

army by combining the provision of good feeding with teaching the principles of nutrition, in the way that they apply to the soldier, to the men who will be responsible for their practical application.

The Place of Nutrition in the Institutional Management Association Certificate Course

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The scope of institutional management

Institutional management involves the responsibility for all the domestic side of any large undertaking, and training for it includes both theoretical and practical work. The syllabus embraces everything connected with the building and its care, equipment and contents, as well as the organization of staff and household work, and also cooking, catering and nutrition, business affairs and book-keeping, with some study of the science subjects connecting these matters.

There are five principal lines of work for which the course provides a basic training; they include the management of the household arrangements in schools and colleges, the catering and domestic management in hospitals, catering management in industrial canteens, hotel and restaurant management and the organization of the School Meals Service. Catering has therefore to be considered in relation to the nutritional requirements of young children, students, heavy and light industrial workers and men and women in sickness and in health, as well as those on pleasure bent. In a training that covers so wide a field, nutrition is only one of several important subjects in a very full syllabus.

The training for institutional management covers 2 years in a College and 1 year taken in employment. During the 2 years in College, the syllabus assumes 1000 h of instruction each year. As the examining body the Institutional Management Association does not dictate to any College how it should arrange its syllabus. A rough estimate of the proportion of time to be devoted to each subject is available, however, as a guide to anyone seeking advice on the matter.

The suggested percentages of time are cookery and catering, 45; nutrition, physiology and hygiene, 15; business management, accounts, book-keeping and English, 15; institutional organization and methods of cleaning, 25.

A large proportion of training time is of necessity spent on practical work, both on acquiring practical skill and in gaining practical experience on the job. One of the foundations of a happy household, whether large or small, is good cooking; unless the person managing the household side of any institution, be it school, college, hospital, canteen or hotel, is herself fully conversant with practical cookery and kitchen management, no amount of theoretical knowledge can compensate. The suggested time allotted to cooking, catering and nutrition is 51%, and of that

the time to be devoted to the teaching of nutrition is seldom more than 48 h divided into 1 h a week for four terms. Moreover, as the training stands there is no possibility of any appreciable increase on this time.

The limited time allotted is by no means the only difficulty encountered when considering how best to plan the teaching of nutrition. Inquiries of various Colleges as to how they approached the subject show that the students entering College may not have received any foundation of science on which to base nutrition teaching. Some students may have taken chemistry at school to the advanced level in the General Certificate of Education, but they will be few. A certain number may have some elementary grounding in biology or physiology, but a large proportion of girls leave school today at the age of 18 with no introduction to any science subject except possibly a little botany.

The need for science at school level

Our Examinations Council has fully discussed whether it would not be wise to insist on some science qualification for any student entering training in institutional management. There is complete agreement that such a course would be highly desirable. It has, however, been made clear to us by responsible authorities that it would be useless at present to make this stipulation because of the acute shortage of science teachers in schools. Many girls' schools today, and especially the type of school from which potential students are drawn, are experiencing great difficulty in providing even a minimum of science tuition. It appears, too, that there is no prospect that there will be any remedy in the near future.

There is a general feeling among College tutors that it would be an advantage for every student who came to College to have at least taken general science in the General Certificate of Education, but this is not at present possible, and most Colleges begin by assuming no science knowledge in their students, though sometimes efforts are made to divide a class into groups according to the science knowledge obtained at school.

It will thus be obvious that much ground has to be covered in a very short time. The percentage of hours to be allotted to science in the syllabus is about 15, which has to include physiology, nutrition and hygiene. As an elementary knowledge of physiology is the first essential to a study of nutrition, most Colleges begin the first term with lectures in physiology as a basis for nutrition, which follows.

Experience over some years shows that, even with the limited time that can be allotted to the study of nutrition, there is still considerable variation among Colleges in the number of hours given to it. At the same time it is not safe to assume that, when students spend longer on nutrition, the best results are to be found on examination or, more important than examination results, at translating the theoretical knowledge acquired into everyday use in cooking and catering. The success or failure of the student here lies not so much in the amount of study, but in the way in which the subject is presented to her.

To understand the matter fully, it is necessary to consider the type of student

who goes in for institutional management and to think again of the kinds of work she will have to undertake in her career.

Girls who go in for institutional management have to be capable, and essentially practical, and with alert brains. If they have had no science background at school they are inclined to be impatient over slow experiments to prove the why and wherefore and are more interested in getting on with their jobs as it appears best to them. Their lives are spent in hurry and bustle. It is important for them to be able to think and act quickly and to be prepared to cope successfully with emergencies, large or small. In the field of catering there are four important considerations: to keep within the available money; to plan within the capabilities of the existing staff; to plan according to the available equipment; to provide food that will be eaten and appreciated. Only when due weight has been given to each of these can a catering department function successfully. Nutrition teaching must therefore aim to give to students a realization of how far a knowledge of nutrition can help them to achieve these objectives.

The practical approach

It will be seen, then, that the study of nutrition in this course is going to appeal most to the student when it is linked up at every point as far as possible with the practical work undertaken. When the science and cookery and catering lecturers combine, so that the points made in the nutrition lectures can be illustrated by practical work in the kitchen, then nutrition at once begins to mean something real and important to the student and there ceases to exist the great gulf only too often to be found between what goes down in the lecture note-book and what goes on in the kitchen.

In the examination for the I.M.A. Certificate at present there is a compulsory theory paper in catering and nutrition and an optional science paper in physiology and hygiene. The Examining Body, believing that the level of science in the certificate is not sufficiently high, set up last year a science committee to consider and make recommendations as to this matter. It is reluctantly recognized that the difficulty of teaching science in schools at the present time makes it impossible to ask for preliminary science knowledge and that in the short time that can be allotted to science in a crowded syllabus of institutional management training it is well-nigh impossible to attain the desired level in the study of nutrition, although some progress is being made. There is yet much to be done to ensure that more emphasis is placed on the study of science for the I.M.A. Certificate and that elementary nutrition be presented as a practical science that can be readily translated into welfare of the community at large.