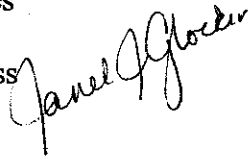


# memorandum

Division of Science, Health, and Business  
Janet J. Glocker, Dean

DATE: February 12, 2001

TO: Ms. Trulie Nobis, Student  
Ms. Marcia Faulkner, Grievance Advisor  
Dr. Rachel Simons, Faculty Member  
Dr. Richard Connett, Chair, MCC Biology Department  
Dr. Vicky Smith, Vice President, Academic Services

FROM: Janet J. Glocker, Dean, Science, Health and Business 

RE: Nobis Grievance

I have carefully considered the grievance of Trulie Nobis, dated January 30, 2001; I commend Ms. Nobis and Doctors Simons and Connett for their good faith effort to seek consensus in meetings held before Ms. Nobis's grievance filing and the grievance meeting on Tuesday, February 6, 2001.

I am writing this decision to complete my role in Step B of the "Rights and Freedoms of Students Process" contained on pages 194-195 of the 2000/2001 Catalog and Student Handbook.

In arriving at my decision, I considered the grievance materials submitted by Ms. Nobis, the several hour discussion of February 6, and materials Ms. Nobis asked that I read concerning dissection alternatives.

Ms. Nobis alleges that "There has been a violation, misinterpretation or inequitable application of an academic regulation of the College". She cites the SUNY policy on discrimination found on page 1 and the materials concerning student attendance policies found on page 190 of the 2000/2001 Catalog and Student Handbook as the academic regulation she believes was violated. Her letters to the Academic Grievance Advisor dated January 28, 2001, and to Doctors Simons and Connett dated January 27, 2001 summarize her allegations, meetings and supply information on alternative laboratory experiences.

**I do not concur with Ms. Nobis's conclusions; in my view, the College did not violate our academic regulations by illegally discriminating against Ms. Nobis's religious and moral beliefs with respect to dissection.**

**New York State does not require institutions of higher education to accommodate religious or secular philosophies with respect to dissection. Therefore, no discrimination has occurred and Ms. Nobis's grievance is without merit.**

The faculty of the Biology Department and the MCC Curriculum Committee recognized and affirmed the educational role of dissection in various departmental and college academic procedures and processes. I will not, through this grievance, alter those deliberations.

In an attempt to assist Ms. Nobis, I requested that we examine acceptable dissection alternatives to see if a special studies course were possible. We also attempted to see if such a course would be accepted at the college she will transfer to. I am convinced that no acceptable alternatives are available to us for the Spring 2001 semester.

Ms. Nobis registered for BIO 142 on January 17, 2001. She attempted to enroll earlier but classes were closed and she was wait listed until January 17. She stated that she realized dissection was an integral part of the BIO 142 course during her discussions with the senior institution several months prior to her registration. The course description in the 2000/2001 Catalog and Student Handbook clearly states that BIO 142 "includes microscope work along with substantial organ and animal dissection".

I commend Doctors Simons and Connett for their open-minded examination of a Wards Scientific plasticized cat. I recognize the time invested by the anatomy faculty and Educational Technologies staff in attempting to evaluate the Catlab Cat-CD-ROM as possible alternatives to the 15 tissue and dissection labs integral to the approved BIO 142 syllabus.

From January 27 (the date Ms. Nobis first talked with Dr. Simons) until February 9 (a meeting between Ms. Nobis and Dr. Simon on lab alternatives), the Biology Department has been attempting to find alternative lab experiences in a very short time frame.

This grievance process has convinced me that the College needs to explore an explicit policy on dissection; I will request that we do so. The policy could then be referenced in biology course descriptions to forestall grievances such as this.

I recommend that Ms. Nobis be given the choice of remaining in BIO 142 and making up any required work or that she apply for and receive a 100% tuition refund as was offered by Mr. Ryther on January 29, 2001.

JJG/lk