response of an assignment to list commonly-held beliefs.

One at a time, the ethnic groups taped their lists on the wall and explained them. For example, the Asian spokesperson discussed major values and how these developed, pointing out that there were great cultural differences among the Asian groups represented (Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, and Hawaiian). Although each sub-group had a different historical development and, therefore, somewhat different values, the group was able to generate a single list of values related to both past and recent history. They explained the list of stereotypes the Asian students thought others held about Asians. Then they shared their conception of the commonly-held stereotypes about Anglos, Blacks, and Mexican-Americans. Students from other ethnic groups were allowed to ask for clarification, but not to dispute anything the group presented.

After each group had shared their ideas, the floor was open to general discussion and commentary. There were expressions of surprise at some of the stereotypes, but each ethnic group had generated most of the stereotypes about itself. The students realized that not all stereotypes were negative; e.g., Blacks were seen as loving their families, and Asians were considered very good students in the sciences.

Finally, we asked students to form small groups composed of representatives from each ethnic group. These groups discussed: How do racial conflicts arise? How do prejudices develop? How have prejudices changed (or not changed)? How can one handle prejudice, both obvious and subtle forms. After thirty minutes, everyone returned to the large group for questions and comments.

Most of the Anglo students refused to believe that the minority students experienced obvious prejudice in this area of Orange County (a conservative Anglo region for the most part). Even when they heard accounts of Black and Hispanic students being followed in shopping malls by store owners who thought they were shoplifting, or of people yelling insults from cars, the Anglo students kept saying, "That doesn't happen now" or "You're just being paranoid." Finally, the Anglo instructor related several instances of negative looks and comments minority students had received when she had taken them to places like Laguna Beach or Newport Beach. This convinced the Anglo students that racial prejudice was still an obvious fact of life in

Orange County and several reported feeling stunned and sorry about that. They also expressed regrets about doubting the word of their peers.

Students were told that while they were examining their own values and stereotypes they might find some they did not like. Rather than berating themselves for being “bad people” they should view these beliefs and values as a reflection of their previous socialization, and then work to change their attitudes. While the actual class ended at this point, several students remained to talk with each other about issues which had been raised.

### **What We Learned**

In the development of this module, structure, support and timing were important. We wanted to provide the students with a supportive context in which to discuss a potentially volatile issue. (The apparent taboo on discussing racial issues had developed for a reason: students were afraid to begin talking on their own for fear that “things might get out of hand.” In addition most Anglo students had been taught not to mention race. “You’ll embarrass someone and you might get into trouble.” We provided a structure for the class by outlining the series of activities students would participate in. Listing stereotypes about themselves helped prevent anger and hurt at seeing the lists made by others. The structure for this assignment was designed to minimize emotional impact. Having students spend the first class within their own identified ethnic group helped create a sense of personal support. In addition, since we had chosen an ethnically diverse staff there was at least one student staff in each group.

The ground rules for the class included that everyone had a right to present their opinions and to be listened to with respect. This helped prevent worries of being attacked or ridiculed for questions or statements. The first year that race roles were addressed directly, the module was delivered in Spring Quarter following a racial incident. Students in that class suggested that Winter Quarter would be the best time to schedule the class in future years. This might be early enough to prevent some racial incidents from occurring and to give the students almost half the academic year to live and talk together after race had become a less taboo issue. Hopefully the class would contribute to more respect for “how others have come to be the way they are.” Also by Winter Quarter, students’ level of mutual trust, respect for individual differences, and listening skills were sufficiently developed to allow discussion of racial issues to take place. Thus, Fall Quarter seemed too early and Spring Quarter too late.

These classes met our expectations. Students were able to share ideas and discuss this topic respectfully and analytically. They began talking to and questioning each other outside of class, and succeeded in developing at least some awareness of the role of ethnicity in the process of socialization.

### Module Commentary

Workshops on racial issues or ethnic identity are frequently thought of as appropriate for ethnic minority groups. For us, however, the Anglo students were the major target. Most of the ethnic minority students were much more aware of issues of stereotyping and racial differences than were the Anglo students. Anglo students tended not to feel an ethnic identity; rather, they had an anti-identity (“I’m not one of them.”) Few Anglo students reported walking across campus and greeting other Anglos simply because they were white. Most Black and Mexican-American students said they were continually aware of their ethnic identity and went out of their way to speak to students like themselves regardless of whether or not they actually knew them. This may be due to UC Irvine being a predominantly Anglo campus. If we placed our Anglo students on a predominantly Black campus, for example, they might develop an ethnic identity. Most of our students were going to live their lives in areas where Anglos were predominant and we hoped to make them more aware of racial issues they might otherwise ignore.

The development of this Race Roles Module was heavily influenced by having a psychologist in charge of the curriculum. Had someone from another discipline been in charge, the curriculum might have been much different. The psychologist/teacher may have been *overly* concerned about presenting race role classes, viewing them as particularly sensitive and anxiety-producing topics. As we approached these topics the *process* was considered important.

This module was highly structured, allowing students little in-class time for free discussion. The model emphasized the differences and similarities between races. Because students worked predominantly within their own ethnic group, they felt supported (part of the process). This allowed them to take a more critical look at themselves than might have been possible in a less supportive context.

By asking each racial group to relate stereotypes about themselves (a more emotional topic) to values and to history (a less emotional matter) emotional upset was minimized. Because groups were asked to list “stereotypes” about other ethnic groups, no one took them as personal attacks (e.g., the

Asian group could say “Whites don’t respect their parents” and not have to say “Well I personally agree with that”). The goal was for the groups to begin to understand each other, and to be more sensitive to cultural differences. Because the staff was so concerned about this being a “touchy” topic, students were not asked to “own up to their own racism.” Here the importance of inducing conflict was weighed against the value of consciousness raising.

In terms of the goals outlined in the module introduction, the staff assessment was that this module was quite successful.

## **LIFE AND CAREER PLANNING MODULE #9**

### **Module Introduction**

During the previous year (with the Class of 1980) more class time had been devoted to the Life and Career Planning Module than was planned with the Class of 1981. It had become apparent that many freshmen were simply not ready for this topic. Their main interests were in being successful academically and socially in the present. While some were interested in knowing what career path would be best for them, most had a rather simplistic view of career planning; that there was one right career for them, and that a test or counselor could tell them what it should be. They tended to think dualistically about career and life planning which was not surprising given the level of concrete thinking we had seen all year. They also tended to have an external locus of control, not quite realizing that they were ultimately responsible for the choice. They had little interest therefore, in learning a *process* by which to plan their lives and careers. We did try to expose them to different life styles through the socialization panel (Winter Quarter) and to some planning through a class on decision making (Spring Quarter). The life styles panel is described under the Socialization Module. Our rationale for teaching decision-making was that the freshmen *would* begin making career decisions later and that knowing a decision-making model that incorporated values, information and strategies would help them.

## **Class S8—Decision Making**

### **Goals and Overview**

In order to challenge the dualistic view that “there is a right answer and a wrong answer for any decision,” the students were taught decision-making models that incorporated values, information and strategies. One goal was to have students see decisions as ranging from “more right” to “more wrong” depending on different values. Another goal was to indicate that in addition to different possible decisions, different strategies could be used in reaching those decisions. The content of the decisions for the students to practice were ones similar to those freshmen were likely to encounter. The model was illustrated in class related to these specific decisions and also related to possible use for career and life decision-making, with the hope that the concepts would generalize. Two books on decision-making (Gelatt, Varenhorst & Carey, 1972a, 1972b) formed the basis of the information presented in the class. The previous year we had students purchase the student manual but enough of the examples involved high school students that the freshmen tended to reject the whole thing as “too young.” In addition to these specific goals, this class fit our overall goal of helping the students to take a more active approach to life.

### **Delivery**

First students were told that the general goals for the class included:

Learning a model for making career/life/personal decisions.

Seeing oneself as having more control over one’s life and more impact on society through active decision-making.

Being aware of how/when/where/why to choose (if one decided to).

Next they heard a brief lecture:

Tonight we’re going to teach you a model for making decisions. You make decisions constantly — from what to major in to what to wear to school every day. Some decisions probably seem easy; a matter of stopping to think for a moment about what you want. But others are tougher; the decisions where you realize that when you do choose you will lose or give up something. The model we will use tonight provides you with an effective method to approach those decisions.

Frequently you may think, “What is the *right* thing for me to decide?” The model indicates that for the difficult decisions there typically is not *one right* answer; each choice loses and gains something. The important component of the decision is which “something” you are willing to give up and which you are waiting to gain.

More specifically the model states that you need to collect some information about yourself; what you value or consider important. Many times you will also need more external information to make the decision — What is out there? What possibilities exist? Then you combine what you know about yourself with the information you have acquired about the different options and use one of several decision-making strategies to reach a final decision. The staff will provide you with an example.

The demonstration consisted of five student staff members sitting in a group who began to make a decision about where to go for a weekend trip. As they talked the lecturer would point out “that’s a *strategy*,” “here’s someone giving *information*,” “there’s a *value*.” For example:

“I just need some peace and quiet and I’d like to be in a scenic area.”  
(value)

“Well the flowers are in bloom in the desert right now and it’s sure quiet out there.” (information)

“OK let’s go there.” (strategy)

“No, I think we should come up with more possibilities first.” (strategy)

Next students were divided into groups of four by counting off. Their small groups were to practice making decisions using the model. The groups received a list of four locations within the dorm. (The order was different for all groups in order to prevent too many people in one place.) They went to the first place on their list and received a written copy of one decision plus discussion questions. They were instructed to sit down and reach a consensus decision on the answers to all the questions. Once they were in agreement on the first decision, they wrote down their choice on an answer sheet and were interviewed by a staff member. The staff member asked:

What different strategies came up?

What did you finally decide?

What different values came into play?

*How* did the group arrive at a decision?

What other information would you want to have?

What future consequences did you consider?

If the students could not answer the questions, they were asked to go back and discuss them until they could do so. After the staff member was convinced the students had used the model and could answer all the questions their answer sheet was initialed and the students proceeded to the next question. They followed this process until they had made all four decisions.

The decisions we chose were related to current student problems, such as having to decide: about summer jobs, about changing their majors, where they would live during the summer, and what they would do if they wanted to date more than one person. The following were the stimulus situations which the students received in writing:

#### DECISION #1

You are a Biological Sciences major. Your goal is to become a doctor. You have just finished your first year with a GPA of 1.8 (C-). You have earned good grades in some computer science classes and are thinking about changing majors, but you do not think you could help people as much with a degree in computing. What should you do?

What other information would you want to have?

Which of your values are relevant in this decision?

How could you use your values in reaching this decision?

What other factors should you consider (e.g., parents preferences, opinions of others, etc.)?

As you discuss this, identify the decision-making strategy you are using.

#### DECISION #2

You have the option to live at home, rent free, and see your old friends this summer. Your parents would prefer this. You are not sure,

however, if you can obtain a job there. If you decide to live at home, it is likely that your parents will give you a car next year. Living at home will *not* be very pleasant this summer because you will still have to live under the same rules that you did in high school.

On the other hand, you could stay here with some of your friends in a nice apartment with a pool and a jacuzzi and pay your own rent. You are assured of a summer job here. What should you do?

What other information would you want to have?

Which of your values are relevant to this decision?

How could you use your values in reaching this decision?

What other factors should you consider (e.g., parents preferences, opinions of others, etc.)?

As you discuss this, identify the decision-making strategy you are using.

### DECISION #3

You have a date for next weekend with someone you somewhat like (Person A) to go to a party. You suddenly have the chance to go to the same party with someone you have been eyeing for months that you *really* like (Person B). Your friends know and like Person A, and would be disappointed in you if you broke the date. What should you do?

What other information do you want to have?

Which of your values are relevant to this decision?

How could you use your values in reaching this decision?

What other factors should you consider (e.g., opinions of others, etc.)?

As you discuss this, identify the decision-making strategy you are using.

### DECISION #4

You have a choice to make between two possible summer jobs. One is a good summer job where you book entertainers. You get to meet

famous people and set your own hours. The job pays well, and there may be a future in it. There is a 40% chance that you will get this job, but you won't know until June 15.

The food service contractor on campus has *guaranteed* you a summer job at an average salary. There is also a future in it plus all the food you can eat. They want to know now, however, if you will take the job. If you say yes, you have to sign a legally binding contract. These are the only two possible jobs you have been able to arrange after considerable effort. What should you do?

What other information would you want to have?

Which of your values are relevant to this decision?

How could you use your values in reaching this decision?

What other factors should you consider (e.g., parents' views, opinions of others, etc.)?

As you discuss this, identify the decision-making strategy you are using.

After each group had made all four decisions, the students formed groups of eight and the staff leader asked them to consider decision-making in a more general way by discussing:

How are decisions made? Good decisions? Fair decisions?

On what criteria *should* decision-making be based?

What are the issues involved in reaching decisions? (on a personal, group, and societal level?)

What are the issues involved in reaching decisions? (This was so important that it had to be asked a second time.)

What kind of control over my life do I have? (i.e., what decisions are really open to me?)

Where am I and where do I want to go?

After I make decisions, then what?

### **Instructional Resources and What We Learned**

Students' response to the actual decision-making portion of this class was positive. They were energetic and tended to want to make decisions

quickly. Meeting with a staff person before being allowed to proceed to the next decision *forced* them to use the model we were presenting. They *understood* the model by the end of the class, but we doubted that this one session was likely to modify their typical decision-making style.

Also, this version of decision-making (values, information and strategies) is quite simplistic. Career and life planning would include these elements as well as interests, skills, goals, education, and experience. In short, this particular class went well but the outcome fell far short of our overall goals.

### Module Commentary

Obviously, life and career planning received very little focus in the Sierra Project.

As stated before, the students were not interested in career decision-making. Either they already *knew* what they wanted to be (for example 50% were declared pre-medical concentrations with the intent of becoming physicians), or they were waiting for the “right answer.” The concept that there are many possible “right” careers, each of which meets slightly different values, did *not* appeal to freshmen.

Ideally we would have presented a developmental model for career decision-making (e.g., Knefelkamp and Slepitz, 1976) that showed the freshmen a series of qualitatively different stages so they could identify what they had already experienced and where they were headed. Such a theory might provide a framework for understanding what is happening to them if they encounter a career decision-making “crisis” later. (This often happens in their junior year.) Freshmen do not need to *do* career planning at a time when this is not a concern, but should become aware that their attitudes towards decision-making may change over time.

This shortened module is a good example of how student feedback was used to modify the curriculum. In addition to what was learned about the low level of freshmen interest in career decision making as described above, we once again realized that salient issues for the staff were not necessarily of interest to freshmen. The freshmen indicated such strong disinterest in issues of career and life planning that we may have overreacted in shortening the module. A compromise position might have been used to expand the single decision-making class into several presentations covering topics including: developmental theory for career decision-making, simple to complex decisions, *how* to collect information on career and life plans, what information might be relevant, and how their current career decision (or non-decision) had come about. Overall, this is not to say that freshmen

cannot be taught information and skills related to career and life planning. However, despite considerable effort, we did not find an effective model for this instruction.

## **COMMUNITY BUILDING MODULE #2 (Continued)**

### **Module Introduction**

This module in Spring Quarter represented a continuation of the fundamental goals from Fall and Winter Quarters; namely, the development of high levels of consideration, trust, cooperation along with mutual feelings of sharing and support, and the reduction of alienation and hostility. During the Fall and Winter Quarters development of a psychological sense of community was approached through direct teaching of relevant skills and through structuring situations where sharing and support could take place.

The Triple I-D groups had been formed in Winter Quarter partially to allow students to experience this sharing and support on a regular basis with a group of students they did not initially label as good friends. During Spring Quarter these groups continued to meet and their membership stayed the same. The groups were asked at the beginning of winter to present classes during Winter or Spring Quarter. The intent was to give them a more active role in shaping their own education, as well as providing another opportunity for them to experience sharing and support.

Topics were to be chosen from a range of issues including role expectations, sex roles, racial roles, philosophies of life, how people get to be the way they are, or how people can take greater control of their lives. Suggested teaching methods they could use included skits, discussions, videotapes, radio shows, lectures, films, exercises, and interviews. Students were told that they were not limited to these topics and methods, but that if they were going to depart from them they would have to check with the instructors first.

The following student-planned classes constituted the Community Building Module for Spring Quarter: an interview with a mature couple (S2, described under the Socialization Module), a presentation on journal keeping (S6), a panel on human sexuality (S7), cross-age interviews on religion and patriotism (S8), women's health care issues (S9), and male-female relationships (S9). The last class of the year (S10) focused on saying goodbye and sharing positive feelings and thoughts with each other.

In addition to the actual classes, by Spring Quarter simply requiring the students to get together twice a week in their Triple-ID group and in the class helped maintain the sense of community that had been developing all year. Most students enjoyed the experience of choosing a concept and developing a class to present that concept to their peers. Students were very supportive of each other even when the class being presented had some obvious flaws.

### **Class S6—Journal-Keeping Presentation**

#### **Goals and Overview**

This student-planned class focused on the journal-keeping process. The goal was to increase awareness of the range of ways the journals could be used and the types of feedback provided by the staff. They also wanted to provide the instructors with suggestions for journal assignments and requirements for the following year.

