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ABSTRACT

The conference papers provide an overview of some of the main issues and perspectives in the granting of credit for experience by covering the transition from the construction of educational experiences for and with students for the future to the accreditation of experiences of the past. This also includes the problem of translation or transportation of field experiences into identifiable quantity and quality. In addition they present proposals for defining what a student must present for prior learning and an in-depth discussion of evaluation of experience. Contributed papers present data and an evaluation of a four-year study of CLEP at the University of Iowa and a report on the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) by the CEU Task Force of the Iowa State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education. Also presented is an overview of current national activities by some institutions. Finally, a charge to continual searching for innovation with quality is given. (Author/JMF)

Learning in an Open Society: Credit For Experience

Conferences On Non-Traditional Study
Series No. 1

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in cooperation with
American Association for Higher Education

LEARNING IN AN OPEN SOCIETY:

CREDIT FOR EXPERIENCE

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FOREWORD

Discussion of any area of Non-Traditional Study brings instant confusion to the minds of many educators and most layman. At the center of the confusion is the lack of an accurate and comprehensive definition of non-traditional study. Some consolation in this matter is gained from the Commission on Non-Traditional Study of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education which agonized for many months over the lack of a clear definition and finally settled on conceptualizing non-traditional study as an attitude that could not be defined except tangentially.

Samuel Gould, Chairman of the Commission on Non-Traditional Study, has identified four major patterns of the current non-traditional educational programs.[1] The first set of patterns is woven around the philosophy of full educational opportunity. "Its goal is to assure each individual, regardless of age, previous formal education, or circumstances of life, the amount and type of education that will add to and develop his potential as a person." This pattern is a further thrust of the same egalitarian spirit which fathered the land-grant movement in the 1800's. The second set of patterns which Gould has identified, "includes elements of structure, method content, and procedures that combine to create a new flexibility in education."[2] This pattern of non-traditional study seeks to loosen the present rigidities in the learning process. As Gould points out, the loosening of present "rigidities is necessary . . . not only because there has been opposition to them and sometimes even revolt against them but because seemingly immutable truths about the learning process are suddenly being questioned seriously."[3]

According to Gould, the ways in which non-traditional studies are adding flexibility include: The growing acceptability of breaking the so-called

"lock steps" of the educational process; the lessening or dropping of residential requirements; and the consideration of credit for work experience both as a part of and completely separate of the established curriculum.

A third set of patterns relates to the new or expanded educational roles being assumed by business, industry, labor unions, cultural, governmental, and social agencies, military commands, proprietary schools, correspondence institutes, and others. The new Serviceman's Opportunity College (SOC) is a good example of the growth of this type of educational program. It has even been said that SOC may well be a "hidden agenda" for traditional post-secondary education in the sense that many of the changes which traditional institutions are making in their procedures and programs to qualify under the SOC program may have the eventual effect of providing more flexibility for their regular student population. The final set of patterns concerns individualized learning. Gould makes the point that "if flexibility is a necessity for non-traditional study, then individualized learning is its most important component."

These various patterns have been noted in order to provide a framework with which to view the granting of credit for experience and to note the interrelatedness of it to all the other types of non-traditional programs.

Growth in Credit for Experience

Flexibility in the granting of credit is becoming increasingly more common not only by new "non-traditional" institutions but, by the more "traditional" institutions as well. Judging by the large number of institutions participating in the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) alone, credit by examination is certainly becoming more commonplace. In addition, numerous other institutions now grant credit on the basis of locally constructed exams.

Credit for learning without validation by exam, however, is much more

rare. The Commission on Non-Traditional Study found that about half of the 122 colleges with external degree programs grant credit for cooperative education or for volunteer work in community agencies, most of which comes about as a result of work-study programs. Almost a fourth of these institutions recognize participation in a community theater and holding office in a student government as creditable learning experiences.

A growing number, somewhere between 15-18%, of the institutions cited above are now granting credit to students based on life experiences such as experience in the Peace Corps, work experience and military experience.

The reasons for this growing acceptance of credit for experience is not clear. It may be merely a marketing-type response aimed at the adult student to help fill the spaces created by sagging full-time enrollments. It may also be a sincere response to the needs of the adult student who has long been a second class citizen in a higher educational system which has catered almost exclusively to the 18 to 22 year-old group during most of its history.

Since 1969 more students have participated in postsecondary education on a part-time basis (credit and non-credit) than on a full-time basis by a substantial margin (55.0 vs 45.0 percent in 1969 and 57.5 vs 42.5 percent in 1972). Between 1969 and 1972 the number of part-time students in postsecondary institutions increased at a rate 2.3 times faster than full-time students (20.4 percent part-time vs 8.8 percent full-time).

These growing efforts to expand the educational milieu are consistent with the many recent pleas of various study groups and task forces to increase educational options and spread them over a person's entire life span. Lifelong learning would then provide a real choice between further study and work by guaranteeing intermittent access to postsecondary education at appropriate times over the life cycle and provide academic recognition for learning

from work and other social experience.

The phenomonen of granting credit for experience, while growing, has not been universally accepted by the postsecondary educational community. S. K. Bailey for example, has written that there are aspects of the non-traditional movement which have the potential of ruining all that the movement has achieved. He is particularly concerned with equating test passing with educational competen and the granting of credit for experience.

The research conducted by the Commission on Non-Traditional Study also mentioned a concern about academic standards and difficulties of assessing non-classroom learning where major deterrants to the initiation of programs on the part of institutions.[4] The Commission itself concluded that: "To this the Commission included a recommendation for the development of new devices and techniques to assess the educative effects of work experience and community services."

It was in the spirit of this recommendation of the Commission that a conference on Non-Traditional Study was held in the Spring of 1974 at Drake University. (A second conference is planned for the Spring of 1975.) This conference was sponsored by the American Association for Higher Education under its Regional Conference Series. The papers that follow eminated from presentations at the conference and invited contributors to this publication. The papers provide an overview of some of the main issues and perspectives in the granting of credit for experience. Presented papers cover the transition from the construction of educational experiences for and with students for the future to the accreditation of experiences of the past (Meyer). This also includes the problem of translation or transposition of field experiences into identifiable quantity and quality (Moore). In addition they present proposals for defining what a student must present for prior learning and an in-depth

discussion of evaluation of experience (Ferguson). Contributed papers present data and an evaluation of a four-year study of CLEP at the University of Iowa (Whitney) and a report on the Continuing Education Unit (CEU) by the CEU Task Force of the Iowa State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education (McGuire). Also presented is an overview of current national activities by some institutions (Barak). Finally a charge to continual searching for innovation with quality is given (Talbot). From these papers it becomes clear that there is a need for both prudence and limits on what experiences are acceptable for academic credit.

Special thanks is given to the participants of the conference who urged us to prepare this publication.

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EVALUATING AND ACCREDITING LEARNING, NOT LIFE EXPERIENCE

Dr. Douglas Moore
President
Mankato State College

I am aware that it is poor form to begin a presentation with a disclaimer, particularly when the disclaimer becomes so patently obvious to the listener or reader as the presentation unfolds. Nevertheless, I make such a disclaimer in order that you may know from the outset the direction from which I make my approach. This is not a scholarly paper nor one representing a great deal of systematic research. I am sharing with you some reflections occasioned by the past six or seven years of my own professional life in higher education. These observations are, I suspect, empirical enough in their own right but obviously do not reflect the present state of knowledge dealing with "external" or "experiential" studies, so called. Most everyone here could, with a little time, come up with a respectable bibliography regarding this topic which would make superfluous any attempt on my part to summarize either theory or findings. Further, I do not consider you a hostile audience and this, therefore is no apology in defense of studies external to the campus or classroom. You do not need to be convinced that people learn by experience. You know that already.

Let me share with you some of the things we have been doing and I will start with a little personal anecdote that is kind of fun for me to relate: My father, up to his retirement, was an electronic technologist. He designed, built and repaired complex electronic equipment including transmitters and receivers for radio and television and even radar. He never attended a college or technical school. His only formal education ended upon graduation from a public high school. When he was thirteen years old he built the first radio in Dawson County, Texas and the first radio he ever saw. My father was a

self-directed learner. He learned by doing, by being curious, by experimenting and discovering.

I present this quite personal account not to praise my father nor his lack of formal education, but only to dramatize something of which I early in life became aware: the world is interesting, stimulating, a rich environment. Man is a curious, inquisitive animal, capable of learning from a variety of sources. The more man knows and the more he and his institutions develop, the richer the potential for learning in this world. The role of formal education in this society is to facilitate man's capacity and opportunity for learning. Let me emphasize this last statement for as far as I am concerned it is the sole purpose for the existence of any educational institution in a civilized society. Alfred North Whitehead in 1927 said "So far as the mere imparting of information is concerned, no university has had any justification for existence since the popularization of printing in the fifteenth century." (The Aims of Education, P. 97 Mentor Books). I repeat, the role of formal education is to facilitate learning - not to impart information nor to acculturate the young. I stress this point because I am able to observe the continuing phenomenon of teachers reading textbooks to students and personnel deans obsessed with hair length and sexual behavior.

There is a not uncommon phenomenon to be observed in this country. In about 2500 cities and small towns there is at least one college or university. These institutions are set (or were before urban expansion enveloped them) on the periphery of their towns and cities - almost invariably designed and developed geographically and socially as enclaves. It is not unusual to find these enclaves actually outlined by a wall or fence.

