

MINORITY
STUDENTS
FILE

To: Faculty Council

From: The Student Counseling Center Staff

Subject: A Position Paper Relating to the Tentative Proposal to Establish Specialized Educational and Service Programs for "Minority" and "Culturally Deprived" Students Date: March 3, 1971

The Student Counseling Center staff takes the position that any educational, vocational, social, or personal problem that a "minority" or "culturally deprived" student reports is a real and visible problem experienced to a greater or lesser extent by "other" students within the student body at the University of Idaho. We recognize that racial, ethnic, nationality, and religious contingencies contribute to and accentuate many human problems. We refuse to accept, however, that any human problem is unique to any identifiable human group. To do so forms the very basis of discrimination and bias.

Many students at the University of Idaho are in need of specialized services not now available. These include special reading and remedial learning laboratories, tutorial services, and speech therapy clinics. Other existing student personnel services are operating on less than professionally recommended staffing and facility levels. We don't believe that the University needs to justify the provision of these services by recruiting specialized groups of students.

When the University recognizes and provides the basic services needed by the cross-section of students now represented in the University, it will be providing many of the basic essentials for specially recruited groups of students no matter what their designation or composition.

If the University decides to participate in these specialized programs, the Student Counseling Center expects to support and contribute to the effort. Until further specifications of the program are made known, our staff sets forth the following roles it expects to assume:

1. Individual and group counseling on vocational, educational, and personal adjustment problems faced by the student. It should be noted here that any drastic changes of environment are usually accompanied by an increase in adjustment and personal problems.
2. The counselors to serve as consultants to the University staff directly involved in the development and maintenance of specialized programs.
3. The Counseling Center does not want to be seen as the advisor to the minority or disadvantaged students. Neither do we see ourselves qualified to serve as the developer of individual programs for individual students. This is best done within the colleges. We do not see ourselves as coordinators of remedial educational programs.

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4. Additions to the staff of the Student Counseling Center should not be designated as providing service solely for the minority group or disadvantaged group in question but must be able to assume responsibilities for all aspects of the counseling program. It would be well to recruit staff members who have special training or experience with specialized groups. For example, we currently have one counselor on the staff who has had extensive experience in counseling American Indians.
5. Because of the neutral nature required in good counseling, the Student Counseling Center does not want to become identified as the helping agency for one specific group of students. Our mission is to serve all students equally.

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