#### **Delivery**

This group presented a series of skits to illustrate student journal entries. In each skit, a student was sitting alone working on his or her journal and sharing with the class the thoughts running through his or her head as well as the actual written entry. For example, one student was portrayed as thinking, “This stupid thing is due tonight and I’d better get something down. Oh well, here goes . . . .” That student proceeded to write out concrete details of the day; what he ate for breakfast, who he saw, . . . . Another was portrayed as thinking, “That class on race roles really started me questioning most of the things I’ve always believed.” She proceeded to write about how her parents were religious but also racist and how her own religious views were still strong, but that now she was having trouble reconciling these values with a racist attitude. While she had seen the minority students in Sierra as “exceptions” she was now beginning to question her own stereotypes. Another student was presented as thinking about a conflict she had experienced with a good friend and then wrote a journal entry exploring her feelings; how she had looked and acted angry but mainly felt disappointed.

These scenes also illustrated different styles and approaches; last minute, scheduled time each day, writing for yourself, writing to “look good” to the reader, writing because it was required, writing spontaneously, and organizing thoughts before writing.

Next the students pretended they had just gotten their journals back and were reading the staff's written response. Like the writer's entries, the staff responses ranged in depth from, "That's interesting!" to critical comments ("John, it looks like you just threw this together to have something to hand in. How about an entry on your reactions to having to keep a journal? And I'll prefer honesty to B.S.!") to questioning ("How does this make you feel toward your parents? And does it lead you to want to do or say something to minority folks in Sierra?") to reflection and self-disclosure ("You were both hurt and angry! I do the opposite; even when I feel anger first I convert it into hurt. I think that's because . . .")

The students reacted strongly to this presentation, laughing or being serious or being bored depending on the scene. They had much less sympathy for the journal readers than for the writers. Finally, a series of suggestions for improving the journal process were outlined including: illustrating the range of motivations and uses for the journal to students at the beginning of the year, assisting all the readers to be more appropriate in their responses, having the readers return journals quickly, and continuing to provide questions for the students to answer.

### **What We Learned**

This student-planned class went quite well. It was obvious that the group had discussed their own journal-keeping attitudes and had used these as a basis for presentation. (There were students in this group who normally wrote "to fill space" and others who used the journal for extensive exploration. They had also gone beyond their individual experiences to make sure they showed the class as diverse a range of reactions and responses as possible.

This presentation drew strong positive response from the students, but did not allow them to express their own thoughts or feelings. Rather, the students observed all the scenes and then heard the group's suggestions. We learned that, in addition to asking students to choose from certain topics and methods, we might also suggest they use a method which allows participation and thinking from the rest of the class.

### **Class S7—Sexuality Panel**

#### **Goals and Overview**

This student-planned class was designed to give the freshmen an opportunity to generate their own questions related to sexuality and to have these

answered (both with facts and opinions) by people from outside Sierra. They hoped to clear up misconceptions, stimulate thinking, and generate areas for students to discuss among themselves. The group also wanted to introduce the class to a homosexual and provide an opportunity to interview him; their goal was to make homosexuality not seem so strange or fearsome to the freshmen.

### **Delivery**

Before class, group members interviewed students in Sierra in order to develop questions for the panel. They organized the questions they received by categories (sexual responses and practices, dysfunctions, disease, masturbation, homosexuality, and birth control/pregnancy/abortion.) Then they typed and mimeographed the questions so that each student could have a copy and so that the panel members could have a preview of the questions.

For the panel, they invited two people: a faculty member in the Social Sciences department who had taught human sexuality and had done her dissertation research in that area and the president of the Gay Student Union on campus. The panel introduced themselves, and then the students were allowed to ask questions (after being reminded to be respectful). The mimeographed questions provided an initial structure and security. Students did not waste time trying to generate questions—that work had already been done. Because of the “taboo” nature of many of the questions, several students found it easier to say, “Please answer number 17” than to actually ask the question:

#### Questions included:

- What percentage of people engage in oral sex?
- Are there cultural or socioeconomic differences?
- Why are some people disgusted by oral sex?
- What makes people horny?
- Can a couple be sexually incompatible?
- How common is such incompatibility? Can it be overcome?
- Is masturbation normal? Are there bad effects? Can it be excessive?
- Why are people threatened by homosexuality?

What are the effects on children of being raised by a homosexual couple?

What are the causes, frequencies, and treatments for impotence, frigidity, premature and retarded ejaculation?

Describe the different methods of abortion and birth control.

What are the advantages of natural childbirth?

Students were allowed to ask questions the entire class period and were not *confined* to the list. There was no official wrap-up but after ninety minutes the Triple I-D group members thanked the panel and suggested that anyone could come up afterwards to talk to them. The students applauded and also thanked the panel.

### What We Learned

Again, the format of a diverse panel coupled with prepared questions provided a good educational experience. Students got the maximum amount of information with the minimum amount of embarrassment and wasted time.

A few students asked questions that were immediately labelled as "simple" or "too stupid," by other students. When that happened, student staff members and other students would yell out, "No, it's OK for her to ask," or "Hey, this is the time to find out stuff like that; maybe you know it but not everyone does." All the comments implied a great deal of respect for people "being where they are at." This was partially a result of the previous class work on social perspective taking and on socialization.

The women students were especially interested in birth control and female orgasms. They were fascinated by the gay man; after the panel about eight of them remained to talk with him. They kept saying later, "He looks so normal. I used to think they were all sick, but he's really OK." Meeting him was a profound experience for these women; it required a rethinking of previously held beliefs and forced them to reexamine their values. On the other hand, several of the men became extremely agitated by the presence of this speaker; they had difficulty looking at him, refused to talk with him, and two kept walking out of the room and pacing around while he talked. For late adolescent men, homosexuality can be an extremely anxiety-producing subject.

Although the class had been structured to challenge conventional thinking, we had not anticipated that it would create this level of anxiety. Several

student staff members sought out the men in question later. These men were not aware how agitated they had appeared, nor were they eager to discuss it. In retrospect a possible approach might have been to preface the panel with a statement from the instructor which predicted possible anxiety, letting the students know it was a normal occurrence and that they could talk with any of the staff about their responses to the panel. This might have helped some of the men recognize and understand their own distress level as it was rising and have provided a channel for discussing it. In spite of these strong homophobic reactions, we still viewed the opportunity for the freshmen to listen to and meet a homosexual as positive.

This student-planned class did an excellent job of involving other class members in the actual class process; student interest and involvement stayed extremely high.

### **Class S8—Interviews on Religion and Patriotism**

#### **Goals and Overview**

This Triple I-D group wanted to illustrate to the class how beliefs and values about religion and patriotism differ, especially across age groups. They also wanted a project that utilized media, was “different,” and that would take them off campus. They chose to interview and photograph a series of people and to play tapes of these interviews to the class.

#### **Delivery**

To prepare for their class group members first developed a list of questions:

- Do you believe in God?
- What do you think God is like?
- Why do people have religions?
- What does religion mean to you?
- What is the role of government?
- Why do we need a government?
- How committed are you to the United States?

These questions were typed up. Then the students went out into the community armed with a tape recorder, camera, and note pad. The group members experienced some difficulty with their interviewing. Because

they wanted to talk with people unconnected to the university, they needed to travel to unfamiliar areas in the county. Two students waited outside a liquor store and stopped patrons, asking if they would be willing to be interviewed. They got a range of responses including “No comment,” no recognition or answer at all, no eye contact, threats, and eager enthusiasm to respond. After fifteen minutes, the owner came out and asked them to leave. Next they tried a playground, where several mothers became worried about the safety of their children. (The fact that one man was Chicano was probably an added threat.) Through persisting in trying new locations (and also using some family members) the group finally had tapes of six interviews ranging from a four-year-old girl through an 85-year-old woman.

When the group presented, they had technical difficulties: their photographs of the people were not yet developed, and the audiotapes (especially those made outdoors or in crowded areas) were difficult to hear. They described each person, how they had gotten that person to agree to be interviewed, and then played the tape. There was not much actual class involvement except for listening. At the end of the presentation the class was asked to comment.

### What We Learned

This class was a good example of how by Spring Quarter students had learned to support and respect each other and to work cooperatively. Even though the tape was difficult to hear, students strained to hear the answers, remained attentive, and several times asked that the tape be stopped so that the presenters could restate what had just been said. In Fall Quarter the students would probably have become bored and inattentive or critical and inattentive, especially if the staff had presented the class. Student comments included praise and support for the *efforts* put into this class and *empathic* responses about the photos not being ready and the difficulty in hearing the tape. Again, we attribute some of this to the students' improved skills in empathy and social perspective-taking; they *knew* what it would feel like to be the presenters.

While the *content* of this presentation was not especially thought-provoking, simply hearing an 85-year-old woman and a 7-year-old boy on tape helped the class remember that the world is composed of more than college students. Perhaps the most learning took place for the Triple I-D groups members as they tried to find people to interview. They discussed among themselves the responses they had received and why people might have acted the way they did.

## **Class S10— Women’s Health Care Issues**

### **Goals and Overview**

The all-women’s Triple I-D group wanted the class to become more aware of issues related to women’s health care and to gain more accurate information about these issues. They wanted the class to realize that these issues had facts *and* emotions connected to them. They chose to do this through a one- hour series of dramatizations.

### **Delivery**

The group chose the issues of most interest to themselves: rape, contraception, pregnancy and abortion. They went to libraries and also searched through their own magazines and books to bring together information on each subject. They compiled the information and chose what they wanted to read to the class.

At the start of class, the women introduced their topic, saying these issues were serious to them and they hoped the class would take them seriously. They then shared a dramatization of each issue, with a narrator adding factual information. For example, two women were discussing whether one of them should have an abortion. They both were distraught. Then their voices grew softer, and, while they were still present, the narrator gave facts about abortion, quoting books and readings the women had found. In another scene a disheveled woman appeared saying that someone had just tried to rape her. The narrator again inserts facts. One woman wondered aloud about the right type of birth control to use, concerned about her health yet not wanting to become pregnant. Again the narrator added facts. In this manner the group presented both facts and the emotional reactions related to these issues. They also showed no “right” answers.

### **What We Learned**

This all-women group was vitally interested in their topic and had done good research. As in several other student-planned classes, however, the other students were only observers and it was difficult to know what impact this presentation may have had on the students’ attitudes. The women had chosen to limit their presentation to one rather than two hours. With the longer time they might have been able to conduct a structured

discussion on these issues. Within these discussions they could have continually inserted accurate information and corrected misperceptions.

It was apparent that with structure students could become excited about their class presentation and would put much more than the required amount of time into their preparations. We also decided to suggest class participation as an important component of future student-planned classes.

### **Class S10— Relationships**

#### **Goals and Overview**

The last student-planned class was designed to illustrate the range of intimate relationships which are available to people. The presenters wanted students to realize that there were also many forms of “non-growth” relationships and that one has a choice.

#### **Delivery**

This group presented a very creative skit to get the students involved in the topic and thinking about the underlying issues. Two students came out dressed as Mr. & Mrs. Conehead from the television show “Saturday Night Live.” They were from another planet and were already valiantly trying to adjust to earth culture. In attempting to assimilate they realized they were totally ignorant about earthling’s primary or intimate relationships. They looked in the Yellow Pages and found a “Relationship Shop” that sold new relationships.

As they entered the store, the owner greeted them and proceeded to show them what he had in stock: a non-monogamous relationship; a symbiotic, mutually dependent relationship; a non-committed “let’s get together and see what happens” relationship; and a more traditional, committed relationship with clearly defines sex roles. As each relationship was displayed the Coneheads looked more dismayed and, after a brief discussion, rejected each. They left the store deciding to form whatever type of relationship would be mutually satisfying and not to be limited by what they had seen.

The students were excited by the skit, wondered what was coming next and frequently cheered and clapped. Next the presenters made an especially good transition into asking the students thought-provoking questions:

What did you think about the relationships illustrated here?

Why do people want relationships?

How are we socialized to choose specific types of relationships?

What relationships might be appropriate for freshmen?

The students stayed energetic and involved. Even those who did not answer in the large group appeared to be thinking.

### **What We Learned**

Again, we learned that with structure for their involvement, freshmen can become excited and creative about teaching.

### **Module Commentary**

This module, consisting mainly of student-planned classes, served both to continue to build community and to demonstrate the sense of community that already existed. Students were very respectful and supportive toward those delivering class, regardless of how well that class went. They remained attentive and involved.

The Triple I-D groups did a very good job of preparing their classes. Each group chose a topic they were truly interested in and spent many hours in preparation. In most groups responsibility was spread among all the students and the sharing and working together gave group members an increased sense of closeness and caring for each other. In every instance, the group members learned much more about the topic than the class did.

The first student-planned class was the interview tape with Gunnar and Alva Myrdal, and in some ways this set the standard for other presentations. The students had a clear set of goals, had obviously put a considerable amount of time into it, were all participants in the process, and were proud and excited about their work. They engaged the class both through the tape and the discussions which followed. The class members gave them a very positive and supportive response. The other Triple I-D groups seemed to respond not so much with competition (“Well, we’ll do even better.”) but with “Look at what they did and how much the class liked it. Let’s do that too and get everyone to respond to us.”

During planning for these presentations the professional staff offered support and encouragement, provided resources when asked, and monitored the process (“How is your group coming along? Is there anything you need?”). In the weekly curriculum meetings the student staff would report on progress. Overall, however, the professional staff left the planning to

the students and student staff. In addition to the students' chance to become more actively involved in their education, it was the student staff's opportunity to do something on their own. Within each Triple I-D group the student staff were invaluable in helping students prepare their class presentations. They helped the freshmen choose a topic, set clear goals, and decide how to present their concepts. Students tended to want to accomplish too much in their presentations, and to become distracted from the task at hand. Left on their own, several groups would have changed topics and goals each week as a new or interesting idea arose. The job of the student staff was to help students stay focused on their end and to help them organize their presentation without dominating the discussions. This was a parallel process to the professional staff/student staff curriculum meetings, where the professional staff provided an initial structure with goals and overview and then encouraged student staff input in the actual organization and delivery. The only change we would suggest would be to encourage the students to include an opportunity for other class members to participate actively in their presentations.

From the Triple I-D group presentations we learned that by providing students with a considerable amount of structure *and* a support person, they could develop classes that were both educational and interesting. We also were able to see on a weekly basis the level of respect, support, and caring which has developed among students in Sierra Hall.

## **S10—Evaluation and Saying Goodbye**

### **Goals and Overview**

In this last class of the year students were to evaluate (in writing) the Spring Quarter curriculum. They were also asked to identify what they thought the focus had been for each quarter (See Appendix B for the evaluation). In addition, we wanted the students to realize that not only was it the end of the class, it was also the end of their living together. The goal was to help them begin to say goodbye to each other and to the Sierra experience.

### **Delivery**

Students were given the evaluation form and told, "We know you are getting tired of filling out forms but we really need your input. What you say here will help us with the curriculum for next year and in under-

standing what has happened this year.” After about an hour we collected all the questionnaires and thanked the students again.

Next the primary instructor talked briefly about the end of class and of the freshman year. She said that many would not realize the value of the community they had built together until next year when they discovered it missing from their lives. To reinforce this point she played six brief audiotaped interviews with ex-Sierrans who responded to: “What was it like when you moved out of Sierra? And what was it like the next Fall?” The respondents basically all said they had been somewhat sad when moving out, but since they knew how to stay in contact with the people they liked it was “no big deal.” They then reported discovering the next Fall that wherever they lived (another residence hall, home, apartment) it was not the same. There weren’t as many people — people who were available and friendly and respectful — nor was there the variety. One student said, “Well, I learned you can’t go home again.”

The instructor said her goal was not to have people feel very sad, but rather to encourage them to enjoy what they had, to savor the next week. She also said that most people think positive thoughts about each other but do not always share them. Then she invited them to join her in an exercise. Each person was given an unlimited supply of 3" × 5" pieces of paper. She asked the students not to speak, but to look around the room at the others and to write a brief note to whomever they wanted. These notes were to share a positive feeling or thought or a “thank you” to that person. She then turned on a tape recording of popular songs about saying goodbye or letting go.

All began writing. Some delivered their notes one at a time, others waited until all were done to distribute them. Some read notes they received immediately; others saved them to read in private. The room was filled with smiling, tears, and hugging. As students finished or became tired they left in silence. Some were still writing long after class time. They still had a week left together, but final exams and leaving would soon draw their attention.

### **What We Learned**

From the evaluation form we found that the students had learned a great deal in planning and delivering their Triple I-D group classes. They also said it was more difficult than they had thought; it took practice, planning, and time. Most wished they had started earlier, and reported that they had found it very difficult to be organized effectively.

We asked students to discuss what they had seen as a focus of the Fall Quarter. Our focus for Fall Quarter had been the development of some survival skills, the building of community, and the development of social perspective taking. Students saw the focus of Fall Quarter as an adjustment to college life, making a closer unit socially, starting to become aware of their feelings and themselves, and learning different skills. Students said that for them, interpersonal relations, assertion training, control of self-growth, and awareness of other's goals and feelings constituted the significant component of Winter Quarter, and that Spring Quarter focused on their own classes.