No doubt there were reasons considered by the founding fathers as good and sufficient for the almost universal adoption of such a pattern. At least

there appears to be three we might identify as reasons colleges and universities were set on the outskirts of town, usually atop a hill, often surrounded by walls, fences, hedges, buildings of one sort or another that were intended to separate the students and faculty from the citizens of the town:

(1) Protection - This was probably a mutual need shared by the academic community and townspeople alike. Students withdrew from the cares of the world in order to be free to study, reflect and otherwise prepare for life. College was preparation and while students were preparing, neither they nor their mentors should be distracted by the world. Obviously, such serious pursuits were occasionally interrupted by youthful bacchanalia which spilled out into the town, but for the most part the campus contained its own and the "wall" protected students and townspeople from one another.

(2) Induction into the Culture - This is not unrelated to the need for protection but it is different in the reasons for the protection needed. The protective custody of a college campus afforded an environment conducive to aculturation. The campus could become a normative microcosm of the culture. Young men and women could not only learn about their culture and its development, they could learn how to use and enjoy its manners, customs, products and artifacts. This function could be of great importance in providing the polish and finish so manifestly lacking in young people from mountains, plains, river bottoms and ghetto's.

(3) Concentration of Resources - In a society of sparce resources such as libraries, laboratories, teaching Masters and Doctors of Philosophy, it made good sense to bring such resources together. The campus served as the point of contact between students who wanted or needed to learn and the resource from which they could learn. There was apparently a distribution factor at work here also as educational resources were transported into the wilds of

Ohio, Kansas, etc., and deposited in more or less strategic places to which the young could come for an education.

It is not our purpose here to evaluate the effectiveness of American higher education nor to criticize the three factors outlined above. It is sufficient to point out that education was necessarily dominated by a concern with time and place. Education was a hiatus - a withdrawal from life in order to prepare for life. Rich learning resources were scarce and therefore had to be concentrated geographically for the sake of efficiency, economy and convenience if not for theology.

No one claimed that learning was confined to such institutions but formalization of learning, certification of learning certainly was and continues to be dominated by public and private colleges and universities. Getting an education by and large has meant setting aside a block of time to be in residence on a campus somewhere.

One of the defining characteristics of formal education whether in a cloister or a multi-campus urban institution has been an emphasis upon vicarious experience, and education has served as a short-cut which avoids direct experience. Students have been brought into an environment where they can benefit by the experience of others, through reading in the library or sitting under lecturers and tutors.

Now there are obvious advantages both to a concentration of students, faculties and resources, and to utilizing someone else's experience. The classroom or tutorial setting provides for control of the content of and variables in the learning situation. Such an environment also can provide the support and interpersonal dynamics of groups of students pursuing a common goal. Vicarious experience is economical in time and money. It simply is not necessary or economical for every individual or even every generation to have to

re-invent the wheel, the alphabet, or the small pox vaccine. This is not a plea for the doctrine that experience is always the best teacher. Such a proposition is at best often painful and frustrating.

We will all agree, however, that there is a certain validity or authority derived from direct experience. Vicarious experience is too often characterized by a passive quality while direct experience demands activity and participation. It is as if there is a kind of internalization or visceralization process in learning by direct experience. It seems from what we know about human learning that the more the total person is invested (or active) in a learning experience, the greater the impact and residual quality. Maybe this is what that hackneyed term "relevance" should mean.

Perhaps we have divided learning up and thus have bifurcated the learner: we have acted as though formal education was a cognitive, intellectual and conceptual process while learning by direct experience has been seen as affective and more a psycho-motor process. Such a division is a tragic error. It is never an either/or proposition. Learning does not take place only in a formal educational setting, nor is there any guarantee whatsoever that the experience of something will result in any learning. We have all seen too many people with college degrees whom we would not identify as either educated or productive in our society. I must say also that I have seen quite enough of ignorant asses who "like man, I just want to experience!" Being struck by lightening must be one hell of an experience but I have no desire to have it and my learning from such an overwhelming direct experience would likely be negligible if not devastating. I have taken students around the world who evidenced no learning from such exposure while my father found the dusty barrenness of West Texas an exciting, stimulating environment.

Perhaps one of the biggest tasks we face as educators is in becoming

more sophisticated in differentiating between appropriate modes of learning, that is, between the respective appropriateness of classroom type learning situations on the one hand and learning by direct experience on the other. More importantly, maybe, we should seek to recognize individual human differences in respect to such distinctions in appropriateness.

The problem, however, of which we are all aware is how to translate off-campus direct-experience learning into credits and grades, the symbols of on-campus learning. Perhaps this is a bit unfair - the question may be put more appropriately in terms of evaluation and quantification. I confess, however, that I perceive a quality of arrogance in this assumption that the classroom is normative and learning achieved in any other setting must be translated into the signs, forms and categories of the traditional campus-based course with credits and grades. I have attended conferences on this all over the U.S. I have never heard anyone raise the question as to how we can translate a student's classroom learning into the joys and skills of living "out there" in society for the rest of that student's life. I do not think I am biased or unfair to make this observation. I think most of you will agree with me that too often too much of formal education finds no transposition from the classroom to the street, shop, office or home.

In addition to this central problem of translation or transposition of field-experience into identifiable quantity and quality, we are able to note other problems and issues which must be solved if such learning is to become integral to formal, campus-based learning. (I might add parenthetically, that this is a basic assumption I make as an academician, that it is both desirable and possible to integrate formal academic programs of curricula with so-called external studies). These other problems breifly are:

(1) The ordinary absence of concept or theory applied, examined or

expanded through such external studies as internships, etc.;

(2) Adequate identification and evaluation of what is learned;

(3) Lack of control of variables which would permit systematic pursuit of learning and enforcing of standards;

(4) Scattered students present geographical problems affecting communication and coordination.

No doubt there are other problems you can identify, but out of my experience these are the more obvious and pressing.

I want to reiterate my conviction that a dichotomy between the classroom and the field is destructive and unnecessary. An integration of the two is both an urgent necessity and a possibility. I recently was involved in the development of a college totally committed to just such an integration. I will outline some of these concepts and procedures but first I want to identify four criteria for evaluating "experiential learning." These are criteria I am trying to utilize and develop in my work with students and faculty. They are broad and general but I believe allow for specific application in individual cases. Let me say also in preface to these criteria that generally I do not think they are unique for external-type studies. They are now being utilized in traditional classrooms and that is as it should be. I do not believe the criteria for evaluating learning should be different for one setting as against another. If learning is anything it should be generalizable as well as specific. These criteria then are neither new nor unique. They are traditional but, I am certain, applicable in the evaluation of experiential learning.

(1) How has the student reflected upon the experience? Against what has he compared it? What concepts were imposed upon it in order to derive meaning from it? What concept(s) derived from the experience?

(2) Did the experience foster a pattern of exploration and discovery?

(3) Did the experience stimulate further study, inquiry or work?

(4) Did the experience have useful results: e.g., aesthetic, skill, a product, personal satisfaction, generalizable results?

Minnesota Metropolitan State College is an institution designed and developed for the chief purpose of integrating classroom and field. Begun by an act of the state legislature in 1971, this upper division college is unique not in all the new things it is doing (actually everything it is doing has been and is being done elsewhere), but in the constellation of all these policies, procedures and principles which it has brought together. Four basic tenets define the institution: (1) the student has authority over and responsibility for his/her own education. It is assumed that any citizen can and should be a student at any time in life that educational needs are perceived. The student should be able then to design, implement, pay for, and accept the consequences of the educational plan best suited to his/her individual needs. Obviously good advice, counsel and reasoned judgment should be components; (2) the college is completely competence-based in its evaluation of students. Learners are not rewarded (or punished) for an experience or a series of experiences. They are evaluated on the results of the experience; their reflection upon and integration of it as manifest in knowledge, skill, understanding and attitudes. Indeed, it matters not where, when, how nor from whom a competence was achieved. Demonstrable evidence that the student knows and can do something is the sole criterion for "credit" or certification. An educated person should be able to engage in the assessment of competence vis a vis acceptable standards of performance or behavior, thought processes are behavior also! The only concern evident on the student's transcript is for intelligible articulation of levels of what is known or can be done; (3) the

college is oriented to its environment which is urban. Therefore, what is taught and what is learned is shot through with an urban emphasis; (4) the college is committed to an inventory, integration, and utilization of existing community learning resources. The student thus should learn how to use these existing resources and literally be a "learner" all his/her life.

These four tenets or foundations are obviously interdependent and not mutually distinct. For the purposes of this paper, however, it is appropriate to give some examination to the fourth: Utilization of existing resources. One of the major tasks of the college is to discover, inventory and disseminate information about the community (the seven county metropolitan area including Minneapolis and St. Paul) which make it an exciting learning environment. These resources include persons, places and events from which learning may be derived. The second major task is to provide staff and equipment that will facilitate the utilization of these resources for learning. The third major task is to develop criteria and procedures for assessing, evaluating, documenting and verifying competencies at a variety of identifiable levels.

The implementation of these tenets and the accomplishment of these three major tasks is carried out in the following manner: a coordinating center, a core of full-time staff (professional and support staff), and an educational process defined in a format for learning development.

The Coordinating Center is located in 12,000 square feet of office space in the Metro Square Building of St. Paul. All full-time staff are presently officed at this location for purposes of program and staff development, records, and processes, dissemination of information, and the general integration, coordination and management of the college. No classes or courses are scheduled in this facility. A series of satellite centers are projected for the next

two years in order to decentralize functions better served by geographical considerations.

The core staff consists of approximately thirty faculty and administrators and approximately twenty clerical and office support personnel. The faculty-administration consists largely of professionally trained educators who have experience in and commitment to innovative education. About 40% hold an earned doctorate, or its equivalent and the remainder hold a masters degree with the exception of a former businessman with twenty years in the private sector and a BA degree, and a former community organizer with a BA. There are two attorneys on the faculty, one with a Ph.D.

