

## STATUS OF GENERAL CHEMISTRY IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

During the coming year the Journal of Chemical Education has planned a series of articles on general chemistry teaching in universities, in liberal arts colleges and in two-year colleges. Tom Lippincott is seeking to "describe the state of the art in general chemistry instruction--with emphasis on new ideas that have been successful or traditional ideas that continue to be successful." He is interested in accounts of successful programs or the kinds of problems we are struggling with. The articles will not consist of surveys that tabulate. I will appreciate your help in assembling a description of the status of general chemistry in our liberal arts colleges.

Should you find time during this conference to inform me of your experiences, your ideas or your problems, I will be grateful if you will write on this sheet and return it to me, to Dr. Kieft or to the registration desk. If you want more time to formulate your thoughts, please write to me within the next three weeks at the address given below. I will list a few of the topics and issues which are relevant. We will discuss some of these in group discussion for those who are interested.

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## CURRENT ISSUES IN GENERAL EDUCATION

### Course Content

Is general chemistry only a service course with content set by outside agents such as the health professions?

Do we find a need to change our content with the swing in high schools away from CBS or CHEMS?

Are we moving toward or away from tracking?

Are we moving away from theory (e.g. molecular orbitals, complex ionic equilibria) toward descriptive applications of modern chemistry?

The laboratory is often cited as the weakest part of general chemistry. Why? What is anybody doing about it?

### Teaching Methods

Are there any changes in the traditional lecture-laboratory sequences such as separation of the laboratory as an individual course?

Do we use upperclassmen in our teaching other than as laboratory assistants or to run help sessions?

Are the self-paced courses such as PSI standing the test of time?

Has educational psychology (e.g. Piaget) made any impact yet?

Are we using media on any moderate scale beyond the usual films and overhead transparencies?

Have we overcome the cost problem in computer assisted instruction?

### Innovation

Are there any new ideas?

What is distinctive about general chemistry in liberal arts colleges vis-a-vis the universities or the two-year colleges?