In general, students indicated that they felt the most involved in the class when they were actually doing something, whether it was an exercise or some kind of participation, e.g., in their Triple I-D groups and other small groups. They felt the least involved when they were doing something like watching films, listening to someone else talking, or listening to some kind of presentation which was not relevant to them. Projecting a year into the future most of the students expected to remember being close to the other students in Sierra Hall as the most important experience of the year.

From the "saying goodbye" portion, we were surprised how serious and intent students were about the exercise. People seemed to be trying to say things that were truly meaningful to them. [This author still has the goodbye notes for that year and occasionally rereads them and remembers that year and those students . . . . JCL]

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## ***SECTION III***

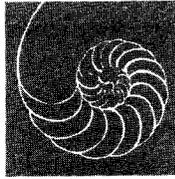
### **SIERRA PROJECT ADMINISTRATION**

*John M. Whiteley*

Section III consists of two chapters which have a common denominator of addressing practical aspects of promoting character development during the college years. Chapter 8 by Barbara D. Bertin, James B. Craig, and Norma J. Yokota focuses on coordinating and administering the curriculum intervention and research. The authors describe four aspects of the Sierra Project, and review approaches to solving management issues, the staffing pattern which was selected, how decisions were made and communicated, and the unexpected problems which were encountered.

Chapter 9, by Martha Morgan and Patricia Hill, describes the rationale and implementation of two elements of the Sierra curriculum: the provision of an opportunity for community service, and the journal requirement. While community service was an optional activity, approximately forty percent of Sierra students chose to participate. In contrast, writing a journal was a requirement of the academic course, and viewed by the staff as a central vehicle for promoting active reflection upon experiences during the freshmen year.





## COORDINATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SIERRA PROJECT

*Barbara D. Bertin, James B. Craig, and Norma J. Yokota*

The focus throughout this chapter is on the practical aspects of coordinating and administering the curriculum intervention and research. This chapter describes four aspects of the Sierra Project: curriculum and class research, residence hall involvement, staffing, and general administration. There is a review of the project management, the staffing pattern, the processes of project communication and decision-making, the management of a staff of twenty, and the special problems faced in the first year.

### **Curriculum and Class Component**

The first administrative step in offering the Sierra course was to gain academic approval. Each university has its own mechanism for new course approval. At UC Irvine, proposals for a new course are approved by the academic department and then by the Academic Senate Committee on Courses. The normal process of approval takes about six months from the initial filing to final review.

The next step in this aspect involved the detailed development of the curriculum (the process of which is described in detail in Chapter 4). Curriculum development the first year was accomplished through two-hour weekly curriculum meetings, a two-hour weekly graduate seminar, weekly staff meetings, and quarterly planning workshops. The basic structure and core for the curriculum were taken from the concepts described in Section I which had been generated by the professional staff. Then the primary instructor (Janet Clark Loxley) worked with seven student staff and six professionals in translating these concepts into the actual Sierra curriculum. The first year was a learning experience for everyone.

Student involvement was an essential component of curriculum planning. It became apparent that “brilliant ideas” (e.g., a class on interpersonal relationships) suggested by professional psychologists in their thirties might not be effective with conventional seventeen and eighteen-year old students. On many occasions student staff significantly modified and improved exercises and classes the professional staff and graduate students thought had been appropriately constructed. They also made staff aware of current issues faced by students in the class. The basic theory and goals were not at issue on these occasions: the students were influencing the actual class content and the process of its delivery.

Information collected through student feedback and from the research component of the Sierra Project proved invaluable in curriculum development. For example, during the first year we realized that addressing the effects of ethnicity had not been planned as part of the curriculum, yet was an important issue for this class because of its multi-ethnic composition. Life planning and career issues had been seen as important by the staff, but proved not to be of significant interest to freshmen. While it had been anticipated that freshmen would welcome active participation in shaping their educational experiences, this turned out not to be the case. Furthermore, there was a need for more structure of learning tasks than had been anticipated.

The curriculum needs to be well matched to the level of psychological maturity of the students if it is to have the intended effect. Here, information derived from the research was helpful. Initially, we did not know that our students and student-staff (see scoring procedure below) were overwhelmingly conventional (Stage 3), and had designed an intervention intended to promote a developmental transition from conventional to post-conventional thinking. By the time it was determined that the curriculum was not matched developmentally with the psychological characteristics of the students, valuable instructional time had been lost. In order to understand the developmental level of students prior to initiating detailed curriculum planning, it would be valuable to test a sample of freshmen the year *prior* to undertaking a curriculum intervention.

### **Administering the Research Component**

The research component of the Sierra Project involved a three-tier design, with only one of those tiers, the Survey Design, posing administrative problems. The Survey Design is what we labeled the longitudinal four-year study using pre/post empirical measures on an experimental group (Sierra

Hall, which experienced the curriculum) and two control groups (Control Group I—Lago Hall and Control Group II—Collateral Control Group). Administrative procedures for getting students to participate, data collection, and compilation and analysis of data are described.

### **Getting Students to Participate**

In order to inform potential students about the Sierra experience, a statement describing the Sierra Course was published in a brochure describing programs in the residence halls. These brochures are distributed to all students interested in living on campus, whether they were entering freshmen or returning undergraduates. The following is the first attempt to explain the Sierra class to prospective freshmen. It was based on the academic course description:

This class will be a forum for exploring community living based on principles of fairness and justice. Kohlberg's theory of moral development will provide a basis for establishing principles for resolving conflict. Both the living environment of the hall and the institutions of society will be analyzed in terms of moral development theory. Interpersonal decisions will be evaluated from the perspective of seeking the fairest decision for all persons involved. Each student will elect a project involving either a study of some element of the interpersonal environment or a selected institution on the surrounding community.

Based on this description, a total of only three prospective freshmen chose to live in Sierra Hall! While the more academic language had served to obtain course accreditation at the university, it did not attract new freshmen to a living environment. The student staff undertook a revision which read:

Entering the University, although a very exciting experience, may prove at first to be a very lonely one. Leaving behind old friends and facing an entirely new situation often presents problems (be they, "what classes should I take? How do I meet people? What are exams like? How does this place work?"). It was to facilitate this adjustment and answer some of those questions that prompted a group of students three years ago to establish Sierra. Since that time Sierra has grown to be one of the most popular and dynamic programs at UC Irvine. Sierra, a residence hall in Mesa Court, is comprised of entering freshmen

and a staff of veteran Mesa Court residents. Included in the Sierra Experience is a four-unit class entitled "Moral Development and Just Community." The twice-weekly class meetings, aside from their academic aspect, provide the opportunity to become acquainted with fellow residents and professors through both large and small group interactions.

One of the program's goals is to intergrate the social and academic facets of University life. With this in mind, the class is held in the hall living room, and many class projects—be they mountain retreats or videotaping and participating in giant role plays—flow easily between pure social fun and academic viability . . . .

During the first quarter residents study historical and contemporary communities and how they relate to Sierra as a community. The second quarter will be specifically concerned with interrelationships within the hall on a more personal basis. Third quarter offers the unique opportunity of participating in SIMSOC (a simulated society game) . . . .

In response to this statement, one hundred and thirty-eight freshmen indicated an interest in living and studying in Sierra Hall. It was clear that the student staff knew how to approach other students better than the professional staff did, and that their help was invaluable.

After the preference forms for housing were returned, the Housing Office staff selected all freshmen who had chosen Sierra Hall as first or second choice. The next step was to send a letter written by the Sierra student staff to each of these students. The letter was warm and humorous with quotes from former Sierrans about past experiences. But most importantly, it explained in detail about the mandatory class and the testing program which was required of all residents. A return reply postcard was enclosed with each letter asking the entering freshmen if he/she still had an interest in living in Sierra Hall. After the cards were returned, the Housing staff then assigned students who were still interested to Sierra Hall. In each succeeding year, there were always more than enough positive responses to the card solicitation to completely fill the hall with twenty-two women and twenty-two men. The best source of participant recruitment turned out to be word-of-mouth by friends and relatives of ex-Sierrans, and ex-Sierrans themselves.

The second group of subjects for the Survey Design, Control Group I, consisted of freshmen who lived in another all freshmen hall (Lago). These students had also requested to live with other freshmen. Both Sierra Hall and Lago Hall were physically the same, had student staff living in them,

and were coeducational. In the first year of the program, 1979, when 138 students requested Sierra, it was possible through random assignments between Sierra and Lago to fill both residences with freshmen who claimed interest in the Sierra experience. In the following years (the classes of 1980, 1981, 1982), Lago was occupied by freshmen who were interested in living with other freshmen, but had not expressed interest in Sierra Hall and its program.

The third group of subjects, Control Group II, composed the collateral control group. This group was selected from the remaining population of registered students at UCI. The freshmen collateral control group was tested both at the beginning of the year and the end of the year. But for each succeeding collateral control group selected thereafter (sophomore, junior, senior groups), the subjects were newly selected and were never used again. (See chapter 7, pg. 119-123 in Whiteley and Associates, 1982)

The subjects in the collateral control groups were chosen by a random sampling method which involved taking a list of the total population of undergraduates and dividing it into lists of class levels (freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors). Subjects who had already participated in the Survey Design were removed from the lists. The remaining lists of student names were numbered. Next, a pre-set amount of numbers were selected from a table of random numbers. For each number chosen, the corresponding name from each separate class list was pulled and became part of a new list, the contingent pool for the collateral control group. There was one list for each class level.

A letter was sent to each name on the class lists stating the purpose of the study and requesting their participation. The rate of positive response to the request was about 25% per class each year; it was necessary, therefore, to contact about two hundred students to obtain a sample of fifty for the collateral control group in any one year. Subjects who participated once were ineligible for subsequent retesting. Their names were removed from our population of possible participants for each new collateral control group which was needed.

The Survey Design specified that the subjects in the Sierra experimental group and the Control Group I (Lago) were to be retested in the spring of their sophomore, junior, and senior years. Locating the subjects required taking all the names of the subjects in these two groups to the Office of Student Records (Registrar's Office) and recording the addresses and phone numbers of each subject. After collecting this data, we sent letters to each subject requesting their continuing participation in our project by completing questionnaires and tests similar to the ones they had previously completed

for us. The letter also stated that they were to make appointments convenient for them, and upon completion of the assignments, they would receive a payment of \$5.00.

The response rate to the first letter was poor. Many of the addresses on file were no longer current; students subsequently indicated that they had never received the letter. A second letter was then sent out to the addresses students had initially listed as permanent, many being that of their parents', in hopes that the letter would be forwarded to them. This second letter brought in a few more responses. Finally, personal telephone calls to the permanent addresses of parents resulted in the most responses. Subsequent calls were placed to the subjects themselves, asking them to participate and to select a date and time when they were available for testing. Even after appointments were made, some subjects needed to be called back three or four more times before they completed the questionnaires and tests. This required a good deal of administrative time. It was handled by student clerical assistants under the supervision of a professional staff member.

### **Obtaining Institutional Approval**

Before administering the questionnaires and tests to any subject, approval was required from a campuswide committee known as the Human Subjects Review Committee. A written description of the project, a copy of the actual test materials to be used, and a subject consent form were submitted for review. The consent document was used to inform subjects of the purpose of the project and to reassure them that participation was confidential, would in no way jeopardize their academic standing, and would not cause them any psychological or physical harm. Every subject in the project needed to sign this consent form before participating. Since the committee did not meet regularly, it was necessary to prepare the approval packet several months before any actual test administration.

All the questionnaires and tests needed to be typed up, duplicated, collated, and organized into packets. After administration, they were checked for completeness and legibility.

In later years of implementing the Survey Design, a form was added to the test packet asking for the subjects' address for the following year, and an address of a person who would know of their whereabouts (i.e., parents, relatives, friends). Since many of our students had moved off-campus for their last two or three years of college, those who had already made living arrangements for the following year could provide us with at least an address. Many subjects remained friends with roommates and others from

the residence hall even after moving out, so we were able to create a network for finding local addresses. The address form proved to be a much more valid source of up-to-date addresses than did the university records or parents' referrals.

The collateral control group was added after the exploratory first year of the Sierra Project when staff realized that the university's normal attrition rate would make follow-up on the random control group sample difficult. Further, we would not be able to make the generalizations from a random control group which are possible with a collateral control group (See Whiteley and Associates, 1982, pp. 111-125 for an extended discussion of the design). Sample attrition is a normal occurrence in research on voluntary subjects in a naturalistic setting. The attrition in the Sierra Project sample may be traced to several factors: 1) Subjects transferred to another college — either a two-year community college or another four-year college; 2) subjects dropped out of school altogether; 3) subjects remained at UCI but were unwilling to return each year to complete the package of questionnaires and tests due to time constraints or personal reasons. Some subjects never responded to any of our requests, and information simply could not be obtained on their whereabouts (in some cases) or reasons for not participating. Some current addresses were incorrect, and letters sent to permanent addresses either were returned "Addressee Unknown" or not acknowledged (see Whiteley and Associates, 1982, pp. 119-122 for a presentation of attrition data).

### **Data Collection**

The schedule for the administration of pre-tests and post-tests was prescribed by the evaluation component of the Sierra Project. The packet of questionnaires and tests was administered at the beginning and the end of the freshman year, then at the end of the sophomore, junior, and senior year. The pre-testing was set for the week prior to the start of classes. Because of the multitude of other programs and activities scheduled during this week, we tried to reserve two times which did not conflict significantly with other activities. We reserved an air conditioned conference room on campus which held approximately 100 people. (During the exploratory first year with the Class of 1979, pre-testing had been done in a small room of the residence hall on what turned out to be an unseasonably hot day). The student staff in Sierra and Lago Halls were responsible for getting all the students in their respective residences to attend one of the testing times available. Each subject was given a packet and was asked to complete the

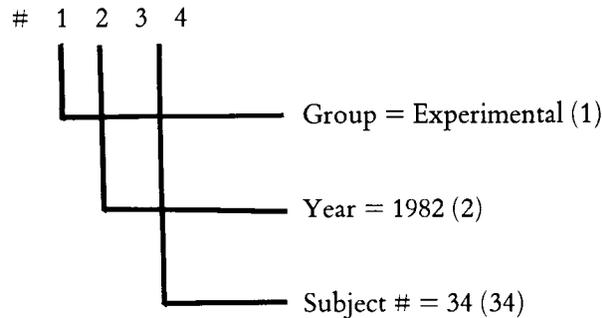
instruments at his/her own pace. These sessions usually attracted ninety percent of all eligible subjects. The remaining few were contacted individually by the in-house staff and asked to complete the packet as soon as possible. The decision to include only some of the written measures at this time was made after finding that asking freshmen to sit through more than two hours of testing was counterproductive. The Moral Judgment Interview was administered at separate times during the first few weeks of Fall Quarter.

The post-testing was done during Spring Quarter near the end of the freshman year. It was not as easy to obtain participation in the post-testing for Spring Quarter as it had been for the fall pre-test. An incentive was needed for participants to sit through another two hours of testing, especially when they were so close to completing their first year at college.

The experimental group met one night each week for class, so one of the last classes was reserved for the post-testing. Again, the student staff was responsible for getting all subjects to complete the questionnaires and tests. Control Group I from Lago Hall needed a little more incentive. In return for their cooperation, the project funded a special banquet dinner. A minimum number of participants who had to complete the post-testing in order for their dormitory to qualify for the banquet was established. We relied on the Lago student staff and peer pressure to obtain the necessary level of response from the group, and found that approach to be effective. The last group, Control Group II, was the most difficult to retest in their freshman year, because they no incentive to return for the post-testing. We chose to write numerous follow-up letters to them requesting they contact us for an appointment. The method that worked the best was to telephone each person until they had actually followed through with the testing.

### **Compiling and Analyzing the Data**

After all of the packets had been returned, and before we started compiling the data, a checklist was completed for each subject to identify any omissions or errors in completing any part of the packets. This check for missing data was an essential step that allowed us to find out what was missing at a time when we could still contact the student to obtain the needed data. Once the data check was complete, the subject's name was removed and replaced with a coded identification number. This code identified each subject, which group (experimental, control) the subject was part of and which cohort (year of graduation) they were in. An example of the ID number follows:



After marking each instrument for all subjects with the appropriate ID number, the packets were separated by instrument and scoring began.

All the instruments were easily scored with the exception of the Sentence Completion Test and Moral Judgment Interview. We chose to have outside experts score these tests for three reasons:

1. Lack of staff with specialized training and skills in scoring.
2. Self-training might produce a subjective bias and inaccurate data.
3. There are highly skilled scoring experts available on a national basis who will score the tests for a nominal fee.

Because of lack of funds, the decision was made after our first year to only test our experimental group with these two measurements and to continue to have the scoring done outside in order to assure accuracy and objectivity. For the classes of 1980, 1981, and 1982, we were fortunate in being able to find one person who was willing to administer the Moral Judgment Interview to all subjects. This provided a consistent approach to data collection for this interview format test. During the summer following the completion of post-testing, the Fall and Spring Quarter protocols were coded, randomized, and sent to scorers who did not know the identity of the subjects or the time of testing (Fall or Spring). We were very fortunate to have the same two people score the Sentence Completion Test (ego development) and Moral Judgment Interview (moral maturity) year after year. This situation eliminated the concern that different raters might apply the standards differently.