The format for learning development is the single requirement at the college. Each student, with advice and counsel, designs his/her own program (Pact) which is a contract with the instituiton. The content of that Pact is not required but each student is required to go through the format or process.

If we take these criteria enumerated above, and apply them in ways appropriate to the field-experience we are attempting to evaluate, I have found that our task of integration is not impossible but on the contrary adds an exciting dimension to education. The problem is in developing procedures, not in the incompatibility of these two facets of learning.

There are three keys to the procedures at MMSC. I share them with you not because they are the only answer nor because they are necessarily generalizible but as illustrations:

(1) The use of the contract system in the program. Students must draw up a set of objectives and goals, identify strategies for achieving these goals, indicate evaluation methods and criteria, and then negotiate this with the person or agency with which he/

she will be working. In short, the contract contains: "what I want to do, how I propose to do it, and how I will know if I have done it."

This system offers control and protects standards of quality. It prohibits a situation in which the student and faculty are presented with a mass or raw experience and simply try to make sense of it. I might add, the college requires this same thing in the class-room. The student and faculty member identify objectives and evaluate in reference to these agreed upon goals.

(2) The conclusion that the student must be an active participant and partner in this process from beginning to end, from establishment of goals to the final evaluation. He is not a passive recipient.

(3) This process necessitates a change in faculty role. At MMSC they have accepted this as basic and pervasive - The campus-based faculty become facilitators or brokers in the educational process. Further, they become evaluators, often of the work with students which is done by someone else rather than themselves. At MMSC the bulk of the teaching is done by non-professional educators while the full-time professional-educator staff spend their time advising, assisting in student planning, facilitating the discovery and use of learning resources, and then in evaluating the results.

This is a new professional in higher education. I do not advocate this as the model for every institution. What I do submit however, is that as students become involved in off-campus, experiential learning, it will bring about some degree of change in faculty. Their role will be altered. This will be threatening to some of them (though they would not admit to that - instead they will give you 34 good reasons why this corrupts education).

It is my conclusion that such a change in faculty is healthy and desirable. It is also my conclusion that such education affects the larger community and I am convinced this is also healthy and desirable. In effect, the granting of a college degree or the certification of competence(s) becomes a joint enterprise between "Town and Gown" rather than the exclusive domain of "education" narrowly defined. It creates a more complete environment for learning through a partnership between the college and the larger society. This is all to the good because learning should be life-long, unconfined by space or time or age or even college degrees.

CREDITING PRIOR LEARNING

Dr. Peter Meyer
Professor of Social Work
School of Health and Social Services
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Standing here, behind a lectern, in front of an audience of colleagues and reading from a prepared script involves me in a fundamental existential dilemma I am supposed to "lecture" to you about experiential education and especially about that aspect of experiential education known as prior learning. As one of the so-called "far out" elements of non-traditional study I find myself standing in front of you in a most traditional manner, when I suppose I should be experiencing with you all the elements of what I shall say this morning. Having survived other existential dilemmas, I am sure I will survive this one. Whether or not you will, remains to be seen.

When Roger McCannon asked if I would key-note this morning I had a number of simultaneous reactions. Since I do not know how to communicate these reactions the way they occured, namely simultaneously, let me share them with you sequentially. "I do not know enough - I am no expert - I do not like listening to speeches - I do not like giving speeches - I must know something after dealing with this topic for eleven years - I do not know enough to begin putting something together - I probably have experienced more and therefore know more about crediting prior learning than some people do - I <u>am</u> able to organize my thoughts so that I will make sense - I know a whole lot about all this - I know more than anyone else - I am an expert - I am an articulate expert - I am a serious, articulate expert - I am <u>the</u> serious, articulate expert - I am going to "knock 'em dead". - I hope I can do it - I wonder if I know enough - I hope I can pull it off without too many people going to sleep - I really do not think I know enough - I am not going to expose my

ignorance - I can always say that my data is incomplete - I can say I have to be somewhere else that day - I can ask him to get someone else - I will even give him two or three names-.

My reason for taking you through this particular thought pattern is that it is identical to thought patterns of students who know that their life experiences have meant something, but are not quite sure of what they wish to disclose and how to expose their experiences confidently, without embarassment and in a manner which will be to their greatest benefit.

It is my hope that as we move through the activities of this day we will keep the student and his or her needs upper-most in our thoughts.

Let me turn now to the central theme of my remarks which is to offer some rationale for granting academic credit for competencies achieved through non-academic life/work experiences. The principles involved are not restrictive, nor is the practice of accrediting life/work experiences discussed here limited to any one discipline within higher education. It should be stated at the outset that the practice of accrediting life/work experience is not widespread among any discipline and that there is a paucity of literature on the subject.

The basic premises are quite simple: (1) that learning takes place in a variety of ways and in a variety of settings within a time framework which is continuous from birth to death, (2) that the assumption that "if you have not learned it from me in my classroom then you have not learned it" is invalid, (3) that the formal, or traditional, mode of higher education is undergoing changes which are reflective of larger social changes and accrediting life/work experiences is one aspect of these changes.

It is well at this point to reflect upon where higher education finds itself at this moment in time. We seem to be emerging from a ten to fifteen

year period which has seen more discussion, agonizing and writing on the shortcomings and failures of higher education than all other periods in history combined. It took a student revolution, not without its share of bloodshed, a financial crisis bordering on panic and a heightened awareness of the student as a human being to shake the higher education establishment out of its complacency. Cries of irrelevance were heard throughout the land. Those responsible for the education of the nation's college and university population were forced to hear. Some chose not to hear, some heard but did not listen while some heard, listened and attempted to respond.

I am not going to deal with all of the charges levelled against higher education. Suffice it to say that certain consistently-heard criticisms are beginning to be taken seriously by those empowered to change the structure, scope, content and certification of higher education. Recognizing that there are others, I will deal with time-liberated curricula, off-campus or "experiential" education and the differences between prescribed exposures and achieved attainments because these three concepts and structures are most closely related to the central theme of granting academic credit for competencies achieved through non-academic life/work experiences.

From 1967 to 1972 the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education has had the mammoth task of identifying the vital issues in higher education and making recommendations for the higher education community. While some people have been less than satisfied, and one critic has charged the Commission's efforts lack any philosophical foundations and will not stand the test of time because ". . . nothing dates faster than conclusions based on conditions, practices, and attitudes of the moment"[5] it is precisely the focus of what is wrong now that make the Commission's recommendations so important.

One of the Commission's most widely discussed and most often misinterpreted

reports, Less Time, More Options deals directly with the issue of the time-lock that concerns all of education. Questions such as: why four years for the undergraduate degree, why twelve years of pre-college education, why two, three or four years of graduate education are asked in the context of offering more options for the student to accomplish certain tasks and certifications of degree. The underlying theme of this report is that education is a life-long process and that "schooling" should be as flexible as necessary to accommodate all people who wish to engage in the living-learning process. The current time frame of higher education is arbitrary. Its roots can be traced back to the early days of Harvard. The primary purpose of offering students a four-year curriculum was to allow a maturation process to take place. The only students in those early days were sixteen and seventeen-year olds for whom a "maturation" process is still valid. However, today's student population reflects a much broader spectrum of ages and the assumption is made here that no one particular time frame can meet the needs of the heterogeneous population who find themselves in colleges and universities in the 1970's

The interweaving of the world of work and the world of school for the purpose of accomplishing an integrated living-learning society is an extremely important concept and is expressed in the Commission's report as follows:

> Society would gain if work and study were mixed throughout a lifetime, thus reducing the sense of sharply compartmentalized roles of isolated student vs workers and of youth vs isolated age.
> 7

The report envisions a society of the future which will discontinue the process of making sharp distinctions between living and learning and thus have a definite influence upon the entire degree structure of higher education. Since we are

a credentialing society and since the degree structure reflects that credentialing, the report further states that the degree structure significantly influences:

- The amount of time spent by youths in formal higher education and its pattern of continuity.
- How this time is used - on what studies and for what purposes. . .
- The job expectations and job performances
- The opportunities for persons throughout their lives to obtain the further education they may come to desire as their lives unfold
- These considerations are of great and rapidly increasing importance as education becomes a more necessary part of more of the total lives of more people as we move into the 'learning society' of the future. The learning process will continue to absorb more and more Americans. Learning opportunities should respond to the new dimensions of the life-and-learning process.[8]

The concept that education is a life-long process which defies the arbitrary barriers of the current higher education structure today is receiving more wide spread acceptance than ever before. While this is true in theory more than in practice, at least serious consideration is being given in a variety of settings. In June of 1972, I had the privilege of organizing and directing a conference on the problems of time-shortened degrees for the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). For three days almost 100 people from the higher education, legislative, student and secondary education

communities wrestled with the problems of freeing the structure and content of higher education. And they dreamed! Dreamed of "performance based" education which would "test" the student's knowledge of performance and build future experiences based upon what the student already experienced. One participant, as spokesman for a small group which discussed the issues of the conference, summarized that:

> . . . there is no proven or rigid corollary between length of exposure and degree of learning, which can be applied to heterogeneous groups of people.
>
> . . . in the best sense education is an on-going process and therefore one of the most important tasks of any so-called formal education should be to make that fact known and accepted.[9]

One of the students participating in the conference summarized her feelings most succinctly. She simply stated that, "Schooling lasts too long and education ends too soon."[10]

One of the results of the current stress on life-long education is a rather strong push towards opening up off-campus or field experience to all students, regardless of discipline. What has recently been discovered as "experiential" education is, of course, as old as the medieval guilds and for example has been a part of Social Work, as well as most professional education, from their beginnings. Educators for the professions take for granted that the ultimate learning is a synthesis of theory and practice. No degree programs in most professional fields exist without some form of field work or internship.

