

3. CURRICULAR CONTENT. We have thus far pointed out the diversity which exists with respect to the organization and administration of schools of nursing. No less a diversity exists with reference to the curricular content and evaluation in different schools, if the catalogues which the Committee has studied can be taken as mirroring actual conditions. It would manifestly be impossible to summarize here adequately all that might be said concerning curricular content and its evaluation. The Committee has studied more intensively seventeen of the university nurses schools selected because for these catalogues and related sources of information were available, and because in these institutions the measure of university influence seems to be pronounced.

In addition to (a) general comments on the curricular content in these seventeen schools, the Committee submits brief comments on (b) basic science courses; (c) medical courses; (d) nursing courses and (e) cultural courses.

(a) General Comment:

In the schools here under review it seems clear that acceptable principles of curricular organization are observed better than they are in a large proportion of the non-university schools. Thus, the general principles of course sequence, course load, time distribution, teaching load per teacher, the relations between theoretical and practical courses and other similar features are observed with some approximation to collegiate standards. On the other hand, with reference to each of these features not only is there considerable diversity in these different schools but in some of them there is a noteworthy falling short in one or more details when the situation in these schools of nursing is compared with the situation in the accredited college.

(b) Basic Science Courses:

The basic science courses are obviously unduly condensed. In a large percentage of the schools studied an effort is made to crowd anatomy, physiology, chemistry, bacteriology and an introductory course in pharmacology into the preparatory four months period. Such an arrangement obviously could not meet standard collegiate requirements, and, as a result, in most of these schools the credit value given is entirely too low to meet the demands of a sound educational quantitative standard. Two credit hours in each of these various subjects are by far the most common credit value assigned, thus falling short of what is generally regarded as a minimal credit value of the collegiate course in the elementary laboratory sciences.