
Guest Editorial

Anne W. Knight, a graduating senior in elementary education

It is extremely gratifying to receive this academic recognition. During my college career, I have had the good fortune of working with many outstanding students from various disciplines, and thus I feel quite honored to have been singled out today. This is certainly the pinnacle of my academic achievement thus far, and I feel privileged to have this opportunity to share my reflections with you and to highlight the influence the faculty has had on my education and development as an emerging professional teacher.

Kennesaw State College is an inviting institution of higher learning in which students of all ages feel equally welcome and an integral part of the student population. The diversity in student age affords learners the opportunity to broaden their perspective of the real world. In my view, Kennesaw State epitomizes a successful learning institution: The professorate is learned and challenging yet ever-curious and supportive; the curriculum is strenuous yet attainable. What I have gained from my experiences here has far surpassed my greatest expectations of college. I will be proud to graduate from Kennesaw State not only as a teacher, but also, and more importantly, as a lifelong learner.

It is clear that a dynamic faculty that stays abreast of research and current theory is the hallmark of an ever-improving institution. I feel that KSC attracts exemplary professors to our campus who exhibit enthusiasm and expertise. As an education major, I have studied the phenomenon of self-fulfilling prophecy wherein what educators

expect of students is oftentimes exactly what the students produce. Understanding this truth places an awesome responsibility on the faculty; however, your efficacy is certainly commendable. It would be impossible to individually name each professor who has impacted my education in a positive manner; therefore, today I will focus on three characteristics of the professorate which I feel have played a critical role in my success as a student.

“For the warmth that you, the faculty of Kennesaw State College, have radiated in my life for the last four years, I thank you.”

First and foremost, I feel the faculty as a whole recognizes the need to establish high academic standards. In order to effectively promote intellectual growth, students must be challenged to rise above mediocrity and to strive for excellence. Judy Mitchell is the personification of this ideal, and I thank her for encouraging students to define the letter grade “A” as truly outstanding work. Dr. Mitchell not only sets high expectations for her classes, but she also has the wherewithal to assist students along their academic journey.

The second quality that I feel the faculty demonstrates is the un-

derstanding of the highly individual and reflective nature of learning. David Martin suggests that his students ponder the belief that there are no right nor wrong answers. Whether one concurs with this philosophy is irrelevant. The emphasis is on the uniqueness of learners. By responding to most questions with a question, Dr. Martin compels his students to formulate their own opinions and articulate their viewpoints.

Thirdly, I feel the faculty recognizes the importance of empowering students to believe in themselves. In every learning situation, students work within the parameters set by the teacher. When the educator views each student as a rich source of knowledge and genuinely respects them as learners, the bounds of the classroom are limitless. I’d like to express my gratitude to Vicki McLain and M.L. Anderegg for consistently creating a stimulating learning environment wherein students recognize their own potential and build trust in their personal academic abilities. Drs. McLain and Anderegg serve as exemplary models of teachers as facilitators versus teachers as instructors. As you know, self-confidence is a powerful component of educational success.

Anne W. Knight recently won the 1993-94 Academic Recognition Award from the University System Chancellor. Her remarks at the KSC Faculty Meeting on March 17, 1994 remind us of what teaching is all about.