In October of 1971, a number of educators held a conference which dealt

with off-campus education as part of the fabric of all liberal arts education. Once again, I had the privelege of leading this conference for SREB. While the participants in this conference refused to get into partisan politics by stating that off-campus education was more worthwhile in one discipline than in another, they did advocate ". . . the necessity and worth of off-campus education for all disciplines and phases of higher education. . . ."[11]

This conference saw off-campus education in any discipline as having the following goals:

1. To help the student examine and develop his own life style.
2. (To) . . . foster the development of the student's capacity to examine the experience and interpret the learning that has occured.
3. To develop and enhance firsthand knowledge of fundamental human concerns by providing the student with the opportunity to examine a variety of cultural values and draw implications for his own personal commitment.[12]

The importance of the deliberations and conclusions reached by the participants in this conference is that they viewed the off-campus experience as an essential part of the fabric of all of higher education. Further, it was concluded that academic credit should be awarded the experience so long as the off-campus experience was approved ahead of time. The conference made no attempt to deal with crediting experiences a student might bring with him. While some conference participants agreed privately that experiences obtained in the past might have the same value as experiences constructed by the faculty and students to be taken in the future, they felt that this was outside the scope of the conference.

The transition from the construction of educational experiences for, and with, students for the future to accrediting experiences of the past is most

crucial. There does not seem to be any purpose at this point to list the mechanisms we already employ in validating past academic experiences. This has been done to the satisfaction of most faculty and students for years. If a student has had the equivalent of a course we require or recommend he or she need not repeat that course. The usual practice is waiver, meaning the student need not repeat but is given credit and must "make up" those credits somewhere else. By this we say to the student that even though you have demonstrated competencies and knowledge you need further exposure with us before we can credential you. This gets to the heart of the matter. Are we interested in students demonstrating competencies and knowledge or are we interested in exposing them to our version of the "truth"? I realize that there are several assumptions in this question which must be made absolutely clear.

Regardless of discipline, every group of faculty had defined a curriculum which it considers to be the truth. For example, the Social Work faculty at Florida International University has constructed a set of experiences for students which contain a set of values quite different from those of another institution. On paper, the course descriptions and field instruction experiences of the two institutions might appear quite similar. The competencies expected are quite similar, also. However, our faculty believes, and justifiably so, that the FIU experience gets our point of view across. What is implicit in that belief is that our point of view is as near the "truth" as we can get it. We not only want our graduates to be competent Social Workers, we want them to reflect our values and our philosophy; in other words, our version of the truth. Every field of study or discipline ascribes to a set of competencies which are much easier to identify than the combined competencies and value system of any one faculty. A further assumption is that we should recognize our biases and either live by them or accept other versions of the truth. This is a decision

which only the faculty or the faculty-student community at each institution can make. At least one institution has gone on record as favoring the acquisition of competencies regardless of source. Minnesota Metropolitan State College, in an early report, put it this way:

> . . . the college does not feel that it is either necessary or desirable for it to sponsor all the learning-teaching situation from which students may profit.
>
> . . . we expect our graduates to have demonstrable competencies. we expect to assist them in this process of acquiring those competencies. But the basic issue is the acquisition of the competencies - not where they acquire them, how they acquire them, or from whom they acquire them.[13]

The Minnesota statement is a clear departure from tradition insofar as it puts primary emphasis upon the attainment of competencies rather than on the exposure of students to a fixed curriculum within a fixed time-frame. A recent article by Harris[14] draws a clear distinction between a baccalaureate degree by exposure and one achieved by attainment. In short, Harris presents the argument that higher education has fixated on a certain amount of classroom exposure to insure that the student is well educated. He further argues that we should focus on what the student has attained, find ways of measuring that and include classroom exposure only where there is lack of attainment.

How do we define that which the student presents for credit for prior learning? Is it the experience itself? Is it knowledge gained from the experience? Or is it something else? This question must be answered by the faculty-student body before any assessment can begin. Let me offer at least four levels as a beginning guide:

(1) Credit for competency achieved through the experience - This recognizes

the fact that some demonstrable competency has been achieved through the experience and that this competency can be directly credited.

(2) Credit for knowledge gained from the competencies achieved through the experience - This is the first level of abstraction and recognizes the student's ability to verbalize and categorize knowledges gained from the experience.

(3) Credit for the analysis of the knowledge gained from the competencies achieved through the experience - This is the second level of abstraction which recognizes the student's ability to analyze knowledge gained from experience in relation to a larger theoretical framework.

(4) Credit for the analysis and synthesis of discrete bodies of knowledge gained from the same or different experiences - This third level of abstraction requires the student to analyze discrete bodies of knowledge and synthesize them into one or more theoretical frameworks.

Regardless of which of these guides is used, the process involved is one of examination; examination of an individual and his experiences by one or more individuals who have a set of standards against which to measure. There is no magic involved, no instant truths, no laying on of hands and declaring a person "educated." Once the process is accepted as an examination process, not unlike so many other examination processes to which students are subjected, much of the skepticism can be removed. One of the criticisms of granting credit for life/work experience which I have most often heard for the past eleven years is that the process is highly subjective. (It is interesting to note that this criticism is often raised before any description of the process has taken place!) Before any "mind-sets" are developed about subjectiveness, let us ask ourselves just how "objective" are our normal judgments of the classroom experience. Short reflection upon this will allow us to admit that there is a

good deal of subjectiveness, indeed, in our judgments. We need not apologize for this because I believe that it is inevitable - even desirable - that human frailty and fallibility enter into our judgments. In recent years we have attempted to minimize our delusions of complete objectivity and allowed students to participate in the examination and evaluation process. This may not have led to greater objectivity but at least is a more honest statement of where we are.

One of the most pressing psychological problems arising from granting credit for life/work experience is that many faculties (here used in the collective sense) see such a concept as undermining what they have attempted to construct. As Mulholland put it, "if the fact students can obtain through their experience what university faculties have labored for and prepared to give for the greater part of their working life, then what exactly would be the justification of having any faculty?"[15] This can be a threat to the faculty member who insists that his version of the truth is the only version. It can also be a threat if the entire faculty becomes nothing but a credentialing body, certifying only products prepared by others.

There is a need for prudence and limits which should be made explicit. While the rare individual who needs no further work to accomplish a degree does exist, that individual is certainly the exception and should be seen clearly in that light. What limits are to be placed upon the number of credits to be granted for life/work experiences rests with the faculty, of course. It has been my experience that as faculties acquire experience and become comfortable with the process the limits are raised. The comfort factor, which includes acceptance of the procedure by a larger faculty-student community within the university and within the consumer community, is important also in allowing as much individualization as each situation demands; and his or her

experiences are different even if the situation is the same; and each person and his or her experiences are different even if the situation is the same.

Two people of approximately the same age and educational background have worked as county welfare workers for five years. Their job descriptions, as set forth by the agency, are identical and the superficial ratings given by supervisors are almost identical. Each is asked to do two things in applying for credit for life/work experience: (1) to describe how they view their jobs as the jobs relate to their agency, their clients and the larger community and (2) to give a detailed description of any two of their cases which includes description of situation, assessment of needs and recommendations for action. One person will give a superficial description, limited to facts, agency rules, without insight and without a conceptual framework. The other person will demonstrate that knowledge gained as a result of the work experience is integrated, goes beyond the limits of any one isolated case and shows personal sensitivity to self in the situation. If in fact, one of the major goals of higher education is to help students integrate knowledge, more from the particular to the general through abstraction and become aware of self, then the student cited in the second example will receive credit for the experience, whereas the student cited in the first example might not. The decision really depends upon the criteria established and the level of abstraction agreed upon.

Let me now suggest one faculty-student based model which could be constructed to handle the crediting of prior learning.

(1) The faculty-student body responsible for curriculum agrees that credit for competencies achieved through life/work experiences is valid, sets parameters and recommends the idea to the total faculty-student body.

(2) The total body votes to grant credit for life/work experience in principle, within the parameters set forth by the Curriculum Committee and

charges that Committee with working out the details to be approved by the total body.

(3) The Committee agrees that no more than x number of credits be granted for life/work experience with the stipulation that exceptions can be made in unusual circumstances.

(4) Students desiring credit for experience are asked to submit a portfolio of their experiences with as much detail as possible and with any supporting data from others as is necessary to the examining committee. The examining committee is to be composed of x number of faculty, x number of students and x number of specialists deemed necessary in any particular situation.

(5) After reviewing the portfolio the examining committee may ask the student to perform such additional tasks as it deems necessary to allow the student to demonstrate his competencies.

(6) After reviewing all available data, the examining committee decides upon the number of credits to be awarded and in what areas of competency these credits are to be awarded.

(7) If the student disagrees with the decision of the examining committee, he or she has the right to appear personally before the committee and/or submit further evidence of competency.

(8) The examining committee then makes its recomendations to the Curriculu Committee and/or the total faculty-student body.

(9) Items 3 through 8 are voted as policy by the entire faculty-student body.