The instruments then were ready to be keypunched onto computer cards. A master copy of each instrument was made up showing the codes for each variable to be recorded. This master copy was given to the

keypuncher as a guide to correctly record the data. All of the data from one instrument was keypunched onto one or two cards (depending on the amount of data) for each subject. After all the data was punched and verified, the cards and instruments were returned to us. The work of the keypuncher was then reverified to be sure that the process of keypunching had not inadvertently created any mistakes. This again was a time-consuming process.

Taking one instrument at a time, the data was entered into the computer, creating our raw data file. This data file was then put through programs that calculated a score for each test based on the raw data. After all the instruments had been scored, the final scores for each subject for each instrument were combined into one file, which became our "System File." This "System File," organized by subject and by variable, resembles a matrix:

Subject <i>ID</i>	Defining Issues Test		IE Rotter	
	Pre-test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1201				
1202				
1203				

The System File was organized in such a manner that it was possible to identify scores either by groups of cases or by variable(s). It could also be modified either to add more cases, to add more variables, or both.

There were two principal statistical tests applied to the data in the Survey Design. The Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RMAV) was utilized to assess the significance of change from pre-test to post-test. This analysis allowed us to examine the data at several time intervals to determine if change had occurred, and if there were cohort differences (differences between classes). This analysis was found to be superior to t-tests in that it was able to demonstrate the interactions between more than one factor; specifically, change over time and cohort group.

The use of an adjusted gain score analysis of covariance made it possible to compare the amount of change experienced by the experimental group

and the control groups. The F-ratio which results from the use of this test has been adjusted for pre-existing differences between the experimental and control groups, and reveals whatever differential effects may have resulted from the various treatment conditions. (See Whiteley & Associates, 1982, for a more detailed explanation of the data analysis.)

### **Residence Hall Component**

A major task of a housing office administration in creating a residence hall program is to ensure that the physical and social environment is conducive to the implementation of a successful program. The six- to nine-month period immediately prior to the initial implementation is a crucial time for planning, student staff selection, and training. This is particularly true in a freshman program as complex as the Sierra Project.

During the Winter Quarter (mid-January) prior to the start of the program, resident assistant (RA) selection process began, with notices in the student newspaper, and advertising and information sessions in the various undergraduate housing complexes. Extensive group interviews were held in late January to narrow the large pool of interested students into a smaller eligible pool who engaged subsequently in workshops and interviews including a day-long session held in February. The focus of this selection session was on group process and problem solving with an emphasis on assessing flexibility and individual and group interpersonal skills.

Announcement of the new RA's for all the twenty-three residence halls was made in early March. In addition to responsibility for their own individual residence hall, the RA's attended weekly business and training sessions and shared an on-duty shift in the larger housing complex. The dual roles of being a member of the university staff and a member of the student community promotes their growth in personal terms and in some very specific skills including group dynamics, programming, and community interaction. In addition, the Sierra RA had the added responsibilities of contributing to the Sierra instructional program and the weekly class which met in the residence hall. The Sierra RA played a significant part in the selection, training, and mentorship of the six student staff members; compensation for these tasks is room and board.

The student staff selection took place in April to choose five sophomore student staff and one curriculum coordinator. The five sophomores lived in different suites in Sierra with their primary responsibility being to assist the RA in developing and implementing educational activities, projects, and programs in the residence hall. Student commitments included regular

weekly meetings with the RA, attendance at a two-day fall training session prior to orientation week, and participation at in-service training meetings conducted by the Housing Office. The training teaches skills, presents expectations, and attempts to build morale and establish a commitment to the residence hall.

The student curriculum coordinator had the option of living in Sierra Hall or off-campus although she/he spent time in the residence with the RA, faculty, students, and professional staff. The curriculum coordinator and the RA had to become familiar with selected concepts from developmental theory. They were usually upper-division students.

During the initial years of the project, the RA and the student staff were always previous Sierra residents. As time progressed, the student staff selection drew new prospects from other residence halls and off-campus living environments. This infusion of diversity proved to be valuable in promoting an atmosphere which was more open and responsive to new ideas, concepts, and attitudes than would have been the case if a requirement had been imposed that student staff must have been freshmen in Sierra.

The process of communicating with a prospective freshman has been described earlier in this chapter. The rule of the Housing Office was to create and disseminate a brochure which described all fifteen special interest halls, and was accompanied by a return postcard to indicate 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices. The Housing Office informed Sierrans that there was a three-quarter mandatory class required as part of the Sierra experience. Occasionally a student changed his/her mind prior to the start of school about living in the residence hall. In that circumstance it was the responsibility of the Housing staff to telephone others in order to fill the dormitory spots. Once school has started, no one in the complex is permitted to change rooms or living groups until the third week of classes. Over the past years, several people initially had considered moving out of Sierra. But in almost all cases they became involved in the Sierra community within the three week period, and decided to stay.

After the first three years covered by the formal evaluation (the classes of 1980, 1981, 1982), the class was opened to a small number (one to five) of students who were not residents of Sierra Hall but who lived elsewhere in the undergraduate housing complex. These students had expressed a strong interest in enrolling and attending class each quarter. The primary instructor talked to students who expressed an interest in the class during the first week of school, and specified three conditions of class enrollment:

1. The commitment to spend time in the hall, and not with just one suite, in order to become part of the Sierra community;

2. the agreement to move into Sierra Hall if space opened up; and
3. the agreement not to enroll for Winter Quarter if participation did not work out for either the instructor, the Sierra community, or the non-resident student.

Generally, the students moved into the hall during the year or attended all three quarters of class. The reason for allowing a few non-residents was that after the basic evaluation had been completed (see Whiteley and Associates, 1982), there was the capability of absorbing a few more students in class, the expression of interest was genuine, and there was a pool created of people to move into Sierra when the inevitable vacancy occurred due to illness, transfer, etc.

The impact of the Sierra program upon the UCI Housing Residential Program has been profound. First, Sierra was the forerunner of special interest halls at UCI. The use of student staff as program aids and the offering of academic credit have served as models for many other programs developed in the undergraduate residence halls, both for freshmen and upper class students. Second, graduates of Sierra represent a disproportionately large percentage of active campus student leaders. They can be found throughout the university in leadership positions in residence halls, student government, peer academic advising, Third World student organizations, orientation programs, the Greek system, and myriad student clubs and organizations.

### **Administrative and Staffing Component**

Accomplishments of the Sierra Project may be traced in large part to the dedicated staff that has been involved in the many aspects of the research and curriculum intervention. The staff has included full-time professionals, students, and part-time specialists. The professional staff consisted of the principal investigator, the primary classroom instructor, data analyst, project evaluator, the administrative coordinator, and the staff from the Housing Office. The principal investigator was a professor as well as an administrator (Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs), a circumstance which was facilitative in obtaining academic accreditation, obtaining the support of the Housing Department, and developing a graduate seminar related to the curriculum development. The primary classroom instructor (a clinical psychologist) chaired the curriculum team (which included professional and student staff), attended staff meetings, and was the key link to the forty-four freshmen and the sophomore staff of six.

The project evaluator (a life span developmental psychologist) coordinated the development of the test battery and the design of the evaluation, and monitored the administration of the research in the crucial first year.

The Housing Office staff facilitated all housing related aspects of the Sierra Project. One member of the Housing Office staff subsequently served as primary classroom instructor for the Classes of 1983, 1984, 1985, and 1986.

The administrative coordinator assisted communication among the staff of twenty and was responsible for a detailed follow-up of each aspect of the project. She also was responsible for the administration of testing for the first several years.

The student staff consisted of undergraduates who lived in Sierra and who provided the essential link between the freshmen and the professional staff members responsible for curriculum delivery. This group was critical to the success of the project.

The tasks posed by the evaluation component of the Sierra Project required individuals with a documentation and research background, the statistical knowledge, experience in the design of evaluations, and familiarity with data management. Graduate students played a key role in accomplishing the tasks of the evaluation component. They also trained undergraduates to score and code the data, and initiated them into the routines of an ongoing research project.

In the first exploratory year of the project, two graduate students organized the test packets and instituted the data collection system. They also arranged for assistance from fellow students to conduct interviews, score tests, and code data. They established the initial base for the present system files. Since the design of the evaluation specified a longitudinal study, it was necessary to create a mechanism for adding data to the system file each year. The graduate students were also very active in the initial stages of curriculum development for the project, and read freshmen journals.

By the end of the first year, we changed the formal organizational structure to initiate a curriculum planning group headed by the primary classroom instructor and a research planning group chaired by the project evaluator. While anyone on the staff was welcome to attend either meeting, the narrower focus of each group enabled a smoother management of the project.

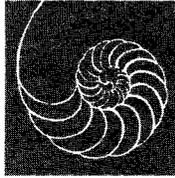
The diverse staff of twenty who initiated the project started with very different backgrounds and expectations. The management and coordination of the research and curriculum was an arduous task the first year. Modified democracies do take time, but they serve to build trust and to clarify roles.

**Summary**

When we started in 1975 we had a concept of what we wanted to accomplish, and had many enthusiastic people involved as has been described above, but we had not yet created a concrete plan of what we would teach when, or exactly what form the evaluation component would take past the first testing in the Fall of 1975.

The Sierra Project proved to be complex from an administrative point of view. Sharing of information between staff involved in the different components was essential. No one person was directly involved with all four components (class, research, residence hall, and administration), so the professional staff meetings were especially important for both decision making and information sharing. While other interventions will not face exactly the same practical aspects described here, educators need to be aware of possible “picky details” that can impede their interventions.





## COMMUNITY SERVICE MODULE AND JOURNAL KEEPING REQUIREMENT

*Martha Morgan and Patricia Hill*

This chapter describes two elements of the Sierra curriculum: the community service opportunity, and the journal requirement. The community service opportunity was offered to students on an optional basis. Journals were a class requirement based on the belief that they would be a critical vehicle for active reflection on experiences during the freshman year.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE MODULE

#### **Introduction**

The community service module was included in the Sierra Project based upon the research conducted by Mosher and Sprinthall (1970) on the effects of cross age teaching and counseling in increasing the psychological development of high school students. The Community Service segment of the curriculum had four goals:

1. To introduce students to active involvement in the broader community. By providing a structured opportunity for going out into the "real world," the Sierra Project offered students a chance to explore and analyze an environment other than that of the University.
2. To provide an opportunity to try out such newly acquired skills as empathy/social perspective taking, assertion, and conflict resolution.
3. To learn to evaluate the goals and philosophy of an institution, organization, or agency; to begin to understand its processes of decision-making and problem-solving.

4. To assist students in career decision-making. Students were exposed first-hand to careers which interested them and were involved in discussions designed to help them assess how realistic such a career might be for them in the future.

Students were allowed to participate in Community Service on a voluntary basis in conjunction with the Sierra class. Participation in the Community Service module required a commitment of 4-5 hours per week, and earned two units of academic credit on a pass/not pass basis. This experience was offered during Winter and Spring quarters.

### **Organization**

Two staff members assisted with the organization of this module; a student coordinator who acted as a liaison between students and staff, and a professional staff coordinator who acted as a liaison with the community placements. During Fall Quarter interested students were encouraged to meet with the student coordinator for a personal interview. Although most participants had ideas about the type of placement in which they were interested, this informal interview help to determine more clearly their agency preferences, what skills they wished to acquire and any relevant experiences they had already obtained. The student was then asked to complete a form mapping out their schedule of classes and other commitments, and showing the blocks of time available for their placement. One important factor that arose in the process of finding placements was whether the students had access to an automobile, as some placements were not accessible by any form of public transportation. All of the information was recorded for use when assigning placements.

During the break between Fall and Winter Quarters, the professional staff coordinator, who was familiar with local community service agencies, began contacting agencies for possible placements. Rather than trying to fit students into a set of pre-determined agencies, the students' needs and preferences were used to decide which agencies to contact. The coordinator found that some agencies had immediate openings for students. For example, the local state hospital for retarded children and young adults was eager for volunteers, as was an Irvine preschool. In other situations openings needed to be arranged. For example, one student had requested to be placed with an attorney; the coordinator then found an attorney, previously a faculty member at UCI, who agreed to take the student.

After a placement had been found, the student was asked if he/she found it acceptable. If it was, a letter was sent to the agency confirming this placement. If the student was not satisfied with this placement, the staff coordinator searched for a new one.

Several of the agencies contacted already had experience with upperclass Social Ecology field study students, and were familiar with the types of volunteer assignments necessary for them; students were not to be occupied with “busy work” types of jobs, such as addressing envelopes, but to the extent possible, to be a functional part of the agency. As the Sierra students were all freshmen, it was understandably difficult to find positions for them where they could perform significant tasks on a very part-time basis.

There were also the usual problems which occur when dealing with off-campus agencies. One agency, which had been newly organized, agreed to take three or four students. Later, they decided they could only take one student. They did not communicate this determination to the coordinators, but instead interviewed the three students who had been assigned positions and “chose” one. This was rather demoralizing for the students who were not chosen, and upsetting to the coordinators who did not know about this until after the event had taken place. Fortunately, the coordinators were able to find appropriate placements for the two remaining students. In another instance, one of the student participants had very definite ideas in regard to the type of placement he preferred and was sent to four different agencies until he found exactly what he wanted.

Finally, it was easiest to place students in the social service areas, and most difficult to place them in the business-related areas. Social service agencies are often dependent upon volunteer assistance, and have had experience in developing activities and supervision for volunteers.

### **Requirements**

The basic requirements for field study credit were designed to help the students think about their experiences. In order to clarify the students' and the agencies' responsibilities towards each other, and to make these requirements explicit, a contract was completed by the student and agency supervisor. This contract provided a written statement of what was expected from both parties (the student and the agency) to make this placement a successful experience, and itemized what the student needed to do in order to earn academic credit for the field study. Both the student and the agency supervisor signed the contract. Then the professional staff member approved the contract.

At the end of each week, the students were required to fill out a short evaluation of their experience. This provided a review of the week and gave the staff timely insight into what was occurring. We were able to quickly identify a placement which was a problem either for the student or the agency/organization. If the student identified the weekly experience as “worthless,” it was important to find out why. Additionally, it was also a method for monitoring the students’ attendance at their placements.

The coordinators met with the student participants on a regular basis in order to receive direct feedback in addition to the written information. We tried to structure these meetings to encourage interest and attendance. One method which was found to be extremely successful was the “potluck” dinner meeting held at the home of a staff member. The students enjoyed getting away from the campus and particularly liked having a home-cooked meal. A fairly lengthy discussion section was held after dinner. Students were provided with a list of topics which related to the original philosophy of the program. Topics included the following:

The placement as a system

Examining ways to analyze systems, factors to consider in developing an understanding of your role

Objective-setting

Distinguishing goals from objectives and focusing on how to see objectives for yourself

Philosophy and reality

Every agency has an explicit or implicit philosophy. How is that philosophy operationalized in your setting?

Interpersonal dynamics (colleagues and clients)

How do personalities (including your own) affect your work?

What are the kinds of problems you have encountered, and how can they be solved?

Problem-solving and decision-making

How do problems get solved and decisions get made in your placement?

What contributions do you and can you make? How could a change in the policies of the placement agency be made?

Critical analyses – doing it, reporting it – effecting change

Differences between criticizing and bitching, and developing legitimate criticisms and proposals for improvement.

During the discussion, individual students would discuss their placements with the entire group. Many students found this to be a useful vehicle for talking about problems, successes, etc. Much information and advice on coping with various situations were exchanged at this time. Again, students were inclined to be concrete, and had a difficult time with concepts like “philosophy” and “system.” They preferred “well, then she said . . . and then I said . . . .”

The final student requirement was to complete an evaluation form of the quarter’s experience. This form gave the staff an overall view of the students’ perception of the community service experience. With information gained from this form, the staff was able to make appropriate changes in the Community Service Module.

### **What We Learned**

During the first year, one of the changes that was needed became apparent quite quickly; namely, that one quarter was not sufficient for this type of experience to have much impact. There were a number of reasons for this. It often took several weeks out of a ten week quarter to place a student in a field study position. This circumstance severely reduced the time available for the student to participate in the actual field study itself. In addition, the agencies/organizations were reluctant to accept students for such a short period of time. The decision was made to extend the program to two quarters. After this, the students were expected to make a commitment at the beginning of Winter quarter that they would participate for both Winter and Spring Quarters.

Both the agency and the students were asked to complete evaluations at the end of the Spring quarter. They evaluated the student/agency interaction and its implications for the program as a whole. Both groups expressed a desire for more extended contact. Some agencies reported that students did not have sufficient time to comprehend their program in sufficient depth, and as a consequence were unable to be given meaningful tasks or projects. The students responded in favor of extending the project to two quarters because one quarter was not enough time to adjust to the agencies’ expectations. Overall, students and placement location supervisors viewed the experiences positively.

As seen in the student evaluation, approximately half of the students reported that skills and knowledge acquired in Sierra classes had helped them with their placements (i.e., assertion training, decision making, group interactions). Each student felt that they had learned *something* from the

experience. In one case, a student decided that a potential career was not for her on the basis of her field study experience, and changed her academic major.

