

3. Obtain financial support for planning and producing needed films and tapes.
4. Have groups of competent teachers and technicians plan and produce the needed materials.
5. Ask all teachers who are to use the material to come to a central location for a summer institute. Go over the materials and procedures for using it in detail.
6. Have subject matter experts continuously revise the ma-

terials based on the criticisms and suggestions of teachers and students who are using them.

This program must be a continuing one. One of the damning criticisms made of visual aids is that they quickly become out of date. When material becomes out of date, it should be dropped. There may be some questions as to whether this material produced in the manner outlined should be placed on television tape or 16mm film. Television tape is more economical. If television tape facilities become universally available, the material prob-

ably should be placed on tape. If the production were to begin today, perhaps 16mm film would be the preferred medium. Although production of 16mm movie is more expensive than production of television tape, facilities are universally available for using 16mm film.

LITERATURE CITED

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The Missed Class and Student Morale

by

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The problem of absenteeism is as old as our institutions of higher learning. The majority of colleges have rules and regulations to cope with the problem. These regulations vary greatly among the various institutions. Some even go far enough only to require the student to pass the required tests for the specific course, regardless of class attendance, to receive a grade. I think most colleges have a reasonable system for dealing with the problem of students missing classes. I shall approach the subject from the standpoint that we as teachers are responsible for a great amount of absenteeism. Naturally, class attendance is a direct result of student morale.

The question has been asked many times: if you give students a *free hand*, do they have the personal resources and the maturity to make satisfying lives for themselves out of their own materials? If there were no regulations requiring students to meet class, what would the outcome be? The state of being free concerning class at-

tendance is certainly a state of mind and a state of feeling which will reflect individual action. Although it is obviously not true to say that only in a free situation can morale be high, it is true that to have a free choice requires a high degree of morale on the part of those who are participating before it can be made to work. A free situation also requires a quality of mutual respect among the individuals in it, especially if they are students, who, in the absence of regulation by the college administration, must answer to their peers.

In our highly specialized system of education within our various educational institutions, only a very few have allowed complete freedom among students. During the 1920's and 1930's the experimental approach to higher education was introduced in many colleges. This approach rested on the idea that in planning a college educators had an opportunity to build an institution in which ideal conditions for individual fulfillment could be created. The theory behind this approach was that students were capable of self-government for which they would take full responsibility. The students were given the responsibility of formulating rules and forming social groups. In fact, the student body was given complete authority over such things as infractions of rules and class attendance. The students enrolled in courses and were at complete liberty to advance on their own initiative. In 1952 and 1953 an attempt was made to get some idea of satisfaction among students that were enrolled in one of these institutions. In response to a questionnaire as to the least satisfying or most frustrat-

ing experience they had had at the college, 15% did not answer. Of the 85% who did reply, 22% listed as their major frustration disappointment in a course or a teacher, 17% gave relationships with other students, and 14% gave frustration about themselves. In other words, they were unable to live up to the standards which they had set for themselves. Approximately 13% were dissatisfied with their relationships with faculty members. Fifteen per cent listed lack of friends and 8% said the courses were too vague.

It appears from this and other studies of a similar nature that complete freedom in higher education is not the most desirable situation. I am of the opinion the student body will be much happier and receive much more from its college experiences with guidance from college officials in all phases of campus activities. I have taught in institutions of higher learning since 1956 and from this experience I have found that the morale and attendance is better if a few simple rules are followed. In many cases the attendance and morale will be higher in the more difficult subjects. I think the key to the problem lies within the teacher himself. At this point I would like to insert the results of three studies made which I think are worthy of consideration by us as teachers of agricultural subjects. All three studies deal primarily with characteristics that students want in teachers. R. J. Clinton found from a list of eighteen qualities that the five most frequently desired by students were, in descending order, interest in students, fairness, pleasing personality, humor, and mastery of subject.

Rousfield, a few years later, presented the same list of qualities; and interest in students was most frequently listed again as a desired characteristic in college teachers. Mastery of subject, personality, organization of materials and clear exposition were mentioned in descending order.

A third study by Trabue attempted to summarize the attributes of 419 presidents of liberal arts colleges concerning the ideal qualifications of faculty. His study revealed that presidents of these colleges emphasized such characteristics as emotional stability, friendliness, tolerance, and sympathy in the top positions. From these three surveys the results clearly indicate that students and many college presidents, in the main, are somewhat less impressed by intellectual

command than by qualities associated with personal amiability and social skill. It appears then, if these studies can be taken at face value, we as teachers in institutions of higher education should motivate our actions toward keeping not only our intellectual knowledge up to date but continuously be conscious of our social relations with students and fellow workers.

I think it would be unfair for us as teachers to sit idly by and allow a student to continuously miss class and not be reminded that he is only depriving himself. Not many of us would handle the problem of absenteeism in the same manner. Personally I allow the student to miss about five classes, a reasonable number of cuts, I think. At this point the student is asked to remain after class for a short conference.

Many times the problem can be solved. Of course, as we all know, many times the problem can't be solved. By showing enough interest in the student to discuss his particular problem, we will possibly command more respect. I believe we as teachers have the responsibility of conferring with students that miss class. What can be more frustrating to a student and a teacher than to have a student trying desperately to overcome a dozen or so class cuts.

In summary I would like to emphasize that if we as teachers only remember to practice fairness to all students, acquire an interest in their problems, master our subject matter, organize our materials and have a sense of humor, our problem of missed classes and low morale would partially disappear.

The Problem Student

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Registrars in many universities report more than 50% of a given freshman class fails to graduate. In this paper this group of students is considered to be the *problem student* which is troubled with one or more of the perplexities discussed later. Deans, Registrars, and Department Heads have spent many hours in discussions, meetings, and seminars attempting to solve the "drop-out" problem. The purpose of this paper is not to offer a solution to this problem, but rather to remind members of NACTA of the staggering number of students who need help. Perhaps our efforts will not be in vain if we discuss with the student the problems that affect him.

By and large, the main trouble for men "drop-out" students is a weakness in ability. For women, it

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is marriage; but undoubtedly many return to the classroom later to complete their education. As a general rule, agriculture faculties are not confronted with problems of the women students.

A point that is seldom if ever mentioned during meetings that deal with "drop-outs" is this: a program of study is established and the student is expected to adjust to it rather than adjusting the program of study to meet the needs of the student. For instance, a student entering college is generally expected to take composition, history, chemistry, biology, and a host of other courses prior to being permitted to enroll in courses he is more specifically interested in. He bogs down in low grades and loses interest in college before he gets far enough up the academic ladder to schedule the courses that attract his interests most.

Listed below are some characteristics of the *problem student* and/or factors causing him to be one.

Lack of ability. As previously mentioned, this is probably the main cause for men "dropouts." In colleges where selective processes



are used in procuring students, this is rarely the case.

Studying habits. The student who fails to achieve proper studying habits will soon run into academic trouble. When he strives to do well and yet receives low grades because of inadequate study habits and methods, he frequently becomes apathetic and disinterested in college per se. The student short changes himself grade-wise. From the academic standpoint, this trait could very well be one of the major causes of the *problem student*.

New pressures. Too many new pressures on the student from social, academic, and emotional origins contribute liberally to the creation of a *problem student*.

Emotional immaturity. Many students are not ready for the new freedoms and responsibilities that go hand-in-hand with college life. Confusion accompanies low grades and a loss of interest. This fate is particularly common with freshmen.

Misunderstanding of college purpose. Many students look upon College as a place similar to high