The procedure outlined above is by no means "fail-safe" but does involve everyone in the decision-making process. It is recommended that the examining committee members be rotated so that all faculty and as many students as

possible have the opportunity to profit from the experience. The procedure is a time-consuming one and faculty reward for participating must be forthcoming. Probably the most time-consuming aspect is helping the student prepare a portfolio which does him credit. It has been my experience that many people, especially those who have been away from formal education for a number of years, are extremely humble about their past achievements and need a good deal of support to help them realize the worth of what they have accomplished. An example of this is a woman who worked to two years as a "lay" teacher for emotionally disturbed pre-school children. During the initial interview the woman described her position as little more than seeing that the children did not kill each other, serving them juice and generally seeing to their physical well-being. Subsequent interviews revealed that Ms. M. was heavily involved in the counseling of parents around issues of acceptance of the children and referral and was responsible for the supervision of graduate students in Special Education. What sounded to me at first as a simple maintenance task turned out to be a highly complex professional function.

This presentation has begun with a concern for students and ends in the same vein. It is the student who forms the center of the wheel. The student's experiences, knowledge, self-esteem, our concerns about those experiences, our own discipline and our standards of excellence are the spokes that make is possible for the wheel to turn.

I wonder if anyone is still listening - I wonder if I said too much - I wonder if I said enough - I wonder how many credits I will get for this!

COMPETENCY EVALUATION AND TESTING

Richard L. Ferguson
American College Testing Program

If I were to adhere strictly to the theme of this conference "Learning is an Open Society: Credit for Experience" and to the topic on which I was asked to speak, "Competency Evaluation and Testing," my remarks would necessarily be limited to a discussion of the role of testing in evaluating competencies acquired through experiential learning. However, I would like to expand the scope of my presentation along two lines. First, my comments will apply to all learning, regardless of the manner in which it occurs. This seems appropriate, in my opinion, since the evaluation of competencies acquired through traditional means (e.g., formal educational programs) presents many of the same problems encountered when competencies attained by non-traditional means are evaluated. Second, emphasis will be placed on assessment and not on testing since the latter term is almost certain to conger up visions of standardized paper-and-pencil tests. Although such tests can be very useful in assessing and evaluating many academic-type competencies, they are often inappropriate and inadequate for assessing competencies that require performance of some set of tasks or the measurement of changes in behaviors and attitudes.

By expanding the scope of my presentation to include the assessment of learning which occurs in formal as well as informal ways, I am actually addressing the broader question of the role of assessment in competency-based education. My use of the expression competency-based is intended to be descriptive of educational programs which satisfy three criteria:

(1) They require detailed specification of the competencies to be

attained (and I place no restriction on how precisely or broadly those competencies are defined).

(2) In the event that the competencies have not already been attained, they identify and/or provide the instructional means or learning resources for individuals to acquire the competencies.

(3) They provide valid means for assessing and evaluating whether or not an individual has attained the specified competencies. These processes occur without regard for the manner in which the competencies are acquired.

Distinction Between Assessment and Evaluation

Before proceeding, I would like to define the term "competency" as I will use it here today. In doing so, I draw on a definition attributed to staff at Minnesota Metropolitan State College. They define a competency as "the ability to exhibit the level of performance that is requisite to the successful attainment of a particular goal." Implicit within this definition is a basic distinction between assessment and evaluation. Assessment provides information about the performance of an individual with respect to some competency. Evaluation occurs when this information is used to judge whether or not the individual has attained a satisfactory level of the competency. For example, two individuals may both aspire to acquire a competency in shorthand and yet each have very different goals. One may wish to acquire the skill only for the purpose of improving his or her note-taking ability whereas the other may desire the skill so that he or she can obtain a job. Although the same instrument might be used to assess both individuals, different criteria would likely be applied to evaluate their shorthand competency since their goals are very different and they would require different levels of shorthand ability. Of course, student records (e.g., narrative transcripts) would clearly distinguish between the level of performances achieved by the two students, yet each could be

credited with the competency in shorthand.

Unfortunately, assessment and evaluation can and often do occur independent of one another. That is, individuals are often evaluated without sufficient data about their ability to perform a given task or set of tasks. Similarly, assessment frequently occurs without adequate consideration for the particular use to which the resulting data will be put. Educators involved in competency-based programs must come to recognize the competency evaluation involves not only assessment, but also the specification and implementation of criteria for making value judgments about the status of individuals seeking to be certified competent in some area. Both of these processes, developing valid assessment procedures and determining the criteria which will serve as the basis for evaluation of a competency are central to the credibility of competency-based education. Without them, little or no confidence can or will be placed in the competency certification process. Consequently, substantial resources must be committed to the development of new assessment techniques and to procedures for determining valid evaluation criteria. To fail to do so is to invite criticism that can only do harm to the whole concept of awarding credit on the basis of demonstrated proficiencies.

With the preceding remarks as background, I would like to sound several words of caution about the development of new procedures and the use of available instrumentation for evaluating competencies. Then, I will identify several especially difficult problem areas related to the evaluation of competencies.

Strategies for Identifying and Developing Techniques for Competency Evaluation

The three ideas which I discuss next focus on precautionary statements about existing procedures for evaluating competencies and for developing new assessment techniques.

(1) Although it is possible, in some instances, to use standardized

paper-and-pencil tests for the assessment of competencies, most instruments available are inappropriate for such purposes, either because they are inadequate for assessing the competencies of because the competencies cannot pro. .ly be assessed by paper-and-pencil tests. Attempts to adapt most commercial instruments for use in evaluating competencies will likely prove counter-productive and frustrating.

With the award of credit on the basis of demonstrated competency without regard for where or how the learning has occurred (e.g., experiential learning) gaining wider acceptance, many educational institutions have understandably looked to existing assessment instruments in hopes that they could aid in some aspects of the competency evaluation process. Instruments like the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) have been used in this capacity, particularly in the assessment of competencies which are relatively academic in character. Although tests like the CLEP can sometimes be of immense value, considerable caution must be exercised by educational institutions to insure that the scope and content of the instrument used to confer a "badge of competency" are consistent with the skill(s) that define the competency. That is, the key criterion for determining whether or not an instrument is suitable for certifying a competency should be the degree to which that instrument actually assesses the skills which define the competency.

A major problem with nearly all nationally-constructed examinations is that, for economic reasons, they are designed to appeal to as wide a user audience as possible. Thus, they may be too general in their content to be of valid use in competency-based programs where the skills and competencies are very precisely defined. Consequently, an effort must be made to avoid what I shall refer to as the "Procrustean Pitfall." You will recall that Procrustes was a legendary robber of ancient Greece, who, when robbing his

victims, forced them to his bed. Once there, if the height of his victims did not match the length of his bed, he took a rather extreme course of action. If they were too tall, his remedy was to cut off their legs, thus adapting them to the length of the bed. If they were too short, he would stretch them until they fit the bed. I would have you draw an analogy between Procrustes' bed and most standardized tests, both of which are of fixed length and structure. Just as the suffering of Procrustes' victims was limited if they fit his bed, little damage is done to the individual being evaluated when the test is a fairly good fit for the competency or competencies being assessed. The danger lies in the insistence on using tests which are only minimally related to the competencies being evaluated thus forcing the test to serve an inappropriate role. Those involved in the certification of competencies have the obligation to validate the assessment instruments they use and to avoid using inadequate measurement devices.

(2) Solutions to problems associated with competency assessment and evaluation are unlikely to come solely from measurement experts. Neither are practitioners alone apt to solve the substantial number of problems with which they are confronted. Rather, a close allegiance between testing specialists and practitioners will be required to solve the important problems.

The assessment of competencies, whether those competencies are acquired either before or after enrollment in a college, requires the development and refinement of a whole new measurement expertise, one relying primarily on criterion-referenced measurement rather than on traditional norm-referenced measurement. By criterion-referenced measurement, I refer to instrumentation which yields measurements that are directly interpretable in terms of an individual's performance on a specified set of tasks (or competency). That is, emphasis is placed on whether or not the individual can demonstrate his or her

proficiency in the skills which define the competency rather than on how he or she performs in relation to some norm group. This need for criterion-referenced measurement has only recently come to gain some prominence in education. Therefore, a theory for this type of assessment is just beginning to emerge.

The preceding fact, coupled with the diversity of the types of competencies to be assessed, the latter being limited only by the imagination of educators and students involved in programs which require competency certification, presents a problem of staggering dimensions to those engaged in the development of assessment procedures. The solutions to these new assessment problems almost certainly must come from a joint effort by both practitioners and measurement experts. Presently, both of these groups have many more questions than answers before them about how to assess the various types of competencies and how to do it in ways that are both valid and tractable.

(3) As the meetings this afternoon will probably demonstrate, existing competency-based education programs are characterized by their diversity. Although this diversity is a strength, it also presents problems to those faced with day-to-day operation of the programs and especially to those who would try to devise solutions to problems of measuring competency. Given the pressing need in this area, the temptation is to seek a neat little package of assessment procedures and/or techniques which can be applied across the board in competency-based programs. While such an approach may eventually prove productive, it is my opinion that we are much too early into the competency-based movement to commit our resources to the design of any one such package of procedures. Moreover, great caution should be exercised to avoid the development of an assessment orthodoxy, one which would in any way limit the constructive exploration of new measurement techniques and procedures or in any way inhibit the investigation

of alternative non-traditional methods of education.

It is hardly a secret that educators are highly experienced in the art of institutionalizing programs and practices. The very fact that we are gathered here as a group today indicates our interest in being identified in some way with non-traditional or competency-based education. The caution I urge on this group is that you carefully walk the tightrope between practices which accentuate the diversity of your programs and practices which encourage commonality among those programs. Either extreme is likely to prove counter-productive. Diversity of the type which obstructs one program from learning about and profiting from the successes or failures of another is unhealthy. On the other hand, a major strength of competency-based education is its responsiveness to individual needs and this attribute must be guarded and maintained at all costs. Consequently, any development of assessment procedures and techniques heralded as "the way" for assessing competency should be viewed with some suspicion. However, a happy medium in which new methods found to be useful in one setting are studied for their applicability to another setting seems both rational and necessary. Indeed it is important that some means be formulated for some systematic sharing across institutions the progress in this important area.

Competency Assessment and Evaluation - Some Problems

The preceding statements were generalizations which advise the exercise of considerable care in the development and implementation of new techniques and instruments for assessing and evaluating competency. My next remarks focus on what I believe to be some of the most pressing problems faced by individuals involved in competency evaluation and which deserve substantially more attention than they are now receiving. Solutions to these problems should be sought within the constraints suggested by the preceding comments.

Problem 1: Level of Specificity of Competencies - A concern often expressed by individuals engaged in competency-based education programs has to do with the level of specificity of the competencies which are to be evaluated and certified. For example, should competencies be stated in such narrow terms that they represent a very small domain of tasks or behaviors or should they be very broad and represent only important terminal behaviors? This issue is of practical concern since it also dictates the number of assessments which must take place as a student seeks to certify that he or she has attained all the competencies necessary to achieve some goal, for example, to earn a degree.

Problem 2: The Match Between What is to be Assessed and What is Actually Assessed - Regardless of the form of assessment used to evaluate competency, whether it involves a written test, performance test, situational observation, or a simulation game, there is often a large gap between the competency which is actually assessed and the competency which should be assessed. This gap between what is assessed and what should be assessed, usually referred to as a lack of test validity, can sometimes be attributed to the difficulty of obtaining measures of the more complex facets of a competency and the ease with which the less complex facets can be assessed.

As I noted earlier, very few instruments are now available on a commercial basis which are adequate or suitable for the purpose of competency evaluation. Yet such tests are and will continue to be used in large numbers simply because they are the only instrumentation available. Although this state of affairs may change as the competency-based education philosophy acquires more adherents, I would counsel that before existing instruments are used for competency evaluation, they should be carefully studied in light of the problem described above. Moreover, as practitioners develop their own instrumentation for use in their programs they need to devote the necessary resources to assure valid

measurement of the competencies they are to certify.

Problem 3: The High Cost of Individualization - Assessment within competency-based educational programs can be very expensive, even if that assessment is of the traditional paper-and-pencil format. This expense is the price which must be paid for tailoring education and assessment to individual needs. Although competency-based education programs sometimes include a common core of competencies which nearly all students must attain, in many instances the competencies desired by students are dissimilar from those of most other students, or as is more often the case, are acquired at different times and in different ways. This requires that alternative means for assessing the competencies of students must be developed.

The lack of commonality among student programs within an individual institution is further compounded by the diversity of approaches and curriculum emphases across institutions. It is this diversity which is likely to prevent the development of specific tests or assessment devices which can service the assessment needs of all competency-based education institutions.

Problem 4: Wise Use of Student and Faculty Time - The development of assessment procedures necessary for certifying competencies which involve the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and changes in attitude and behavior, can place great demands on faculty. This is especially true when the responsibility for both designing and validating such assessment falls to faculty.

Another major problem is related to the amount of effort required to administer assessment and to evaluate competency. Clearly, one criterion for the development of assessment instrumentation must be that it be practical from the perspective of student use in terms of complexity and time required for completion. Likewise, it must not place unreasonable demands on the evaluator(s). These demands for practicality must be balanced against another problem already

described - that of missing the mark of assessment by settling for measurement of those facets of a competency which are most easily assessed at the expense of the more important facets of the competency. I believe that such a balance is possible but that it will require a developmental process which is formative in nature, that is, one which involves continuous evaluation and refinement of the instrumentation.

Problem 5: Who Trains the Evaluators? - It is unlikely that anyone here would disagree with the premise that competency-based assessment and evaluation generates many unique and difficult problems. Since much evaluation will be very subjective, that is, will involve judgments which may not be consistent across all evaluators, the credibility of competency-based programs rests in large part on how accurately these judgments are made.

Assessing competencies is a very difficult and demanding task, one which requires that the individual doing the assessing is knowledgeable in assessment techniques. Yet, it is doubtful that many institutions involved in competency-based education have made provision for training their faculty in this crucial area. Because the awarding of credit for experiential learning and the certification of competencies attained through formal or informal education programs rests on the assumption that such learning can be assessed and evaluated fairly and accurately, educational institutions would do well to invest in the development of the assessment skills of their staff.

In summary, I am of the opinion that the future of competency-based education is yet to be written. The potential for that future is very bright indeed. Just how bright that future will be depends in large part on how successful educators are in solving the problems related to competency assessment and evaluation.

WHAT'S HAPPENING OVER HERE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Barbara Lowther
President, Lincoln Open University

I am very pleased to be here today to discuss some of the trends in alternative postsecondary education and to identify some of the major sources of assistance available to groups contemplating undertaking alternative educational programs. When I first got into this business, most of the discussion was concerned with questions like "alternative to what?" "for whom?" Gravely, many asked if we might not be further downgrading people already excluded from higher education by promising credibility through questionable curricula, instructors, and institutions. Today these questions are, ifyou will excuse the expression, largely academic. Women, ethnic and racial minorities, senior citizens and all groups formerly excluded from the regimen of traditional college training have rallied behind the cause of non-traditional education. It has become respectable in academe. I do not believe there exists a traditional college or university whose program has not been altered as a result of the influence of alternative education. Institutions which refuse to budge are planning their own funeral; they have less to offer and enrollments will reflect this. There is growing disenchantment with the need for a degree earned through formal education. This certificate is no longer the guarantee of a job and higher pay, which it was in the past.

Let us examine some of the trends and issues in postsecondary and higher education. First of all, we notice that the student has changed. And, there are fewer of them. Many are the products of elementary and secondary teaching and learning processes which have emphasized and rewarded an inquiry approach to learning. They expect to be more involved in designing and implementing

their own programs with the guidance of a professor. There is a great surge of interest in career education. This is replacing the liberal arts generalist of the recent past decades. Motivation is very different too. With the draft ended, great numbers of young people no longer feel compelled to stay in school. More and more students interweave learning and work experience over a number of years and do not have the financial and leisure options formerly considered the birthright of college students.

These trends have caused the development of two new types of higher education. One of the new types is the counselor-advisor-monitor approach in which the institutions and professors help students design and implement a learning plan geared to their objectives. In the second type a person submits himself for evaluation and demonstrates, performs or produces evidence of knowledge. He then may be granted a degree attesting to his achievement.

The institution which I represent today and which stands as a model of what can be done to organize educational forces toward the establishment of a cohesive program is Lincoln State University. The name will be changed shortly to Lincoln Open University to more clearly reflect its mission. Lincoln State was developed to meet the challenge presented by alternative postsecondary educational needs in Illinois and Indiana. Established in 1973 and chartered by the State of Illinois, Lincoln State has degree-granting authority through the master's degree. The University does not offer courses of study, but works through a consortium of existing academic institutions and community learning resources to help a student plan an appropriate program of study. LSU concentrates on the special needs and requirements of the adult "over 25" learner. Student certification is accomplished cooperatively with collaborating institutions. In its broker capacity, LSU seeks to apply sound procedures for validating learning from experience and non-traditional study through a variety

of assessment procedures. It also works to create new educational opportunities and materials where none exist to meet individual needs. LSU is responsible for "packaging" materials and services, thereby designing an external degree program for those colleges and universities which choose to participate in the consortium.

Now, where does this designing and packaging occur? The answer is - just about anywhere that instruction is offered - TV and radio facilities, museums, art galleries, industrial training facilities, and service agencies.

The University is essentially a non-campus institution. Students will pursue individual programs in selected "study centers" established primarily in public libraries. Public libraries are a natural choice for the location of centers for non-traditional study. They are accessible to the anticipated new student clientele, and they already provide many resources for alternative forms of education. In Chicago, library facilities have been provided to make possible (a) study and information gathering, (b) student-instructor conferences, (c) videocassette instruction, and (d) use of media and special equipment. The libraries offer specially prepared study guides, required texts, supplementary reading, and audiovisual aides - everything a serious student could want. Officials of the American Library Association and the Institute for Educational Development have expressed strong support for the library study model. Both organizations will play a continuing role in the expansion of this library model on a nationwide basis.

I wish at this point to introduce and explain some of the resources providing active assistance to LSU, and capable of giving advice and support to a variety of non-traditional educational services. The Institute for Educational Development (IED), which I mentioned in conjunction with the library services project, is a nonprofit, educational corporation chartered by the Board of

Regents of the University of the State of New York in 1965. Its charter provides for a wide range of activities in the creation, development, evaluation, production, and dissemination of educational concepts, services, and materials and methods. IED has been an affiliate of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for several years. This affiliation makes possible a productive interchange of capabilities and experiences across a broad range of educational interests and activities. It also makes management, professional and supportive services available to both organizations. Dr. Samuel B. Gould serves as president of IED, and previously was a vice-president of ETS. IED has conducted more than 125 projects in the areas of development, research, and evaluation.

Dr. Gould also serves as Chairman of the Council for the Progress of Non-traditional Study. The Council is being sponsored and funded by the Phillips Research Foundation. As part of its operations, the Council plans to initiate and publish studies of current development in non-traditional educational efforts. Council membership represents the leadership of a wide range of interests - business, labor unions, libraries, educational institutions and accrediting associations. The Council's aims are to encourage new approaches, call attention to programs of high quality and publish papers commenting on current developments in the non-traditional area. The ETS, the College Entrance Examination Board, and the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies have joined the Council in an affiliate relationship.