Many changes occurred over the years. In 1977, a grant was written by the office of Student Affairs at the University for a federally-funded internship program (University Year for *ACTION*). When the proposal was funded, it became possible to expand on our relationships with many of the placement locations. In this way, the Sierra Project freshman field study became the “seed” for a larger, more comprehensive community service program. In addition, as word of this new opportunity spread through the residence halls, we had many requests from non-Sierra students to participate in the program.

## **JOURNAL KEEPING REQUIREMENT**

### **Goals and Overview**

Students in the Sierra class were required to keep journals and hand them in on a regular basis. The journal assignment was developed by staff for two reasons: Journals were viewed as a learning experience for students and as a research tool to provide another way of understanding the freshman year. Journals were viewed as 1) an adjunct to in-class activities; 2) a vehicle for allowing students to explore their own learning processes and as a record of his/her progress and growth; 3) a record of the program’s progress and a source of feedback on the curriculum and on life in the residence hall.

### **Instructions to the Students**

Journals were presented as a method of learning and a means to establish an ongoing process of reflection. In the first presentation made to the Sierra class, students were simply asked to write about their lives in Sierra and at the University, and about themselves personally. They were told to write five entries per week, but the subject matter was loosely defined. They were given examples of possible journal topics such as reactions to situations in class and in the residence hall. It was stressed that this was not a diary of everyday activities and sample acceptable journal entries were presented.

It became apparent that these instructions did not provide enough structure for students to understand what to do. Many students simply chronicled

the day's events, including details of meals they had eaten. Very little *thinking* was involved in the entries. Students were told that each week they would receive a list of suggested topics or questions to write about. These topics and questions would be developed by the staff, and would relate to the curriculum modules and the project goals. This would give students the opportunity to write about ideas related to class, and to think about their out-of-class applications. The guidelines for journal keeping were typed up and handed out to students (Morgan and Hill, 1985).

Journals were to be handed in bi-weekly to a reader who would both check to see that the requirement was met, and would respond to what the student had written. Students were also told that they should use a loose-leaf notebook or loose sheets of paper rather than a bound volume for their writing. This way they would be able to hand in two weeks of entries to their journal reader and be able to continue keeping their journal while the reader was responding to their previous entry. They heard that each reader would make arrangements for pick-up and return of the journals, and that anonymous journals would be handled by the instructor. In the instructions, staff also attempted to make the distinction between content (*what* to write about) and process (*how* to write). Students were also told that if they wrote an entry they thought was "too personal" to share with the reader, they could staple or tape it and ask the reader to count it as part of the requirement but not to read it.

### **Pairing Journal Readers and Writers**

Students were given the choice of three types of journal readers: resident student staff, non-resident staff, or anonymous. The choices were described the first week in class. They were told that the student staff could interact on a close, personal, live-in basis with them. Student staff also would be available to respond verbally to the journal writers as well as providing written feedback and commentary.

The non-resident staff members who would be journal readers worked for the university as professors, psychologists and administrators. While they would interact with the students on a personal basis through meetings, classes and occasional extracurricular Sierra gatherings, they were not as available for personal interaction as the live-in student staff. The non-resident staff were also older and more distant from the everyday life of the dormitory. Some writers wanted this distance; others wanted feedback from a more mature reader. As with the resident student staff, the readers and writers would know each other if this choice were made.

The anonymous readers were unknown to the students. This left the writers free to share their feelings with an unbiased person. All anonymous readers were graduate students who were peripherally involved with the Sierra Project. To respect this group of writers' wishes, the anonymous readers were not allowed to come to the Sierra class meetings, Sierra activities or the residence hall itself.

During the second week of class, the students were asked to state their preferences for readers. All student requests were honored, although occasionally a student writer was ambivalent, stating: "I don't care" as the choice of readers he/she preferred to have. For these individuals, a reader assignment was made from the available readers who were not already assigned.

The choice of a reader was not permanent for the whole year. Both the writers and the readers were given the choice at the end of each quarter to request a change to a different reader or writer for any reason. Initially twenty-three writers chose student staff readers, ten writers chose staff, and five writers chose anonymous readers. At the end of Fall quarter, three writers changed from staff readers to student staff readers, one writer changed from anonymous reader to staff reader, and two writers with students staff readers changed; one to staff reader and one to an anonymous reader.

Based on their own ideas and on responses from journal writers, the staff made the following commentary about how journal writers perceived their readers:

1. Writers perceived that student-staff readers would provide the most intimate interactions with the readers (i.e., meeting in person, talking, sharing the same Sierra class experiences, sharing dorm experiences, as well as reading and responding to the journal entries.
2. Writers perceived that anonymous readers would be least intimate in terms of a personal relationship developing between the reader and the writer (i.e., no personal contact, no shared dorm living or Sierra class meetings, no talking). It is possible, however, that a closer written communication relationship may result than with student-staff readers and writers because the only way of communicating for anonymous readers and writers is through the journal entries and reader responses.
3. Writers expected that non-resident staff readers would provide a middle ground: providing some personal contact, but not so much as to be threatening or bothersome. There seemed to be enough distance for comfort, for maintaining a privacy from the reader, while at the same time sustaining personal contact.

A journal, like a diary, can be a very personal collection of thoughts and feelings. While journal and diary keepers may wish for a response, an acknowledgment, or feedback about their thoughts, these private thoughts are sometimes not easily shared. This may be especially true if one is experimenting with a new thought, or reflecting on a new experience or awareness. A reader who has constant direct contact with the writer may be perceived at times as an intruder; too close to the writer's thoughts and feelings for comfort.

Elkind (1974), in discussing adolescent ego-centrism, which occurs with the onset of formal operational thinking, refers to the "imaginary audience" that the adolescent constructs in his/her mind. "The adolescent's wish for privacy and his reluctance to reveal himself may, to some extent, be a reaction to the feeling of being under the constant critical scrutiny of other people" (Elkind, 1974, p. 92). If it is true that college freshmen/women may still be involved in the ego-centrism of adolescence as Elkind describes, then the choice to restrict or control the depth of the interaction with the journal reader, through the choice of an out-house staff reader (or anonymous reader), makes sense from the perspective of student personal development.

### **Training the Journal Readers**

Because journal readers included student and professional staff as well as graduate students, the range of skills for responding was wide. Journal readers met three times early in Fall quarter for training and occasionally received new information to read throughout the year. Sample written handouts for readers are described in Morgan and Hill (1985). The strongest emphasis at training sessions was on using *empathy* in responding to the journal entries. Empathic responses were described as those which reflected *understanding* of both content and feelings. This might often take the form of restating or summarizing what the student had written. Writers also heard much about trust as a basis for open communication, and about the concept of confidentiality. Confidentiality was especially important since in most cases readers and writers saw each other regularly. The student staff needed to learn about dual relationships, and about how they would be hearing information from students that they could not share with anyone. Readers were encouraged to ask the writers what would make them most comfortable in terms of talking or not talking about the entries, and to let the writers approach them rather than pressuring the writers to talk.

In the training sessions, journal readers also practiced by responding to written statements, and then discussing their responses as a group. They were given a list of road blocks to communication and discussed why these might not be helpful (and in some cases why these might actually be detrimental). When asked to choose their own “roadblocks,” readers said they would be most likely to use excessive advising, sympathizing and logic.

### **Journal Research**

The only completed research using the journals looked at the reactions of readers and writers. This was done by having readers and writers complete a questionnaire at the end of the year (Morgan and Hill, 1985). Writers also completed a questionnaire rating the journals and readers on helpfulness (Morgan and Hill, 1985).

The questionnaires asked both readers and writers to review the process of keeping the journal. Readers and writers indicated that the journal entries covered a range of topics with the most frequently mentioned being daily experiences, friends, introspection, and conflicts. Other frequently mentioned topics were parents and family, sexual relationships, boy/girlfriends, school, philosophy of life, religion, goals, racial issues, the dormitory experiences, education, desires, poetry, advice, love, roommate problems, values, the past, and fantasies.

Journal questions were presented to the students each week. These questions were designed to insure that at least a portion of the journals were directly adjunct to the in-class experience. Student response to these questions was negative — 64% said they did not like the topics, and 46% said they were not useful. When asked what types of topics would have been better, 46% said, “I don’t know” and 36% said “topics I chose.” Informally some students said they liked the structure of having journal questions provided, that it kept them from “wasting time trying to decide what to write about.” Others said they felt “hemmed in” by the questions. Having questions tied to the class clearly fit the staff’s goals. One possibility for making these questions more palatable would be to ask students to design their own questions tied directly to the classroom experience. As the year went on, students were encouraged to submit possible journal questions and all (serious) submissions were used.

In terms of process, all the journals received written responses from the readers. In addition, 37% talked regularly with writers about their journals. Resident student staff were the most likely to respond verbally. In some

cases anonymous readers found themselves frustrated because they wanted to talk to the writers, which was not possible unless they chose to break the anonymity. Most writers (84%) were satisfied with their readers' responses. Readers were more critical of themselves, with only 65% of the readers thinking they responded in a manner which was considered satisfactory by the writers.

Readers and writers both viewed the journal keeping process as valuable, and feelings about the journal were generally positive. Neither writers nor readers complained about the amount of time they had put into the process. In fact, the majority of recommended changes dealt with putting more time and effort into the journal and writing more personal and more introspective entries. Whether the journals were recording and reporting change or stimulating it is a question which cannot be answered. The writers and the readers both thought that the journals did stimulate thinking and introspection. This may lead to personal growth, or may be caused by personal growth that is occurring on its own.

The relationship between the readers and writers allowed for a great deal of growth-stimulating exchange. The readers were given the opportunity to stimulate the writers to think further about the daily experiences and feelings that they were recording.

Most readers (75%) and almost all writers (90%) felt that thinking was stimulated by the journal assignment. While 19% of the readers said that they tried unsuccessfully to do this, none of the writers recognized this failure. There was agreement that for the most part the writers gained some insight into other perspectives and were encouraged to think. When students mentioned conflicts or moral dilemmas, readers were encouraged to respond in such a manner as to stimulate moral thought.

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## ***SECTION IV***

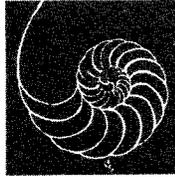
### **SIERRA PROJECT FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS**

*John M. Whiteley*

Section IV consists of two chapters and an Epilogue which serve to conclude *Character Development in College Students, Volume II*. Chapter 10 reports the central empirical finding concerning the development of character during the college years. The changes over the course of the freshman year on moral reasoning (principle thinking and moral maturity) and ego development are followed by the changes which were found over four years of undergraduate study.

Chapter 11 presents the central implications of the Sierra Project for the freshman year, for the nature of undergraduate education, and for higher education in general. *Volume II* concludes with an Epilogue which returns to a theme first addressed at the inception of the Sierra Project; namely, the obstacles which historically have prevented higher education from meeting its responsibility for character development.





## THE PRINCIPAL FINDINGS CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER DURING THE COLLEGE YEARS

*John M. Whiteley*

The central constructs of character as measured in the Sierra Project were moral reasoning (principled thinking and moral maturity) and ego development. The Survey Design called for administering the Defining Issues Test (principled thinking) to all participants in Sierra Hall (the Experimental Group which experienced the curriculum), in Lago Hall (Control Group I), and in the Collateral Control Group (Control Group II). The administrations of the Defining Issues Test occurred at the start of the freshman year, at the end of the freshman year, at the end of the sophomore year, at the end of the junior year, and at the end of the senior year. This pattern of administration made it possible to determine the growth of the principled thinking dimension of character during the freshman year, and over four years of undergraduate study.

### *Change in principled thinking which occurred during the freshman year<sup>1</sup>*

Table 10.1 presents the results of the analysis of scores on the measure of moral reasoning which reflected students' use of principled thinking.

Inspection of Table 10.1 reveals that freshman students as a group made a moderate gain which was statistically significant ( $p < .0001$ ) in moral reasoning, defined as percentage of principled thinking, over the course of their first year of college study. This gain was characteristic of all three classes studied. Sex of students did not influence the degree of change over the freshman year. There were significant differences among the cohort groups in the percentage of their responses which were based on principled moral

Table 10.1

**MEAN TEST SCORES AND REPEATED MEASURES ANALYSIS OF  
VARIANCE RESULTS FOR THE DEFINING ISSUES TEST  
MEASURE OF MORAL REASONING FOR FRESHMEN IN THE  
CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, and 1982**

	<b>n<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Mean Pre-test Scores</b>	<b>Mean Post-test Scores</b>
<b>Class of 1980</b>			
all males <sup>2</sup>	34	34.43	41.56
all females	35	30.97	38.82
<b>Class of 1981</b>			
all males	11	46.18	50.73
all females	34	45.29	45.21
<b>Class of 1982</b>			
all males	33	34.95	39.30
all females	40	41.83	43.21
<b>ALL GROUPS <math>\bar{X}</math></b>	187	38.12	42.20

**Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance**

	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>F Value</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Class	2	8.39	.0003
Sex	1	.02	ns <sup>3</sup>
Class x Sex	2	2.66	.0728(ns)
Change over Time	1	15.88	.0001
Change over Time x Class	2	2.87	.0592(ns)
Change over Time x Sex	1	1.19	ns
Change over Time x Class x Sex	2	.59	ns

<sup>1</sup>n's are smaller than reported elsewhere because the repeated measures analysis of variance requires that complete data (all testing times) be available for all subjects used; hence, subjects on whom we have incomplete data are not used in this analysis.

<sup>2</sup>For this analysis, males and females from all groups are combined.

<sup>3</sup>ns = not significant at the .05 level of confidence.

reasoning, men and women in the Class of 1981 both entering and leaving at a level higher than that of the other two classes ( $p < .0003$ ).

#### *Differential effects of the curriculum: The freshman year*

The Survey Design allowed the assessment of the differential effects of the curriculum on the character dimension of principled thinking by the contrast of the differential change between the Sierra Experimental Group and the two control groups. It also allowed the reporting of the pre- and post-test scores for the Sierra Experimental Group on the character dimensions of moral maturity and ego development.

In analyzing group differences between pre-test scores and post-test scores, we chose to adjust for initial differences among the groups. We chose this statistical technique because our goal was to understand differences among the three groups in *patterns of change* evidenced over the course of the freshman year, not to assess their *initial* differences or the final result. If we simply examined the difference between pre-test and post-test scores, our analysis would be affected by regression towards the mean. If we examined only the post-test scores of the three groups, our analysis would not be responsive to initial differences among the groups.

In order to examine differences in change from pre- to post-testing related to treatment condition, we employed the analysis of covariance, using the pre- to post-test gain score as the dependent variable and the pre-test score as the co-variate (Hendrix, Carter, & Hintze, 1973, p. 101). This method of analysis allows us to examine differences in degree of change among the three treatment groups while controlling for initial differences among groups. We need this technique to compare three groups at two test administrations so as to distinguish the variance accounted for by variations in treatment.

### **Principled Thinking**

With respect to group differences in moral reasoning (as reflected by percentage of principled thinking), Table 10.2 reveals that Sierra residents in the Class of 1980 experienced a major increase in moral reasoning (a mean adjusted gain score of 11.92224). This is in contrast to increases of 3.0458 for Control Group I (Lago) and 4.9085 for Control Group II (Random Control). When the analysis of covariance was performed, the differences among adjusted gain scores approached significance ( $p < .0596$ ). For the Class of 1981, the differences among the three groups on moral

Table 10.2

**ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE USING ADJUSTED GAIN SCORES  
FOR EACH YEAR ON MORAL REASONING FOR FRESHMEN  
IN THE CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 COMPARING SIERRA,  
CONTROL GROUP I, AND CONTROL GROUP II**

Moral Reasoning (DIT)	Experimental Group (Sierra)	Control Group I (Lago)	Control Group II	F Value	Significance
Class of 1980	11.9224	3.0458	4.9085	2.9456	ns (.0596)
Class of 1981	2.8989	6.8531	-6.4511	8.3459	.0009
Class of 1982	2.9597	1.8065	3.7244	.1852	ns

reasoning were more pronounced, reaching statistical significance ( $p < .0009$ ) largely because Control Group II scores declined sharply, with a loss of 6.4511. In the case of the Class of 1982, scores for all three groups increased, with no significant differences among them.

Since the analysis of covariance for the adjusted gain scores showed a significant difference for the Class of 1981 ( $p < .0009$ ), it was permissible to employ a post hoc analysis to identify the location of that difference. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 10.3.

The post hoc analysis revealed that both Sierra and Control Group I scores differed from those of Control Group II for the Class of 1981 ( $p < .01$  for each). Control Group II declined in percentage of principled thinking, registering an adjusted gain score of  $-6.4511$ , while Sierra and Control Group I (Lago) increased, registering adjusted gain scores of  $+2.8989$  for Sierra and  $+6.8531$  for Control Group I.

Another way to explore the differential changes in principled thinking among Sierra and the control groups is to compare the amount of growth in moral reasoning for all years combined. This analysis is presented in Table 10.4.

