

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL RECOGNITION

Introductory Comments

The question of social recognition is one of the most controversial issues associated with the Brotherhood School. All of the members of our subcommittee (Carolyn Kendall, Mark Kulieke, and Sally Schmidt) have expressed concern about granting titles or degrees in the Brotherhood School. David Kantor and Marvin Sawryn have also shared their ideas with us. David cautions, "I think that a unique challenge exists in setting up a reward system which does not easily allow the rewards to become sought for their own sake, such as if the rewards were overtly associated with granting of political power and privileges...we should have a clear conception of exactly what it is that we are reinforcing lest we inadvertently get the movement developing in some strange tangent." Marvin suggests that we have no terminal degree or notification of completion but a series of basic goals and personal task oriented goals.

Among the objections to granting titles which Mark has heard from Urantians are:

1. Titles are too churchlike. They are beginning a new priesthood. They will cause new people to shy away from the URANTIA Book.
2. Titles suggest that certain people are more spiritually advanced than others. How is spirituality evaluated? Who is to say if one person is more spiritually advanced than another?
3. Awarding of titles and degrees will turn into a popularity contest. Whoever is liked by the Education Committee, or some other evaluating body, will receive recognition. People with unpopular ideas will be held back.

Carolyn warns against constructing our own tower of Babel and suggests that maybe our "school" already exists in study groups and societies: "The study group format is flexible, and even transportable, if necessary. They are relaxed and free from the pressure of competitive scholastic compulsion. The group could conduct specialized research. Study groups are autonomous and un-standardized. They individualize study and can provide tutoring, from friend to friend. It is a simple form adaptable to any culture, race, or country in the world. Under ideal circumstances it encourages pupils to become teachers. They can learn by doing. Best of all, study group members study the URANTIA Book itself, and they share religious experience."

After receiving such excellent and authentic insights concerning the dangers of awarding titles, I feel a little lonely in saying "Yes, but..." I would make the following observations.

1. In terms of the present social responsibilities of the URANTIA Brotherhood there is little need for such control, evaluation, or social recognition in the Brotherhood School. We can enjoy "open learning."

2. The history of religious and other social institutions shows that as social responsibilities increase specific problems arise and cause the establishment of rules, regulations, and forms of certification. Any responsible social institution must eventually be concerned with standards and quality.

The idealist in us shrinks from titles and degrees but viable institutions must have stratified leadership. We must think in terms of the future. Someday the Brotherhood School will become a great center training religious leaders of the world.

In such an institution differential evaluation and recognition are almost inevitable. People being served by every social institution need guidance in selecting and evaluating leaders and service. Educational accomplishment and group certification are the usual methods used in accomplishing this purpose.

3. The founders of the Brotherhood School recognized this future responsibility and began preparing for it. We may not like the terms "certified leader" and "ordained teacher" but the Committee on Education is probably wise to make plans for "evaluated learning" before it is needed and before the necessity of immediate problems result in more restrictive policies than are necessary.

4. Most of the lower level personalities in the universe are given some kind of training, evaluation, and classification labels. Recognition indicative of both effort and attainment is given to ascending mortals in local universe schools. Tests are administered to determine qualification for certification in various phases of local universe service.

The Lanonadek sons are trained, evaluated, classified, and certified according to ability, personality, and attainment. The seraphic angels are given training, subjected to educational tests, and given classification labels. Mortals on this confused planet can hardly expect to be exempt from evaluation and classification in carrying out their social responsibilities.

5. In the following outline I have attempted to look at the problem of social recognition in the light of my conception of both the present situation and in the long term purposes and broad structure of the Brotherhood School.

SOCIAL RECOGNITION IN THE BROTHERHOOD SCHOOL

I. Purpose and Responsibility.

The purpose and responsibility of the URANTIA Brotherhood School is to actualize the Father's will through educational services on two basic levels.

A. Individual-personal.

The school should strive to develop personality and facilitate spiritual growth in harmony with Article II (purpose) of the URANTIA Brotherhood constitution.

B. Social-institutional.

The school should strive to establish solid educational foundations to ensure the viability and institutional effectiveness of the URANTIA Brotherhood and other social institutions.

Within the framework of the above objectives, the Brotherhood School should strive to promote as much freedom and diversity as possible in the educational process.

II. Actualization of Purpose.

The Brotherhood School must be concerned with both individual potentials, growth, and achievement and social responsibility for educational standards (adequacy) and quality. There are two basic approaches to accomplish these ends.