Another resource open to non-traditional postsecondary programs is the Commonwealth Universities Association. This consortium of colleges and universities assumes projects which are too costly for an individual school or program to develop. Membership in the Association is open to academic institutions nationally with an interest in developing, improving, and implementing

non-traditional programs of high quality. It combines the forces of many institutions to deal with broad issues rather than the problems of any one school. In this way it works to reduce the cost of education directly without adding new costs to students or taxpayers. The Association has established the following objectives for member institutions:

(1) Develop regional learning centers which will attract and refer potential students to cooperating institutions for matriculation.

(2) Develop programs for the re-orientation of faculty to concepts and methods of non-traditional study.

(3) Develop financial and management models appropriate to external degree programs.

(4) Create new curricula tailored to the needs of emerging student groups and content areas.

(5) Work to implement procedures for assessing life experiences and non-traditional study.

(6) Apply sound procedures for transferring credit earned at member institutions.

(7) Provide a centralized public relations office to use all media in educating the public about non-traditional education.

The Association has defined many other goals which time does not permit me to list. It is an invaluable establishment for any institution whether wholly alternative or just beginning to incorporate non-traditional methods.

In its operation, Lincoln State University is availing itself of three major innovations. All three are under development by one or more of the resour organizations I have just described. The first is the "Credit Bank" which will provide a transcript service. This will accept and record evidence of an individual's educational accomplishments and career experiences. Evidence

will be machine processed, stored, and retrieved when necessary. This information belongs to the learner, is placed under conditions of security and can be released only with the approval of the individual. Under these conditions the transcript becomes less a deed of transactions between instituions and more of a document belonging to the learner, to be validated by institutions.

A second innovation in LSU's format is the Alternative Educational Resources Service (AERS). This listing will provide quick, accurate and meaningful information about all colleges and university instruction, correspondence courses, and credit by examination through a variety of programs. At present an individual can be overwhelmed by the confusion of inadequately described educational opportunities. This system will be standardized and used in conjunction with trained counselors. Although AERS will be advisory only, it should develop a sound, vigorous and progressive leadership for public and private external study opportunities, promoting efficient and effective non-traditional higher education at numerous locations.

The third aid available to students of LSU is the Cooperative Assessment and Counseling Program. Through this, students, whose early lack of accomplishment would prevent them from a high level of success, can be evaluated. Their non-traditional experiences and education can be identified and recognized. CACP is not a selection device, but a guidance tool. Its purposes are:

(1) To find ways of appraising learning wherever it occured.

(2) To provide a list of objectives acceptable for credit as higher education.

(3) To determine criteria for identifying learning a student needs as well as recognizing that already achieved.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the ease of reporting and completeness of evaluation.

Other institutions can take advantage of these many services as we at Lincoln have. Most of the organizations I have mentioned are functioning at a national level. The technology and mobility of today's society encourage us to eliminate as many barriers - whether they be spatial, temporal or psychological - as possible. Higher education, in its struggle to survive, must keep costs as low as possible and avoid unnecessary competition for limited financial and personal resources. I might add that as materials become more costly, we must strive to avoid duplication of services. Voluntary cooperation among instituions of higher learning has proven beneficial to both student and institution. Cooperation preserves the autonomy of institutions and allows the freedom to develop unique approaches to off-campus study.

I urge you to consider the options I have outlined in making your plans for education of the future. With some exploration we may discover that Illinois and Iowa have more in common than corn and the Mississippi River.

Thank you.

CLEP CREDIT AND GRADUATION: A FOUR-YEAR STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

Douglas R. Whitney, Director
Evaluation and Examination Services

A credit by examination program provides a means by which well-prepared students may satisfy basic graduation requirements by exhibiting competence beyond the level of introductory college courses. Some college have developed their own testing programs to serve this purpose. The problems they have encountered include (1) maintaining the security of the tests, (2) keeping the tests up to date, and (3) developing tests which are sufficiently general in emphasis so that the credit earned by examination would be accepted at another institution.

In the past decade statewide and nationwide college-level testing programs have experienced a marked growth. However, the use of such a series of standardized tests have been hindered by the difficulty in (1) locating tests acceptable to the faculty and (2) determining appropriate rules for awarding credit. The College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), made available in 1965, through the College Entrance Examination Board, represents a major effort in developing standardized tests for such programs. With their wide use, CLEP examinations have come to represent a common currency; many colleges and universities now accept CLEP scores for credit in lieu of college coursework.

Since 1966, The University of Iowa has offered students the opportunity to satisfy certain basic graduation requirements and to earn elective credit toward graduation through tests offered in the CLEP series (Stuit, 1967; Braddock & Enger, 1973). By January, 1974, students in the College of Liberal Arts had earned 23,626 semester hours of credit and exemptions in 10,200 courses through

CLEP. Credit is awarded at The University of Iowa for selected General Examination subtests with scores at or above the eightieth percentile based on national college sophomore norms; credit is also earned by students scoring at or above the fiftieth percentile on selected Subject Examinations (College Entrance Examination Board, 1967). The University also requires students to pass an essay examination to earn credit through the Literature Subject Examinations.

The announced purposes of credit by examination through CLEP have been threefold: (1) converting certain life experiences into college credit, (2) exempting students from basic requirements where they can demonstrate a sufficient level of competence, and (3) shortening the time required to complete a college degree program. Descriptions of programs emphasizing each of these purposes appeared in a recent issue of the College Board Review (Burnette, 1971; Fagin, 1971; Reich, 1971; Stetson, 1971). Since only 2% of the new freshman entering the University have been out of high school for more than one year, the use of CLEP to convert life experiences into college credit has been infrequent. The primary use of CLEP at The University of Iowa has been to satisfy basic graduation requirements. The use of CLEP credit to shorten the time required for graduation at the University has not been previously explored; this report will examine this effect.

Description of Students

This study focused on the 2,866 freshman students who completed their first semester at the University of Iowa in the fall of 1969. As a group, these entering freshmen had an average American College Test (ACT) composite score of 25.2 (85th percentile for college-bound students). After four academic years (through May, 1973), these students had earned an average of 88 semester hours at the University of Iowa with a grade point average (GPA) of 2.61 on

a four point scale (A = 4.00). A total of 277 students (10%) earned 2,103 semester hours of credit through CLEP; another 7% attempted one or more CLEP examinations but received no credit. Eighty-three percent did not attempt any CLEP examinations.

CLEP Credit vs No CLEP Credit

Students who received CLEP credit (10%) had a higher average ACT Composite score (see Table I) than those (90%) who did not earn CLEP credit. As a group, those with CLEP credit also had an average percentile rank in their high school graduation class higher than that of those without CLEP credit. Thus, the group of students who eventually earned CLEP credit had better acadmmic credentials at the time of admission to the University than did those who did not attempt or did not earn credit on the tests.

TABLE I
Average Aptitude and Achievement Measures:
Students with and without CLEP Credit

Variable	Students with No CLEP Credit (N = 2,589)	Students with CLEP Credit (N = 277)
ACT Composite Score	24.9	28.8
High School Rank	74	85
Semester hours earned at University of Iowa	85	111
Cumulative GPA at University of Iowa	2.55	3.07

The students who earned CLEP credit accumulated more semester hours with a higher grade point average than did the students without CLEP credit. Even when the number of semester hours for the group earning CLEP credit was

reduced by subtracting the hours earned through CLEP (an average of 8 per student), this group still earned an average of 18 more semester hours during the period studied. Since the group earning credit through CLEP received credit for courses in which they would have been expected to perform well, the observed difference in average GPA between groups is probably an underestimate of the difference in college-level achievement.

In light of the differences between the groups in hours earned and GPA, it was not surprising to find that a greater proportion of the group who earned CLEP credit graduated in May, 1973 (the anticipated graduation date for students entering college in Fall, 1969). Similarly, the CLEP credit group more frequently graduated early (See Table II.). Clearly, students with CLEP credit tended to graduate earlier and at a higher rate than those without CLEP credit.

TABLE II
Graduation Rates of Students
with and without CLEP Credit

Date Graduated	Earned CLEP Credit		No CLEP Credit	
	No.	%	No.	%
Prior to May, 1973	47	17.0	65	2.5
May, 1973	119	43.0	870	33.6
Total graduated by May, 1973	166	60.00	935	36.1
Had not graduated	111	40.0	1,654	63.9
Total	277	100.0	2,589	100.0

Before one concludes that CLEP credit facilitates graduation or early

graduation, it should be recalled that the CLEP credit group had better academic credentials when they were adm ... d. Since one would expect better students to show a higher rate of gradu... on and early graduation, it is not clear from the data presented thus far whether or not the CLEP credit was responsible for the differences between graduation rates.

Graduates with and without CLEP Credit

If the graduates in the CLEP credit and no CLEP credit groups possessed similar academic credentials, one could conclude that the CLEP credit was not causally related to the differences in graduation rates. When the two groups of graduates were compared, however, the graduates with CLEP credit revealed much better pre-admission credentials (See Table III.). Similarly, the average GPA for the graduates with CLEP credit was much higher. Thus, the graduates with CLEP credit had markedly better credentials at entrance and (perhaps as a result) had a better college record than did the graduates without CLEP credit. Therefore, the analysis of graduates in each group still does not clarify the role of CLEP credit in explaining the differences in graduation rates.