A review of Table 10.4 reveals that there were differences in the amount of change among the groups. Combining all Sierra classes, we find an adjusted gain score change of  $+6.2662$  in percent of principled thinking. The corresponding increases in principled thinking were  $+3.1606$  for Control Group I and  $+1.2887$  for Control Group II.<sup>2</sup> This difference was statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). The planned comparison of the Sierra group to the combined control groups revealed that the group which received the experimental treatment (Sierra) was found to differ significantly from the aggregated control treatments ( $p < .0188$ ).

Table 10.3

**DIFFERENCES IN MORAL REASONING USING COVARIANCE  
ANALYSIS OF ADJUSTED GAIN SCORES, AND PLANNED  
CONTRAST AND POST HOC ANALYSIS FOR THE DEFINING  
ISSUES TEST MEASURE OF MORAL REASONING FOR  
FRESHMEN IN THE CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 COMPARING  
SIERRA, LAGO (CONTROL GROUP I) AND CONTROL GROUP II**

**Adjusted Gain Scores:**

Class	Sierra	Lago	Control Group II	F Value	Significance
1980	11.9224	3.0458	4.9085	2.9456	ns (.0596)
1981 <sup>1</sup>	2.8989	6.8531	-6.4511	8.3459	.0009*
1982	2.9597	1.8065	3.7244	.1852	ns

**Planned Contrasts: "t" test**

Class	Contrast	"t" value	"t" probability
1980	Sierra vs. Lago & Control II	2.3634	.0211
	Lago vs. Control II	.4129	ns
1981	Sierra vs. Lago & Control II	1.0399	ns
	Lago vs. Control II	3.8984	.0004
1982	Sierra vs. Lago & Control II	.0805	ns
	Lago vs. Control II	.5669	ns

**\*Post Hoc Analysis (For Class of 1981):**

Contrasted Groups	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Sierra vs. Lago	59	1.0329	ns
Sierra vs. Control II	59	6.4657	.01
Lago vs. Control II	59	12.7259	.01

<sup>1</sup>The Class of 1981 met the requirements for post hoc analysis; no other group met the requirements.

In terms of our overall evaluation of the psychological intervention provided through the Sierra Project, this is an extremely important finding. Principled thinking was the only measure of character (the others being moral maturity and ego development) which we were able to collect on the entire sample; the two control groups as well as the Sierra group. On this

Table 10.4

**ADJUSTED GAIN SCORE ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE OF PERCENT OF PRINCIPLED THINKING FROM THE DEFINING ISSUES TEST COMPARING ALL SIERRA CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 WITH ALL CONTROL GROUP I (LAGO) SUBJECTS FROM THE CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 WITH ALL CONTROL GROUP II (RANDOM CONTROL) SUBJECTS FROM THE CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, and 1982 FOLLOWED BY PLANNED COMPARISON "T" TEST CONTRASTS OF SIERRA (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP) VERSUS ALL CONTROL GROUPS (CONTROL GROUP I AND CONTROL GROUP II) AND CONTROL GROUP I VERSUS CONTROL GROUP II**

**Adjusted gain score analysis of covariance**

	<b>Sierra</b> (all classes combined)	<b>Control Group I</b> (all classes combined)	<b>Control Group II</b> (all classes combined)
Principled thinking adjusted gain score	+6.2662 n = 83	+3.1606 n = 58	+1.2887 n = 46

F value - 3.0080

Degrees of freedom = 2

p < .05

**Planned comparison contrast "t" test**

Sierra versus all Control Groups  
"t" = 2.3720      p = < .0188

Control Group I (Lago) versus Control Group II (Random Control)  
"t" = .8236      p = ns

measure, Sierra residents exhibited greater change toward a higher level of moral reasoning than students in both control groups. The differences were moderate in size, one class (the Class of 1980) accounting for a large proportion of the positive change in Sierra scores. The conclusion we draw, however, is that the Sierra curriculum can make a moderate contribution toward furthering character development in college freshmen during a year in their lives which would normally include a small but persistent gain in level of moral reasoning.

### **Ego Development**

Except with the Class of 1981, it was not possible for us to measure the ego development of the control groups.<sup>3</sup> Table 10.5 provides the analysis of the data collected on the Class of 1981, comparing Sierra and Control Group II.

Examining Table 10.5 we see that the initial level of ego development was significantly lower in the Sierra group than in Control Group II for the Class of 1981 ( $p < .05$ ). However, the Sierra group had greater growth between fall and spring testing ( $p < .0019$ ). Sex and the interaction of sex and group were also found to exert effects on student change ( $p < .0141$  and  $p < .0026$  respectively). Sierra men from the Class of 1981 increased in ego level (from I-3 to I-3/4) while Sierra women and students of both sexes in Control Group II declined slightly.

### **Differential Effects of a Character Education Curriculum Over Four Years of Undergraduate Study**

The research design of the Sierra Project did not address directly the fundamental question of whether a college or university can design a curriculum which will have a differential effect on the character of its graduates after four years of undergraduate study.

In order to make a determination on whether it is possible to deliberately promote character over four years, it would be necessary to construct an educational experiment which would meet three independent criteria:

1. The availability of pre- and post-test data on all three measures of character (principled thinking, moral maturity, and ego development) on the experimental group, and on the control groups
2. The implementation of a sequential curriculum which would extend over four years of undergraduate study in order to continue to reinforce and build upon the differential effects found in the freshman year of the Sierra Project.
3. A sample with a retention and graduation rate sufficiently high that the senior year sample would be substantially the same as the entering freshman year sample.

While we did conduct a four year follow-up of the freshman intervention based on available data, and will report that data below in Table 10.6, there

Table 10.5

**MEAN TEST SCORES AND REPEATED MEASURES ANALYSIS OF  
VARIANCE FOR THE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SENTENCE  
COMPLETION TEST FOR MEASURING EGO DEVELOPMENT  
FOR THE CLASS OF 1981 COMPARING SIERRA AND CONTROL  
GROUP II**

	n <sup>1</sup>	Mean Pre-test Score	Mean Post-test Score
<b>Class of 1981</b>			
Sierra Males	16	4.19 <sup>2</sup>	5.13
Control Males	13	5.31	5.00
Sierra Females	18	5.06	4.89
Control Females	16	5.38	5.19

**Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance**

	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Group	1	4.23	.0442
Sex	1	1.28	ns <sup>3</sup>
Group x Sex	1	.23	ns
Change over Time	1	.50	ns
Change over Time x Group	1	10.60	.0019
Change over Time x Sex	1	6.40	.0141
Change over Time x Group x Sex	1	9.92	.0026

<sup>1</sup>n's are smaller than reported elsewhere because the repeated-measures analysis of variance requires that complete data (all testing times) be available for all subjects used; hence, subjects on whom we have incomplete data are not used in this analysis.

<sup>2</sup>Key to numbers:

1 = I-2	6 = I-4
2 = Δ	7 = I-4/5
3 = Δ/3	8 = I-5
4 = I-3	9 = I-5/6
5 = I-3/4	10 = I-6

<sup>3</sup>ns = not significant at the .05 level of confidence

is little theoretical or practical reason to anticipate a differential effect of the curriculum over four years because the Sierra Project Design did not meet any of the three criteria.

The Sierra Project did not meet Criterion 1 on assessing the three measures of character for fiscal reasons. While the principled thinking measure (Defining Issues Test) is inexpensive to administer and score, the measurement of moral maturity (Moral Judgment Interview) requires both a trained interviewer for one hour as well as a trained scorer. It also requires convincing the control groups to allocate an extra hour of their time, plus travel time. While ego development (the Sentence Completion Test) can be measured as part of the regular Survey Design data collection procedure, it does require a trained scorer for valid results. Such financial resources as were available to the Sierra Project had to be expended on the basic curriculum intervention and data collection and processing.

The Sierra Project did not meet Criterion 2 which specifies a sequential curricula which would extend over four years of undergraduate study. The reason it was not designed to do so is that in the year of the project's inception (1974-75), the judgment was made that the first priority in a new field of research and curriculum development would be to construct, refine, and replicate a basic character development curricula for college freshmen. Such a curricula had not been constructed previously. We developed, therefore, the outlines of a curriculum in 1974-75, and implemented it on a pilot basis in the exploratory year of 1975-76 on the Class of 1979. With refinements based on the pilot implementation, the revised freshman curricula was repeated with the Classes of 1980, 1981, and 1982. It was then possible to measure the effects of it on three different freshman cohort groups.

The Sierra Project did not meet Criterion 3 on retention and graduation rates because of the nature of the university in which the research was conducted. The University of California, Irvine graduates forty-four percent of freshmen four years later, and roughly fifty percent over time. While this is common for research oriented public universities, it did not bode well for retaining at UCI a large proportion of our freshman sample over four years. Retention of Sierra students at UCI over four years has been higher than the University average, with sixty percent graduating in five years, but it is still not a sample which averages the seventy to ninety percent graduation rates of quality liberal arts colleges.

A high retention rate is essential in order to insure that there will be present to evaluate a large and representative sample of four year participants in the curriculum. There will be a built-in natural attrition in the student population based on changing interests, and the special demands of

Table 10.6

**MEAN TEST SCORES AND REPEATED MEASURES ANALYSIS  
OF VARIANCE RESULTS FOR THE DEFINING ISSUES TEST  
MEASURE OF MORAL REASONING FOR SIERRA AND CONTROL  
GROUP I CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 COMPARING THEIR  
FRESHMEN-PRE WITH THEIR SENIOR POST-TEST SCORES**

	n	Mean Freshman Pre-Test Scores	Mean Senior Post-Test Scores
<b>Class of 1980</b>			
Sierra	24	32.53	47.22
Control Group I	13	37.50	44.62
<b>Class of 1981</b>			
Sierra	14	43.71	50.26
Control Group I	16	38.50	55.21
<b>Class of 1982</b>			
Sierra	16	35.10	46.23
Control Group I	12	37.64	44.42
<b>Sierra Classes Combined</b>			
	54	36.19	47.71
<b>Control Group I Combined</b>			
	41	37.93	48.69
<b>All Groups Combined</b>			
	95	36.94	48.14

**Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance**

	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Class	2	2.19	ns
Group	1	.03	ns
Class x Group	2	.02	ns
Change over Time	1	40.97	.0000
Change over Time x Class	2	.22	ns
Change over Time x Group	1	.03	ns
Change over Time x Class x Group	2	2.82	.0647 (ns)

Table 10.6 (Continued)

Note: The Control Group II means are as follows:

	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean Freshman Pre-Test Scores</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean Senior Post Test Scores</b>
<b>Class of 1980</b>				
Control Group II	33	37.43	26	43.46
<b>Class of 1981</b>				
Control Group II	26	43.88	16	42.29
<b>Class of 1982</b>				
Control Group II	26	44.07	14	48.81
<b>Combined Years</b>	85	41.43	56	44.46

some academic majors even in a campus with high retention and graduation rates.

Our conclusion is that a university environment with a high retention rate is preferred when evaluating the effects of a cumulative curriculum. Also, there is little reason to expect that an intervention which occupied freshmen during only one quarter of their first year in college will have made a differential impact upon them if it has not been followed up, extended, and reinforced.

Within the Sierra community of students, there had been a keen interest in participating in a follow-up program of enrichment over their remaining three years of undergraduate study. While reviewing the development and implementation of a coherent four year curriculum as the next priority in character education, we did not attempt it for two reasons. First, it was all we could accomplish to do what we did in longitudinal research and freshman curriculum development and replication. Second, our sample of students did not meet Criterion 3, and on fiscal grounds our evaluation design could not meet Criterion 1.

As discussed earlier, while our design and sample did not directly address the differential effects of the curriculum over four years, there is available pre- and post-test data for the same individuals for Control Group I (Lago Hall) as well as the Sierra Hall sample. Since Control Group II (the Collateral Control Group) was composed by design of different individuals at each testing point, it is not possible to conduct a pre-post computation of gain score with them.

The mean test scores for all three groups on the Defining Issues Test measure of principled thinking is provided in Table 10.6 for the combined Sierra, Control Group I, and Control Group II classes for 1980, 1980, and 1982.<sup>4</sup>

Inspection of Table 10.6 reveals that there were no significant differences between the growth patterns of Sierra residents and those of Lago Hall (Control Group I) over four years of undergraduate study. Both groups increased in principled thinking in a major and statistically significant amount ( $p < .0001$ ), but not differentially with respect to each other. Sierra residents went from 36.19 to 47.71 over four years; Lago residents went from 37.93 to 48.69.

### **CHANGE IN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT WHICH OCCURRED OVER FOUR YEARS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDY**

The longitudinal data on character which is available to address the question of changes in character development over four years of undergraduate study consists of two measures on the Sierra Experimental group only (moral maturity and ego development), and one measure (principled thinking) on the entire population (the Sierra Experimental Group and two control groups).

*Change in moral maturity which occurred during the four years of undergraduate study with the Sierra Experimental Group (no control group)*

Table 10.7 reports the mean test scores and the repeated measures analysis of variance results for the Moral Judgment Interview (measure of moral maturity) for the Sierra Hall Classes on 1980, 1981, and 1982 comparing their mean freshman year pre-test with their mean senior year post-test scores.

Inspection of Table 10.7 reveals that there were no significant class (cohorts of 1980, 1981, and 1982) or gender differences.<sup>5</sup>

There were statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) changes for Sierra participants as a group. The freshman pre-test sample had a combined mean of 283.79 and the senior post-test sample had a combined mean of 327.60. While this was a statistically significant finding, it is of only modest theoretical importance: A change of only 40 percent of a stage over four years of undergraduate study is not very large. Further, the sample as a whole was finishing the transition from Stage 2 to Stage 3 at the start

Table 10.7

**MEAN TEST SCORES AND REPEATED MEASURES ANALYSIS  
OF VARIANCE RESULTS FOR THE MORAL JUDGMENT  
INTERVIEW MEASURE OF MORAL REASONING FOR THE  
SIERRA HALL CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 COMPARING  
THEIR MEAN FRESHMAN PRE-TEST WITH THEIR MEAN SENIOR  
POST-TEST SCORES. (NO CONTROLS)**

	n	Sierra Mean Freshman Pre-Test Scores	Sierra Mean Senior Post-Test Scores
<b>Sierra Class of 1980</b>			
males	12	313.25	347.67
females	11	264.91	315.00
<b>Sierra Class of 1981</b>			
males	11	244.09	348.45
females	17	285.24	307.82
<b>Sierra Class of 1982</b>			
males	10	292.30	337.50
females	14	296.71	320.86
<b>All Sierra Males</b>	33	282.85	344.85
<b>All Sierra Females</b>	42	283.74	314.05
<b>Both Sex Combined</b>	75	283.79	327.60

**Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance**

	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Year	2	1.40	ns
Sex	1	3.32	.07 (ns)
Group x Sex	2	2.20	ns
Change over Time	1	65.89	.00
Change over Time x Year	2	2.34	ns
Change over Time x Sex	1	6.35	.01
Change over Time x Year x Sex	2	6.27	.003

of their freshman year. At the end of their senior year, they were still solidly rooted in the initial portion of Stage 3, basic conventionality.

*Change in ego development which occurred during the four years of undergraduate study with the Sierra Experimental Group (no control groups).*

The mean test scores on ego development from the fall of the freshman year and the spring of the senior year along with a repeated measures analysis of variance for Sierra residents combined for all three years is reported in Table 10.8.

Table 10.8

**MEAN TEST SCORES AND REPEATED MEASURES ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR THE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SENTENCE COMPLETION TEST FOR MEASURING EGO DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SIERRA CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 COMPARING THEIR MEAN FRESHMAN PRE-TEST SCORES WITH THEIR MEAN SENIOR POST-TEST SCORES. (NO CONTROLS)**

	n	Sierra Mean Freshman Pre-Test Scores	Sierra Mean Senior Post-Test Scores
<b>Sierra Class of 1980</b>			
males	12	4.67	4.92
females	12	4.67	5.00
<b>Sierra Class of 1981</b>			
males	9	3.89	4.67
females	18	5.33	5.39
<b>Sierra Class of 1982</b>			
males	9	4.33	4.89
females	12	4.25	4.92
<b>All Sierra Males</b>	30	4.33	4.84
<b>All Sierra Females</b>	42	4.83	5.14
<b>Both Groups</b>	72	4.62	5.01

Table 10.8 (Continued)

## Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance

	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Year	2	.47	ns
Sex	1	3.13	.081 (ns)
Year x Sex	2	3.09	.05
Change over Time	1	9.64	.002
Change over Time x Year	2	.42	ns
Change over Time x Sex	1	.39	ns
Change over Time x Year x Sex	2	.96	ns

Key to Loewinger scores:

1 = I-2	6 = I-4
2 = $\Delta$	7 = I-4/5
3 = $\Delta/3$	8 = I-5
4 = I-3	9 = I-5/6
5 = I-3/4	10 = I-6

Inspection of Table 10.8 reveals that there were no significant class (cohorts of 1980, 1981, or 1982) or gender differences overall. There were some gender differences which reach statistical significant in some years.