A. Open Learning.

1. Students in this category are not formally evaluated.
2. Any restrictions to specific classes are determined by conditions or prerequisites determined by the teacher, study group, society, or Brotherhood School.
3. Each study group, society, or Brotherhood School organizes classes, workshops, or educational experiences according to its best wisdom.
4. The Brotherhood School in open learning situations serves mainly in an advisory capacity or may be the source of educational materials and resource leaders.
5. Certificates of accomplishment or other recognition is optional and is determined by the sponsoring group.

B. Evaluated Learning.

1. The only formal curricular requirements needed in the Brotherhood School are the establishment of areas and levels of educational competence and personal experience. The student may achieve this competency and experience through any process of his choosing, including individual initiative.

2. Students desiring to formally enter the program of evaluated learning must apply for admission to the Brotherhood School. They must have been accepted at least one year prior to applying for any comprehensive examinations.
3. Educational and experiential requirements should be established for at least two or three levels of competency by the Brotherhood School.
4. When a student feels he is competent in an area he applies for an examination. Initial examinations in each area will consist of both objective and essay questions. Where appropriate there will be performance evaluation. His tests will be evaluated by three faculty members and/or consultants. If he should not be approved as competent in an area, he must wait a minimum of one year before applying for another examination in this area.
5. Students in both the lower level and higher level programs will complete a dissertation, a research project, or a creative project which is approved by their advisory committee.
6. When the student has successfully completed his preliminary written and performance exams and has submitted his dissertation, he applies for his final oral examination. This final examination and evaluation will be conducted by a seven member committee selected by the Brotherhood School.

III. Social Recognition of Accomplishment.

The following titles and degrees are presented only to illustrate and to stimulate more adequate suggestions.

A. Conventional Terminology.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Degree</u>
Accredited Teacher	Certificate of accomplishment
Master Teacher	Rel. M. - Master of Religion
Life Teacher	Rel. D. - Doctor of Religion

B. Classification suggested by Mark Kulicke.

Student-Teacher I	I
Student-Teacher II	II

Student-Teacher III

IV. Current Status of Brotherhood School.

- A. We should probably emphasize open learning throughout the Brotherhood at this time.
- B. Leadership level (Accredited Teacher) evaluated learning should be formally reorganized by the Brotherhood School in the near future. Master's level and doctoral level evaluated learning are probably many years from actualization.

— Recommendations of Workshop Participants to the Committee on Education of the Urantia Brotherhood, July 28, 1975

"The Book is being given to those who are ready for it long before its worldwide mission. In the meantime thousands of study groups must be brought into existence. Thus will the Book be in readiness to comfort and enlighten the peoples of the world when the battle for man's liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind." (Excerpt from "Unity, Not Uniformity" by Martin Myers, Copyright © 1973 URANTIA Foundation — used by permission)

1. In light of this statement:

We move that the URANTIA Brotherhood Education Committee foster the creation and promulgation of URANTIA Book Study Groups throughout the world as the most significant foundation for the dissemination of the URANTIA revelation.

Vote: yes-35 no-0 abstention-3

2. As the great need for resource coordination has been expressed in the conference by you:

We move that the URANTIA Brotherhood Education Committee create a Resource Center which will serve all levels of URANTIA Book students in the following areas by:

- a) Collecting all available study aids and guides.
- b) Making available study aids and guides to all individuals, study groups, Field Representatives and Societies on a worldwide basis.
- c) Gathering from the individual, study groups and Societies a list of resource specialists.
- d) Publishing a catalog listing all these resources.
- e) Advising individuals seeking specialized training.

Vote: yes-28 no-5 abstention-3

3. Because of an expressed need for more effective communications among URANTIA Book students:

We move that the Executive Committee of the URANTIA Brotherhood expand and strengthen the existing communication channels of the URANTIA movement.

Vote: yes-33 no-1 abstention-5

4. Because of the importance of these issues:

We move that the URANTIA Brotherhood Education Committee reconvene the Summer Workshop of the URANTIA Brotherhood School in 1976.

Vote: yes-30 no-2 abstention-6

5. In order to gain wider involvement and perspectives:

We move that the URANTIA Brotherhood Education Committee conduct a survey of the participants in the General Conference to determine their educational needs and goals.

Vote: yes-20 no-11 abstention-8

6. Because of the need for continuity in thinking and communication:

We move that the URANTI Brotherhood Education Committee inform all Workshop Participants of actions resulting from these proposals.

Vote: yes-unanimous no-4 abstention-0

Submitted by: