Retiring Faculty Offered New Option

Columbia has found a way to help solve two problems facing universities in the next decade: how to survive an expected large number of faculty retirements, and how to help retiring faculty sustain a scholarly life.

It is Columbia’s Society of Senior Scholars, a new program that encourages retired scholars to continue part-time teaching and counseling in the undergraduate core curriculum.

“It will strengthen instruction and give students exposure to mature and experienced teachers in courses often taught by younger scholars,” says its originator, Wm. Theodore DeBary, “and it will give faculty facing retirement an option between continued full-time teaching and an abrupt divorce from academic life that retirees often find painful. Sustaining their intellectual life past retirement is perhaps the most crucial need for scholars as ‘senior citizens.’ As teachers in the classroom they can share their wisdom with students and junior colleagues in core courses.”

DeBary is John Mitchell Mason Professor of the University and director of the Heyman Center for the Humanities, where the Society of Senior Scholars will be established with a five-year, $340,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Its members—four or five will be appointed each year beginning this spring—will be chosen from a select group of senior faculty of ages 65 to 75 who have demonstrated a commitment to teaching in the undergraduate core curriculum.

Provost Robert F. Goldberger in announcing the program said he hoped it would serve as a model for others: “Large numbers of tenured faculty in American colleges and universities will be retiring in the next decade, opening up opportunities for younger scholars to join the tenured ranks. But this turnover may also create problems of leadership and staffing in programs of basic instruction. To have on hand a corps of mature and committed teachers with wide educational experience, established reputations, and a close familiarity with the distinctive educational traditions and standards of their home institutions can provide a measure of continuity, leadership, guidance and vision to a new generation of teachers and students.”

Senior Scholars will teach one course a semester and participate as they wish in the colloquial activities of the Society and in the Humanities colloquia at the Heyman Center. They will receive modest stipends and share in research and travel.

GS Course Puts Teen Sc

A 16-year-old high school student won first prize in this year’s prestigious Westinghouse Science Talent Search with math he learned at Columbia last fall.

Chetan Nayak, a senior at Stuyvesant High School, won the top $20,000 scholarship in the contest for teenage science students by mathematically analyzing the relationship between gravity and electromagnetism.

Nayak, a member of last year’s U.S. team for the Physics Olympiad competition in Europe, took a differential geometry course, in which he earned an “A,” through the School of General Studies. Usually ten to twelve high school students take courses through General Studies each semester. This term Nayak is taking a physics course in optics and thermodynamics.

“There are many competing unified field theories,” said Nayak in a recent interview. “I used a Lagrangian approach to formulate a classical unified field theory in a new way and then to reformulate it as a quantum theory. The course at Columbia taught me much of the requisite math to do that. When you talk about gravitation, differential geometry is really the only math you can use.”

Unified field theories attempt to relate the various physical forces that act in nature, as when James Clerk Maxwell unified electricity and

Euripides Is Watching...

...and so are Demosthenes, Sophocles and Augustus Caesar, the four statues on the north balcony of Low Rotunda. Sarah Weiner is among several workers under their gaze in new “open air” offices in the Rotunda galleries. Page 8.

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funds, attend luncheon and dinner meetings and take part in scholarly conferences with special lecturers, visiting scholars and distinguished guests.

They will be chosen by nomination of the administrative committee of the Heyman Center, which includes the chairmen of its interdepartmental programs, the dean responsible for the instructional program and the vice president for arts and sciences, and will be appointed for one-year renewable terms.

"This program will give special recognition to the dedicated service of faculty members who have been most conscientious in serving undergraduate divisions of the university. At a time when many of the rewards of academic life go to those engaged in advanced research and writing, it will give public importance to the role of the teacher," said deBary.

Sponsors of the plan at the Heyman Center in addition to deBary are Robert Belknap, professor of Slavic languages and former chairman of the General Education and Humanities programs; Arthur C. Danto, Johnstone Professor of Philosophy; Ainslee Embree, professor of history and chairman of the Contemporary Civilization program; Steven Marcus, chairman of the department of English and comparative literature.

Barbara S. Miller, Milbank Professor of Oriental Studies at Barnard and chairwoman of the Society of Fellows in the Humanities; James Mirolo, professor of English and comparative literature and director of the Humanities program; Wayne Proudfoot, professor of religion and former department chairman, and Carl Woodring, G.E. Woodberry Professor Emeritus of English and Comparative Literature and former chairman of the Society of Fellows.

The Heyman Center was established in 1981 with a gift from David M. Heyman, a 1912 graduate of Columbia College, to encourage interdisciplinary teaching and research in the humanities and promote study and discussion of contemporary issues in all fields concerned with questions of human values.

Meeting Anniversaries
Dr. King

Marian Wright Edelman, the Children's Defense Fund's outspoken civil rights lawyer of the early 1960s, will address students and scholars at a Barnard conference, "Unfulfilled Agenda," at 9:30 A.M. in Barnard Hall.

The conference, which will consider the progress and problems of civil rights struggle, celebrates the anniversary of King's April 4, 1968.

Edelman's speech will be followed by faculty discussion on civil rights in America, the world and the future.

Panelists will include executive director of Human Rights Watch, Julius Chambliss, and A. Leon Higginbotham, Exxon professor of social studies at Howard University. 

The conference on "The New Liberalism: Martin Luther King, Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Civil Rights Movement" will be held in the ABC "Nightline" studio on Jeff Greenfield, former writer for Senator Robert F. Kennedy, will serve as executive producer of "Report" on WNYW-TV.

Lynn Walker, program director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, may have unique problems which the State certification process might not adequately address, the City's Board of

Licensing . . .
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results of health and fingerprint checks, and by the scheduling of the written tests.