There was a statistically significant change ( $p < .002$ ) when the three cohorts were combined. The freshman pre-test sample had a combined mean of 4.62 (4.0 is the I-3 Conformist Stage and 5.0 is the I-3/4 transitional Conscientious/Conformist, Self-aware Stage. The senior year post-test score was a combined mean of 5.01 (I-3/4). While statistically significant, this was not a very important area of psychological growth over a four year span. Based on this data reflecting change in a relatively homogeneous sample of highly conventional college students who as freshmen had participated in a freshman year curriculum, the college years do not appear to be a time of fundamental progression in ego development.

*Change in principled thinking which occurred during the four years of undergraduate study.*

The mean test scores on principled thinking from the fall of the freshman year and the spring of the senior year along with a repeated measure analysis of variance for Sierra residents and Control Group I combined for all three years is reported in Table 10.9.

Inspection of Table 10.9 reveals that there were no significant class (cohorts of 1980, 1981, 1982) or gender (sex) differences in the growth of principled thinking over four years of undergraduate study. However, there were statistically highly significant ( $p < .00001$ ) changes for the entire sample (both sexes combined for all classes). The freshman pre-test sample had a combined mean of 36.94 in comparison with the senior post-test sample which had a combined mean of 48.14.

**Table 10.9**

**MEAN TEST SCORES AND REPEATED MEASURES ANALYSIS  
OF VARIANCE RESULTS FOR THE DEFINING ISSUES TEST  
MEASURE OF MORAL REASONING FOR SIERRA AND CONTROL  
GROUP I CLASSES OF 1980, 1981, AND 1982 COMPARING THEIR  
COMBINED FRESHMAN PRE-TEST SCORES WITH THEIR  
SENIOR POST-TEST SCORES**

	<b>n</b>	<b>Mean Freshman Pre-Test Scores</b>	<b>Mean Senior Post-Test Scores</b>
<b>Class of 1980</b>			
all males	16	34.59	42.09
all females	21	34.03	49.51
<b>Class of 1981</b>			
all males	10	34.40	51.70
all females	20	44.25	53.50
<b>Class of 1982</b>			
all males	14	34.52	42.34
all females	14	37.57	48.58
<b>ALL GROUPS</b>	95	36.94	48.14

Table 10.9 (Continued)

## Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance

	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Class	2	1.68	ns
Sex	1	2.18	.097 (ns)
Class x Sex	2	.07	ns
Change over Time	1	46.79	.0000
Change over Time x Class	2	.46	ns
Change over Time x Sex	1	.08	ns
Change over Time x Class x Sex	2	2.06	ns

Note: The collateral control group means (Control Group II) are as follows:

	n	Mean Freshman Pre-Test Scores	n	Mean Senior Post-Test Scores
<b>Class of 1980</b>				
males	20	32.90	11	44.81
females	13	44.39	15	42.45
<b>Class of 1981</b>				
males	11	38.09	8	36.66
females	15	48.13	8	47.91
<b>Class of 1982</b>				
males	13	48.08	4	42.50
females	13	41.33	10	51.33

In addition to being a difference of major statistical significance, a change of twelve points on percentage on principled thinking is a finding of major theoretical and practical importance. It is a finding of theoretical importance because of the magnitude of the change during the college years. The college years have been determined to be a period of major growth in moral reasoning when moral reasoning is empirically defined as principled thinking. It is a finding of practical importance to college educators: they are working with a portion of the general population which is making major changes on a significant dimension of the human condition; namely, growth on dimensions of character.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Tables 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5 appeared in Whiteley and Associates, 1982. See that reference for an extended discussion of results in the context of the freshman year.

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that one-third of this combined sample received a character intervention for one year (their freshman year). However, identical patterns of growth were found for both subsamples (Sierra and Control Group) over four years. (See Table 10.9)

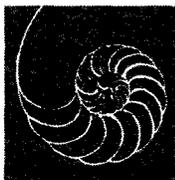
<sup>3</sup>Fiscal constraints precluded administering the Moral Judgment Interview (moral maturity) and the Sentence Completion Test (ego development) to other than residents of Sierra Hall (the Experimental Group). Our only longitudinal data on moral maturity and ego development intervention, therefore, was on a sample which has participated in a character development intervention. Given those special circumstances, the longitudinal changes in moral maturity and ego development will be considered in the section on effects of the curriculum.

<sup>4</sup>The Collateral Control Group (Control Group II) is necessarily excluded from the repeated measures analysis of variance because, by design, the freshman sample consisted of different individuals than the senior sample. Their scores are reported, however, for purposes of inspection.

<sup>5</sup>On the two measures of moral reasoning there were opposite gender differences which only approached statistical significance. Females as a group changed more on the measure of principled thinking; males as a group more on the measure of moral maturity.

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## **CENTRAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE SIERRA PROJECT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

*John M. Whiteley*

This concluding chapter on the central implications of the Sierra Project will focus on the freshman year, the nature of undergraduate education, and on higher education in general.

### **The Freshman Year**

The freshman year has been found to be a period of moderate growth in the level of the principled thinking dimension of character. This growth occurred in freshmen who had a high expectation for the sense of community which they would experience at college. Uniformly, this high level of expectation was met with a lessened perceived reality of community. The reasons they stated for this situation were clear and unambiguous:

1. The intense competition from peers;
2. The psychological distance from faculty and staff; and,
3. The perceived low level of community which existed on the UCI campus.

Residents of Sierra Hall reported *less* of a gap between what they expected and what they actually received. Given the emphasis the Sierra staff placed on developing a high level of community, the gap students reported between the myth of community in higher education and the perceived reality of lack of community is noteworthy.

Of the three sources of disappointment students reported on the community issue, one was especially specific to Irvine at the time of intervention. There was no University Center (Student Union); the average commuter student traveled eleven miles each way to the university, and only thirty percent of the student body was housed on campus. Students with similar interests and enthusiasms had a hard time getting together. (This situation has been improved subsequently with the opening of the University Center with its many and diverse gathering places, activities and programs.) The other two sources of disappointment, however, are not at all specific to the Irvine Campus of the University of California: intense competition from peers, and psychological distance from faculty and staff.

The residents of Sierra Hall reported they had experienced a higher level of community than did their peers in other living arrangements without the curriculum. For theoretical reasons previously reviewed in Whiteley and Associates (1982), the creation of a sense of community was viewed as a vital contributor to raising the level of moral reasoning. The basic notion is that it is possible to challenge students much more intensely when that challenge occurs within the context of an environment which is personally supportive and which is characterized by a psychological sense of community. The lineage of such a notion is Nevitt Sanford's pioneering work on student development in higher education (Sanford, 1956; 1962).

The Sierra research design did not permit differential attribution of effects by components of the curriculum. Our impressions, however, substantiated by student retrospective reports, are that the psychological sense of community was an important contributor to the most significant empirical finding to emerge from the freshman year curriculum intervention; namely, that the Sierra experimental group which experienced the curriculum increased on principled thinking twice as much as did the two control groups. This moderate differential change attributable to the curriculum occurred in the context of freshmen as a group making small but persistent positive change in their scores on the principled thinking measure of moral reasoning.

Finally, as reported in the student retrospective (Bertin, Ferrant, Whiteley, & Yokota, in press), the freshman year *itself* turned out to be a positive catalyst for change. The psychological distance from previous support groups including parents and high school chums, the opportunity for making important decisions, the consequences of increased personal autonomy from all authority, and the immersion in a new multicultural, coed educational culture all combined to create a catalyst for personal change in the crucible of the freshman year.

## Undergraduate Education

The college years have been found to be a period of significant growth in the principled thinking dimension of character development. This growth was found to be both statistically significant and psychologically important: Twelve points of change on principled thinking from 36 percent to 48 percent is major by any yardstick.

There is perhaps no period in young people's lives when they are more open to new experiences *and* alternative ways of thinking about those experiences. In retrospective interviews, in detailed case studies, and in the context of regular interviewing throughout an academic year, students were nearly unanimous in reporting that they would not be who they had become if it were not for the college experience, especially on dimensions of thinking about moral issues. They did make one important qualifier: They had not *changed* as much as they had *developed*.

As we struggled to understand their meaning in using development in contrast to change, it seemed to us that they were expressing that the core of who they were had remained the same. It was their appreciation of the world of moral choices and their stance in relation to those choices which had become more acute and sensitive, and this was appropriately considered by them to be development.

Irrespective of the meaning attributed to their characterization of the subjective experience of change during four years of college, and the context in which they understand that change to have occurred, the empirical measures confirm the magnitude of what occurred, at least on the principled thinking dimension of character.

It proved possible in the Sierra Project to stimulate the personal psychological development of college students *within* a framework of rigorous academic accomplishment. The elective course structure of a publicly assisted research university allowed Sierra students to earn four units of graduation credit (in contrast to departmental credit toward an academic major) each of the three quarters of their freshman year.

The four year graduation rate for Sierra Hall students was sixty percent in contrast to the campus average of forty-four percent. This we attribute to two factors: the sense of community, and the closeness of relationships with significant faculty and staff during the freshman year. The sense of community contributed to a level of support which we view as highly significant. Students made enduring friendships during that first year which were nurtured in an environment of shared experiences and trust.

The chief effect which close relationships formed with faculty and staff in the freshman year had on retention was that students could and did make “connections” with the support structures of the university: the formal and informal academic advising structure, personalized advice on how to make the “system” work, and personal introductions to counseling, career planning, health, and faculty personnel. While such introductions and advice may be an integral part of life on a liberal arts college campus, it is not in a research multiversity.

### **Implications for Higher Education**

The central implications for higher education, beyond those covered in the sections on the freshman year and undergraduate education, are four: level of student interest, hospitality of the campus, generalizability of the curriculum, and the overall impact of higher education on character development.

First, students chose to participate in all levels of the Sierra Project with a willingness and enthusiasm far beyond our expectations. Whether it was the willingness of the control groups to subject themselves to recurrent testing, the sophomore staff to dedicate a vast amount of time to the success of the project, or the freshmen to pass along to prospective students that the Sierra experience was well worth a year of their involvement, the professional staff each year had a host of vitally interested freshmen students and student staff colleagues.

Second, the university itself proved to be far more hospitable to the Sierra Project intervention than we had imagined. The faculty committees responsible for granting instructional improvement funds, approving academic courses, and authorizing research on human subjects acted positively in support of our endeavors. The Chancellor of UCI at the time of the intervention, Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr., made a number of public statements about the significance of a university engaging in character education. Finally, the staff of the Housing Office involved themselves in the program, assisted with a myriad details involved in administering a living-learning program and continued the program intact after the initial primary classroom instructor (Janet Clark Loxley) and principal research investigator (John M. Whiteley) had gone on to other tasks.

Third, the Sierra curriculum as it was implemented and reported in this volume provides a week-to-week roadmap of what we did, problems we encountered, and feedback we received. It is a curriculum, however,

tied in important respects to the freshman year of students in a research university who were highly conventional in terms of the theories of moral reasonings and ego development. Therefore, while the general presentation of character issues and the sequencing of educational experiences constitute a model we have found valid for our population, the actual presentation of classes needs to be adapted by subsequent researchers and teachers to the developmental level of student participants and to the particular characteristics of the educational institution in which the character intervention takes place.

In adapting the curriculum to the requirements of different colleges and universities, it may be useful to keep in mind that in our assessment the key components of the Sierra Project curriculum are as follows:

1. The psychological sense of community;
2. The presence of more mature role models in the residence halls;
3. The assertion training model which developed students' skills in identifying the rights of oneself and others and learning to resolve conflicts fairly;
4. The empathy training module which increased students' perceptions of how other people experience situations;
5. The greater responsibility for their educational experiences which was demanded of students;
6. The structured exercises which required students to rethink a number of previously unexamined beliefs; and
7. The consideration of sex roles and race roles which stimulated more complex thinking about ways of relating to other people.

In our assessment, the provision of both moral and psychological educational experiences is essential.

Fourth, and most significantly, the Sierra Project demonstrated once again that education can make a difference in promoting what John Dewey called the development of a "free and powerful character." Consistent with an emerging number of research studies on different populations in diverse settings, the effect of formal education as a catalyst to significant moral growth was again demonstrated, this time in the context of the freshman year at college, and subsequently affirmed over four years of undergraduate study.

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## Epilogue

*John M. Whiteley*

The writing of *Volume II* occurred close to a decade after the inception of the Sierra Project. The odyssey which began with a planning group which met for a year before encountering the first Sierra freshman has now spawned a second planning group. This new planning group is currently exploring how to investigate the critical relationship between reasoning about moral issues and acting on moral issues.

It is timely, therefore, to return to one of the opening themes of the Sierra Project: the need for higher education to confront and overcome a number of obstacles which have prevented it historically from meeting its responsibility for contributing to the character development of college students.

There have been six obstacles. In presenting each in turn, the intent is to indicate their current status, which have been successfully addressed, and the tasks yet undone.

**Obstacle I:** The lack of definition of higher education's role in meeting its responsibility for character development.

There will undoubtedly never be a general definition which is accepted for the diverse universe which is higher education in America. Nor is such a generally accepted definition necessary, or perhaps even desirable, if the goal is to have each institution define for itself a role consistent with its charter, heritage, and current mission.

Colleges can have a major impact on the character development of their undergraduates. A significant challenge is in defining what role they wish to play, developing the rationale for that role, and communicating it to the college's distinct constituencies.

The approach of the Sierra Project to this obstacle and challenge was to define a six part rationale (see the Introduction to this Volume): While the specific content of the rationale represents our attempt to address

the broader problem of defining our role in character development and the reasons for it, the issues which were joined we believe have broader applicability and can serve as the foundation for statements at other institutions.

**Obstacle II:** The lack of attention by institutions of higher education to establishing effective character education programs.

The reasons that character education programs have not been established in higher education are varied. A consequence of their lack of establishment, however, is that the venture known as the Sierra Project had to address many programmatic issues without guidelines from previous interventions. The initial approach followed by the project staff was to undertake a set of interrelated activities: surveying relevant educational and psychological literature to identify promising theoretical constructs on which to base an intervention; reviewing the literature which did exist on character education methodology and practice; and designing a pilot curricular program, then revising it after an exploratory year of implementation.

With this initial work on Obstacle II completed, we were able to proceed with the implementation of a character education program. In reflecting upon the implementation, it is apparent that such an undertaking is inherently multidisciplinary. While the curriculum drew heavily on the skills of psychologists, the creation of a psychological sense of community, the use of the residential living program, the stimulation of structured moral dilemmas, and the utilization of a student staff are no more the province or expertise of psychology than any other discipline.

It is likely that whoever is directing Sierra-type interventions in the future will have several interrelated choices to make: the academic unit from which to seek authority to offer academic credit, the disciplinary background of the key academic and professional staff members, and the physical location in which to offer the program.

On this latter point, the Sierra Project staff elected to offer the intervention within the context of an undergraduate residence hall. This choice was made because we felt that: it was ideally suited as a location for building community, student staff could live in close proximity to freshmen in the program, and integrating the residential life program into the mainstream of academic activities was a goal shared by many on the campus.

The Sierra curriculum could have been offered to commuter students in a traditional classroom setting, it could have been open to a combination of freshmen and upperclassmen, or it could have been an offering in

the residence hall which was open to both residential and commuter students. The central point is that arrangements for offering a Sierra-type experience can be tailored to suit the variety of institutional needs which are paramount.

**Obstacle III:** The lack of agreement on what constitutes character, character development, and character education.

This obstacle was initially addressed by reviewing the use of these terms historically and currently, defining them conceptually, and then defining them empirically by three proximate measures of character: moral maturity, principled thinking, and ego development.

Our central learning was that character is, and will remain, a definitional term. It is used in so many ways, both formally and colloquially, that it will always be incumbent upon the user to be explicit about the meaning which is chosen, and the empirical referents of that meaning.

**Obstacle IV:** The absence of controlled studies of long-term psychological interventions designed to promote character.

This obstacle was approached in two ways: the design and implementation of a psychologically-based intervention extending throughout the freshman year, and the evaluation of the character development of college freshmen using multiple sources of data with an experimental group and two control groups, then following them throughout their undergraduate experience.

The construction of three proximate empirical measures of character (moral maturity, principled thinking, and ego development) in the last two decades has made it possible to conduct controlled studies. Consequently, the analysis of the character development of college students is no longer an undertaking in which a host of measurement and methodological problems must be undertaken simultaneously with the implementation of a curriculum.

**Obstacle V:** The lack of knowledge concerning which experiences have the greatest impact on promoting individual growth in moral reasoning.

The initial approach taken to addressing this obstacle was to create a number of structured approaches to investigating the substantive question

about which experiences impact individual growth in moral reasoning. The approaches initially ranged from repeated interviewing of freshmen throughout the freshman year (Resnikoff and Jennings, 1982) to intensive case studies utilizing in-depth retrospective interviewing and objective test data (Lee and Whiteley, in preparation). A subsequent approach included the administration of questionnaires followed by structured interviews with a larger sample seeking the retrospective view of recent graduates (Bertin, Ferrant, Whiteley, and Yokota, in press).

Research on the question of which experiences impact in major ways the development of character in college students is in its infancy. Learning more about influences on character in college is of vital importance to those who value character and wish to shape college programs in order to facilitate its enhancement. Our essential learning is that college students, both during college and in retrospective appraisal, are articulate informants about the experiences which shape their development.

