

BRIEFLY NOTED



Liberal Education: Critical Essays on Professions, Pedagogy, and Structure by Frederick Stirton Weaver. Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027 (\$24.95).

This is a book that would be very much at home on the shelf next to Ernest Boyer's latest volume, *Scholarship Revisited* (See Spring, 1991 issue of *Reaching Through Teaching*, page 9). While Weaver's stated purpose is "... to clarify and promote what [he sees] to be the central purposes of undergraduate education, especially the elements of it regarded as liberal education," the theme of teaching as scholarship pervades the volume.

Though the term, pedagogy, is part

of the book's subtitle, the author is quick to point out his overriding concern with what is taught rather than how it is taught. Without denigrating the importance of teaching techniques, he insists that content is of primary importance, and that content influences pedagogy. He vigorously supports a form of what he calls critical-inquiry education because it entails a pedagogy that encourages good habits of the mind.

Weaver makes a noble, if not completely believable, attempt to dissolve the perception of competition between teaching and research by making the usual point of how research can enliven the classroom. What is more believable is his position that writing about teaching also constitutes valid scholarship. The problems with this type of scholarship, he says, are: 1) that it lacks visibility (recognition, prestige, and reward in terms of promotion and tenure, and 2) that it needs more stress on the intellectual side of teaching.

In Chapter 5, two examples are

given of curricular innovation, which are simple (if any curricular change in higher education is ever simple) and inexpensive. One is the concept of Academic Advising, which seems a misnomer, since it has other connotations to us. This involves a required one or two-hour seminar where students discuss important questions based upon assigned readings. Topics of discussion include, "What is an educated person?" and "What is liberal education, and is it good for you?" The second, and most intriguing, is the idea of establishing thematic minors, as opposed to disciplinary minors. These interdisciplinary groups of courses would engage faculty and students across disciplinary lines in a way that could only benefit the whole educational enterprise. 🍏

Some of the most recent books CETL has acquired on teaching at the college level are listed below. These are available from the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Room 472 in the Library, and may be borrowed for a reasonable time by KSC faculty.

Bateman, Walter L. *Open to Question*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

Eble, Kenneth E. *The Craft of Teaching*. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988.

Erickson, Stanford C. *The Essence of Good Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984.

Kahn, Susan and Joanne Kurfiss, eds. *To Improve the Academy*. Vols. 6, 7, & 8. Stillwater, Oklahoma: New Forums Press, 1987-1989.

Katz, Joseph and Mildred Henry. *Turning Professors into Teachers*. New York: Macmillan, 1988.

Kendall, Jane C., et al. *Strengthening Experiential Education Within Your Institution*. Raleigh, North Carolina: National Society for Internships and Experiential Education, 1986.

Lowman, Joseph. *Mastering the Techniques of Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984.

Ory, John C. *Improving Your Test Questions*. Urbana-Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Editor's Note: All materials reviewed in this publication are available from the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Room 472-473 in the Library.

REACHING THROUGH TEACHING

Please share with us your ideas about teaching and the exciting strategies you use for making your classrooms successful. Our next deadline for submissions is **February 14, 1992**. Please send all articles, typed double-spaced, to Don Forrester in THE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING (CETL).

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