**Obstacle VI:**The relative absence of longitudinal studies of character development in college students.

The initial Sierra Project response to this obstacle was to design a longitudinal study featuring three proximate empirical measures of character, an experimental group and two control groups based on a rationale from life span developmental theory and research, and an approach to statistical analysis which allowed us to identify both the extent and duration of change over the freshman year and over four years of undergraduate study.

This approach to longitudinal research investigating dimensions of character would not have been possible even a decade ago, at least in the manner implemented in the Sierra Project. Subsequent researchers will share our indebtedness to those individuals previously cited (Rest, 1979; Loevinger & Wessler, 1970; and Colby, Gibbs, Kohlberg, Speicher-Dubin & Candee, 1979) who pioneered in instrument development, persisted in the drafting of detailed scoring manuals, and continued basic inquiry to establish instrument reliability and validity.

Even though new and refined instruments are being proposed, and continued advances in research design and statistical methods are occurring, the basic tools are in place now to investigate a host of significant research problems in the area of character development.

The six obstacles confronting institutions of higher education in meeting their responsibilities for character development which existed a decade

ago are less formidable today. This circumstance is a consequence of the efforts of many individuals throughout the country.

Each of the previously identified obstacles will continue to create challenges for future researchers. Progress on some obstacles furthermore has served to identify further novel and complex issues which must be addressed and resolved in order for continued progress to be made. The endeavors associated with the study of character development in college students, and the provision of experience designed to enhance that development, will remain supremely challenging for decades to come.

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***APPENDIX A***  
**VALUES**



## **Appendix A**

### **VALUES**

Select five of the following that are most like your parents — i.e., values you and your parents have that are alike.

Select the five that are most different.

1. happiness
2. sex
3. delicious food
4. liquor
5. smoking
6. fame
7. being patient
8. wealth
9. being well-liked
10. being accepted by others
11. being admired or looked up to
12. being un-weird
13. being the center of attraction
14. being in love
15. being powerful
16. friendship
17. peace of mind
18. being smart
19. being physically appealing
20. being talented
21. being kind
22. being special
23. being healthy
24. being witty
25. listening to music
26. going to cultural events
27. education
28. traveling
29. being tolerant
30. sports
31. being honest

- 32. being true to oneself or one's values
- 33. knowledge
- 34. physical strength

Add any values you feel are important which have been left out.

### **Small Groups Discussion**

How do your values match those of your parents? How are they different?  
How do you think you got those that are the same? Those that are different?  
What happens when they are different? How are values in this society transmitted?

**TASK:** Generate a list of institutions that transmit values — mechanisms of socialization other than your immediate family (i.e., peer group, media).

*APPENDIX B*

**EVALUATION OF DORM CLASS—FALL 1976**  
**CURRICULUM EVALUATION—WINTER**  
**CURRICULUM EVALUATION—SPRING 1977**



**APPENDIX B**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## EVALUATION OF DORM CLASS — FALL 1976

We are interested in your reactions to dorm class. This will help us in planning for next quarter and in offering the class next year. We would like you to take time filling this out since your feedback is really used by us. Your answers will have no effect either way on your class grade.

Intro to Class I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Information session where we gave an overview and history of the class, introduced the staff, and talked about journals.

1. How helpful was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How could this material have been presented better?

3. What did you especially like?

4. Other comments:

Class F1 I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Survival skills I. Mundo taught organization of time and materials. Janet taught contingency management (reinforcement).

1. How enjoyable was this?

Not at all				Very
1	2	3	4	5

2. How much have you used these skills this quarter? (how helpful was this)?

Very often				Never
1	2	3	4	5

3. What was especially good about this class?
4. What could have been improved?
5. Other comments:

Class F2                      I was there.    \_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_ No

Survival skills II. Test anxiety reduction was taught. Then a presentation was made on objective test taking.

1. How helpful was the text anxiety reduction?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4		5

2. How helpful was the objective test taking?

					Very
Not at all					5
1	2	3	4		

3. What would have made these presentations better?
4. What did you especially like?
5. Other comments:

Class F3 & F4                      I was there.    \_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_ No

Group dynamics and values clarification. The class listed good and bad ways to behave in a group. The staff modeled a group discussion and asked the class to give feedback. Topics from the Values Clarification exercise were the basis for small group discussion where feedback was given after the discussion.

1. How much have you made use of these concepts?

Very often					Never
1	2	3	4		5

2. How relevant to you was this?

Quite					Not at all
1	2	3	4		5

3. How enjoyable and interesting was this?

Awful					Great
1	2	3	4	5	

4. What would have made this better? How could the concepts have been presented more clearly?

5. What was good about this class?

Class F5, F6 & F7      I was at the discussions.    \_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_ No

SIMSOC and post-game discussions (if you need more info to remind you what SIMSOC was, then you really must be having a hard quarter).

1. How much did you learn about yourself from this?

A lot					Nothing
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How much did you enjoy playing the game?

Not at all					Tremendously
1	2	3	4	5	

3. How much did you learn about the other people in the dorm?

Nothing new					A great deal
1	2	3	4	5	

4. How do you see this fitting in with the rest of the quarter's class?

5. What do you think about taking people away from the dorm for a weekend? When would be the best time to do this if we did it for next year's class?

6. What was especially good about this experience and the discussions?

7. What would have improved this experience and the discussions?

8. Other comments:

Class F8

I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Values clarification exercise where you took stands on stealing. Large and small group discussions about how and what the issues are in the dorm and how to generate more trust and security.

1. How much impact did this have on the way people behaved toward each other in the dorm?

None				A lot
1	2	3	4	5

2. How relevant to you was this?

Quite				Not at all
1	2	3	4	5

3. How interesting?

Uninteresting				Very
1	2	3	4	5

4. What would have made this better?

5. What was good about this class?

6. Comments:

Class F9

I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

GAIT. (When you talked about a problem with a listener and then saw or heard a replay and got feedback). Since we did this twice, try to give your reactions as they were then (as opposed to how they were after the second time through).

1. How much did you enjoy doing this?

A great deal				Not at all
1	2	3	4	5

2. How would you evaluate the way you listened that night?

Very poorly				Good listener
1	2	3	4	5

3. What would have made this a better experience for you?

4. What was especially good about this experience?

5. Other comments:

Class F10 I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Introduction to listening skills. Class identified how they would like to be treated by a friend if they had a problem they wanted to talk about. Staff showed some examples of good listening and then people broke into groups and practiced listening.

1. How much did you enjoy this?

Not at all					Very much
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How much of an impact did this have on your perception of good listening?

Great change					No change
1	2	3	4	5	

3. What would have made this better?

4. What did you especially like?

5. Other comments:

Class F11 I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Conflict, fair and unfair fighting, generated lists of conflict and then broke into small groups and conflicted.

1. How helpful was this?

Not at all					Very
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How much did you enjoy this?

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. What could have been better?

4. What was good?

5. Other comments:

Class F12

I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Listening skills (continued). Reviewed good and bad listening responses, talked about questioning and having conversations, saw a film of a counselor listening.

1. How helpful was this?

Very

Not at all

1

2

3

4

5

2. How enjoyable was this?

Not at all

Very

1

2

3

4

5

3. What could have been better?

4. What was good?

5. Other comments:

Class F13

I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

How to make yourself miserable.

1. How much did this affect the way you think and feel?

Not at all

Very much

1

2

3

4

5

2. How interesting was this?

Very

Not at all

1

2

3

4

5

3. What could have been better?

4. What did you especially like?

Class F14 I was there. \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

GAIT (second time)

1. How much did you enjoy doing this?

A great deal					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How would you evaluate the way you listened that night?

Very poor					Good listener
1	2	3	4	5	

3. What would have made this a better experience for you?

4. What especially was good about this experience?

5. Other comments:

**Overall**

1. How much has your ability to listen improved?

Gotten much worse		No change		Gotten much better
1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## CURRICULUM EVALUATION – WINTER

We are interested in your reactions to the class this quarter, especially for specific topics. Once again, we will try to use your ideas and suggestions to make Spring Quarter better. If you did not attend the specific class, please don't comment about it. While you are answering the questions, please keep in mind that "being enjoyable" and "being helpful to you" are not necessarily the same; that is, you could have had fun in one of the classes and it did not make much impact on you or you could have had a difficult time in the specific class and it really raised good issues for you.

Class W1 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Overview of the quarter was given. Then Dr. Karen Nelson talked about the theory behind the class and the research that's involved and why we're doing the whole thing.

1. How helpful was this to you in understanding what is going on with the Sierra class?

Not very helpful

Very helpful

1

2

3

4

5

2. How interesting was this to you?

Very interesting

Totally uninteresting

1

2

3

4

5

3. What would have made this better?

4. What did you especially like? and any other comments:

Class W2 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Panel of staff answering questions generated by the class about past and present socializing factors.

1. How much did you learn from this; that is, how helpful was hearing these different attitudes?

Very helpful	Not helpful
1      2      3      4      5	

2. How interesting was this to you?

Very interesting	Totally uninteresting
1      2      3      4      5	

3. What would have made this better?  
 4. What did you like about this? and any other comments:

Class W3                      I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Looking at sex roles as one part of socialization, the videotape about sexism was shown and people discussed the overall theme of this film.

1. How much did they affect your attitudes and ideas about women's sex roles?

Not at all	A great deal
1      2      3      4      5	

2. How enjoyable was this class?

Not at all	A great deal
1      2      3      4      5	

3. What would have made this class better?  
 4. What did you like about this? and any other comments:

Class W4                      I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Took the assertion pre-test. Broke into small groups and discussed how your values related to your parents values (using a values list to give ideas). Then two III-D groups presented skits that illustrated value and assertion issues in the dorm.

**Character Development in College Students**

1. How helpful was this class to you in terms of getting you to think about these issues or in terms of your learning something about yourself or others?

Not at all	A great deal
1            2            3            4            5	

2. How interesting was this class to you?

Very interesting	Very boring
1            2            3            4            5	

3. What would have made this class better?

4. What did you especially like about this class? and any other comments:

Class W5                      I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Art Lange talked about personal rights, discrimination between assertive, unassertive, and aggressive behavior, and showed people how to role play being more assertive.

1. How interesting was this class to you?

Very boring	Very interesting
1            2            3            4            5	

2. How much did your opinions change about whether it's OK to be assertive?

A lot	Not at all
1            2            3            4            5	

3. How much did this affect your actual behavior?

I became more assertive	No change	I became less assertive
1            2            3            4            5		

4. What would have made this class better?

5. What did you especially like about this class? and any other comments:

Class W6 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Assertion training obstacle course (need we say more to remind you).

1. How much did you enjoy participating in this?

Very much					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How much did this affect your actual behavior?

I became more assertive	No change	I became less assertive
1	2	3
4	5	

3. What would have made this better?

4. What did you like about this class? and other comments:

Class W7 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

The hierarchy of needs was explained and then small groups discussed their significant relationships and what different needs were being met. Then people wrote out what they wanted and had to give in a relationship.

1. How helpful was this to you in thinking about yourself and your relationships?

Not helpful					Very helpful
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How interesting was this class?

Very boring					Very interesting
1	2	3	4	5	

3. What would have made this better?

4. What did you like about this class? and any other comments:

Class W8 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

The values auction, where people picked the person who offered what they wanted in a relationship. Then people broke into small groups and discussed different types of relationships (some groups filled out the roles wheel).

1. How interesting was this class?

Very interesting

Very boring

1          2          3          4          5

2. How much impact did this have on your thinking?

A lot

Not at all

1          2          3          4          5

3. What would have made this better?

4. What did you like about this?

Class W9                      I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Showing and discussing *Men's Lives* film.

1. How interesting was this?

Very

Not at all

1          2          3          4          5

2. How much of an impact did this have on you thinking about men's sex roles?

No impact

Very impactful

1          2          3          4          5

3. What would have made this better?

4. What did you especially like about this?

### **III-D Groups**

1. How much better have you gotten to know people?

No difference

I know them much more

1          2          3          4          5

2. How did they compare with your expectations?

Far exceeded my expectations

Much worse than expected

1          2          3          4          5

3. How enjoyable were the III-D groups?

Very					Awful
1	2	3	4	5	

4. What has been especially productive?

5. What could have made your group better?

**Overall**

What has been the most personally helpful to you this quarter?

What has been the least personally helpful to you this quarter?

What were the most positive things about this class this quarter?

What were the things you would still like to see changed? (please use the back)

Thank you for your time in filling these forms out!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## CURRICULUM EVALUATION — SPRING 1977

Once again, we would like your input about the class—what went well, what could be improved, etc. The questionnaire is long but we really use the information for next year's planning, so we appreciate the time you take filling this out.

Thanks again!!

Class S1 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Self theory. Presentation by Jim Harrison and tying this concept to the course.

1. How helpful was this in understanding what the class is about?

Very helpful

Not helpful at all

1

2

3

4

5

2. Did you learn about yourself?

No difference

Yes, a great deal

1

2

3

4

5

3. How interesting was this?

Very

Not at all

1

2

3

4

5

4. What did you especially like?

5. What would have made this better?

6. Comments:

Class S2 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Showing the interview with the Myrdal's and discussing issues they brought out.

1. How stimulating to your thinking was this?

Not at all					Very
1	2	3	4	5	

2. If this was stimulating, what topics did it encourage you to think about?

3. How interesting was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

4. What would have made this better?

5. What did you especially like about this?

Class S3                      I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Three exercises for understanding self-theory: Analyzing songs, labels on forehead with discussion (Marianne's Group Labeling Exercise), and putting labels on other's backs. Please add comments about each different exercise as well as the combination.

1. How helpful was this in understanding self-theory?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

2. Did you learn about yourself?

No difference					Yes, a great deal
1	2	3	4	5	

3. How interesting was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

4. What did you especially like?

5. What would have made this better?

6. Comments:

Class S4 & S5 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Racial values and their development; Racial stereotypes. We broke into groups by races and generated lists (S4) which were shared (S5).

1. How helpful was this in understanding other racial groups?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

2. Did you learn about yourself?

No difference					Yes, a great deal
1	2	3	4	5	

3. How interesting was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

4. What did you especially like?

5. What would have made this better?

6. Comments: (especially about when and with whom this exercise might be appropriate)

Class S6 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Presentation by III-D group on journal keeping.

1. How helpful was this in clarifying what the journal keeping process has been like?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How interesting was this?

Not at all					Very
1	2	3	4	5	

3. If this had any impact on your own journal keeping, please describe:

4. What did you especially like?

5. What would have made this better?

6. Comments:

Class S7                    I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

One professor and one student formed a panel to answer questions on sexuality gathered by a III-D group.

1. How informative was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4		5

2. How interesting was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4		5

3. What would have made this better? (include other types of speakers or specific topics about sexuality you would have found interesting)

4. What did you especially like about this?

5. Comments:

Class S8                    I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Part I. Interviews of people of different ages on religion and patriotism by a III-D group.

1. How stimulating to your thinking was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4		5

2. How interesting was this?

Not at all					Very
1	2	3	4		5

3. What did you especially like?

4. What would have made this better?

5. Comments:

Class S8 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Part II—Lecturette on decision-making. Small groups made decisions, discussed values, info, strategies, and were quizzed by a staff person.

1. How helpful was this in understanding decision making?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

2. Does understanding decision-making have any effect on your behavior (including thoughts, feelings, actions)?

NO \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe:

3. How interesting was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

4. What did you especially like?

5. What would have made this better?

6. Comments:

Class S9 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Part I—Information and dramatizations about women's health problems.

1. How informative was this?

Not at all					Very
1	2	3	4	5	

2. How interesting was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

3. What would have made this better?

4. What did you especially like about this?

5. Comments:

Class S9 I was there. \_\_\_\_\_

Part II— Skit and discussion about relationships illustrating different non-growth relationships available to couples.

1. How stimulating to your thinking was this?

Not at all					Very
1	2	3	4	5	

2. If this was stimulating, what topics did it encourage you to think about?

3. How interesting was this?

Very					Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	

4. What would have made this better?

5. What did you especially like about this?

### Triple I-D

This quarter everyone participated in planning a class with their III-D group.

Which one was yours?

What kinds of things did you learn about your topic?

What did you learn about planning and presenting a class?

Would you suggest we do this again next year? (Why or why not?)

What would have made this better?

What did you especially like about doing this?

### Comments:

There are no right answers to the next part. We are interested in your *perceptions*:

What did you see as the focus of Fall Quarter?

What did you see as the focus of Winter Quarter?

What did you see as the focus of Spring Quarter?

What changes would you make in Fall Quarter?

What changes would you make in Winter Quarter?

What changes would you make in Spring Quarter?

When during the class did you feel most involved?

Least involved?

A year from now, what do you expect to remember as the most important experience from Sierra?

As you think back over the year, what events were the most significant in helping you make the switch from being a high school student to being a college student?

In the dorm?

In the class?

In UCI as a whole?

What part(s) of the curriculum really made a difference to you?

What else do you wish had been covered?

What was SIMSOC to you? Can you see it as a contribution to the hall?

What has been the role of each of the student staff members (in your perception)?

What was helpful about each of the student staff?

What else do you wish the student staff had done?

What changes have you seen in Sierra through the year? (Especially on how people relate to each other)

What changes has *your* level of involvement in Sierra gone through?

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

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