TABLE III
Average Aptitude and Achievement Measures:
Students Who Graduated with and without
CLEP Credit

Variable	Graduated Students with No CLEP Credit (N = 935)	Graduated Students with CLEP Credit (N = 166)
ACT Composite	25.5	29.2
High School Rank	81	89
Cumulative GPA at University of Iowa	2.99	3.30

Prediction of Graduation Rates

In order to explore more fully the relstionship of CLEP credit to graduation rates, a number of regression analyses were performed on the data for the total group (N = 2,866). First, the correlations among ACT Composite Score (ACT), High School Rank (HSR), University of Iowa Cumulative GPA (UIGPA), CLEP credit (CLEP), and graduation outcomes were computed (See Table IV.).

TABLE IV
Correlations Among Variables
Predicting Graduation
(N = 2,866)

	ACT	HSR	UIGPA	CLEP
ACT Composite				
High School Rank	.42			
University of Iowa GPA	.38	.53		
CLEP Credit	.33	.17	.22	
Graduation	.19	.28	.50	.14
Early Graduation	.21	.27	.49	.20

Note: CLEP Credit = 1 if CLEP credit earned, 0 = no CLEP credit earned;
Graduation = 1 if graduated, 0 if not;
Early Graduation = 2 if graduated prior to May, 1973, 1 if graduated in May, 1973, 0 if not graduated.

Inspection of these correlstions revealed that GPA at the University of Iowa was the best single predictor of graduation and of early graduation. In each case, the next best predictors were high school rank, ACT Composite Score and (finally) CLEP credit. Additional analyses using the amount of CLEP credit earned yielded identical conclusions. Thus, as a single predictor, CLEP credit

was not a very powerful predictor of graduation or early graduation.

It is possible, however, for a predictor to assume great importance as a second or third variable after the introduction of a "best" predictor. To explore this possibility, the partial correlations between CLEP credit and each graduation criterion (removing the effect of the ACT Composite Scores) were computed in order to examine the relationship over-and-above that accounted for by academic ability. The resulting values were only .08 for graduation and .14 for early graduation. Similar analyses to remove the effect of high school rank yielded values of only .10 and .16. Thus, once the graduation rates for the group with CLEP credit and the group with no CLEP credit had been adjusted for differences in academic credentials at the time of entrance to the University, very little difference remained. That is, most of the original differences in graduation rates could be explained by differences in ACT and high school rank.

In other regression analyses developed to predict graduation and early graduation, the multiple correlations using GPA at the University as the predictor were .50 and .49 respectively. Addition of CLEP credit to the prediction equations yielded little improvement in these correlations (increases of .00 and .01 respectively).

Conclusions

The higher graduation rates for students with CLEP credit were predictable from differences in measures of academic ability and achievement which existed at the time of admission to the University. The apparent reason for this finding is that the most able students are the ones who earn CLEP credit. These are the same students who have usually graduated and graduated earlier in higher proportions than the less able students.

The original purpose for adopting the CLEP examinations at the University of Iowa was to enable well-prepared students to satisfy certain collegiate

graduation requirements so they could be eligible to take other courses for which their aptitude and high school instruction had prepared them. This purpose is apparently being accomplished without resulting in a flood of early (and, perhaps, "cheap") graduations. This is especially important in light of the fourfold increase in the use of CLEP by succeeding freshman classes.

A SYSTEM FOR RECORDING AND AWARDING CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS ON NON-CREDIT CONTINUING EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF IOWA

Don McGuire, Chairperson
Task Force of the Iowa State Coordinating
Committee For Continuing Education

INTRODUCTION

The commitment to non-credit continuing education throughout the country is recognized by the wide variety of continuing education programs and the number of adults who have taken advantage of such programs. Iowa has been a leader in the nation in providing these services. Programs have been made available in Iowa to adults at locations easily accessible whenever sufficient interest has been found.

One problem that has been encountered in non-credit continuing education programs in the past throughout the country has been the lack of recording continuing education programs in a systematic way or with any sense of permanence, significance or transferability.

A Task Force was appointed by the State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education and assigned to study the "Continuing Education Unit" which had been used by some states to record non-credit continuing education programs. In March, 1973, the Task Force examined how the CEU was being used in various states and what the results were of those states involved with the CEU.

It was found that the CEU was accepted very well by the states utilizing the system for a solution to a uniform unit of measurement for continuing education programs. The Task Force then studied very carefully various state plans. The Task Force also examined whether agencies, associations, institutions, employers, etc., from Iowa would see the CEU as a benefit to their respective groups. After contacting various groups, it was found that the CEU could be beneficial. The Task Force then felt the CEU had implications for Iowa. As

a result of this work, a State Plan for Iowa was developed.

It is hoped that this proposed State Plan can be used as a guide for educational instituions in Iowa planning to utilize the CEU.

THE CONTINUING EDUCATION UNIT - DEFINITION

One continuing education unit (CEU) is TEN CONTACT HOURS OF PARTICIPATION in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction. CONTACT HOURS is not intended to exclude non-traditional education programs such as independent study, correspondence study and other activities of this type. These activities will be evaluated by the appropriate educational officer in the involved instituion to make a determination as to the appropriate number of CEU's to be awarded.

Sponsorship

Responsible sponsorship includes all officially recognized schools, colleges and universities represented by the State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education. Other interested educational institutions not represented by the State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education should make their request for inclusion in the State CEU system to the Chairman of the State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education.

Approval of Programs

The approval of programs, number of CEU's and the appropriate evaluation procedures for successful completion by the participant will be determined prior to the program offering through the regular channels of the educational institutions concerned.

Qualified Instructors

All instructors of programs approved for CEU's must be competent in the fields in which they teach, attested to by study culminating in appropriate degrees; or have extensive occupational experience or professional practice

which is of the highest quality and in the appropriate field in which they will teach.

OBJECTIVES

Some specific objectives which the application of the continuing education unit will fulfill are:

(1) To systematize the recording and reporting system for participation in non-credit continuing education.

(2) To provide a uniform system for accumulating quantitative data on participation in continuing education activities.

(3) To permit the accumulation, updating and transfer of the continuing education record of an individual participant.

(4) To encourage long-range educational goals and lifelong learning as a process of continuing education.

(5) To make the pursuit of knowledge more attractive as a way of personal and professional development.

(6) To permit and encourage the typical adult student to marshall and utilize a host of continuing education resources to serve his particular needs.

CRITERIA FOR PROGRAM APPROVAL

The following criteria will need to be met in order for a program to be approved for granting continuing education units:

(1) There is a statement of the purpose and objectives.

(2) The content is well-organized and presented in a sequential manner.

(3) There is evidence of pre-planning which should include the opportunity for input by the target group to be served.

(4) The instructional personnel utilized will be well-qualified by education or experience.

(5) There is provision for individual participant registration which will

include information required for record-keeping and reporting.

(6) There is a provision for evaluation of each individual participant appropriate to the material presented. This may consist of attendance records, student performance, self-learning summaries, examinations, evaluative critiques . . . or any combination of these.

RECORDING AND AWARDING UNITS

Eligibility

CEU's will be recorded and accumulated for all students who participate in an approved CEU program. Additional recordkeeping is at the perrogative of the institutions. Transcripts will be made available from the awarding institution upon the request of the student and upon payment of an appropriate fee.

Determination of CEU's to be Awarded

The determination of the number of CEU's to be recorded and awarded for a particular continuing education experience is the responsibility of the program director. The decimal system will allow the record to reflect the number of CEU's to be recorded and awarded, based on contact hours, e.g., 1.5 CEU's, .2 CEU's, 3.0 CEU's, etc. A continuing education experience to be eligible to be recorded and awarded shall not be for less than .1 CEU.

RECORDKEEPING

The instituion is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate permanent records of all CEU's that are recorded and awarded. It is recommended that the below minimal information be recorded on the program approval form, registration form, and transcript:

Program Approval Form

(1) Date of request.

(2) Course title.

(3) Brief course description and format.

(4) Starting and ending dates of activity.

(5) Number of CEU's requested.

(6) Location where course is to be offered.

(7) Cooperating non-educational instituion.

(8) Program classification.

(9) Sponsoring institution.

(10) Course objectives.

(11) Target audience to be served.

(12) Description of evaluation procedure to be used.

(13) Signatures of instructor and appropriate institutional officer.

(14) Comments.

It is assumed that the educational instituion will utilize existing registration forms which will contain most of the following information.

Registration Form

(1) Name, address, zip code.

(2) Social security number.

(3) Course title.

(4) Sex.

(5) Age grouping by:

Under 22

22 - 35

36 - 55

56 - 65

Over 65

Information not given

(6) *Minority participation by:

American Indian

Black

Spanish surnamed

Oriental

Caucasian

Other

(7) Highest education attained. (If the institution needs it.)

(8) Number of CEU's to be recorded.

(9) Present occupation.

(10) Evaluative reports.

(11) Name of sponsoring institution.

*It is recommended that educational institutions follow their Affirmative Action Plan.

Transcript

(1) Date of transcript.

(2) Name, address, zip code, and social security number of student.

(3) Course title.

(4) Brief course description. (To include co-sponsoring agency and identifying course format.)

(5) Date CEU awarded.

(6) Number of CEU's awarded.

(7) Certifying institution statement (this is to certify that _____ has successfully completed the following continuing education program offered by (institution's name) .

(8) Name and title of certifying officer.

Layout of Keypunch Card

Educational institutions planning to use the computer for printing transcripts should consider the below keypunch card layout. In the event a

centralized data bank should become a reality in the future, it would be extremely beneficial if the below minimal information was kept by all educational institutions.

Card Number 1:

Columns	1 - 2	County
	3 - 6	School or District
	7 - 30	Name of student
	31 - 41	Social security number
	42 - 53	Classification and Course Number
	54	Sex
	55 - 56	Age grouping
	57	Ethnic background
	58 - 61	Completion date (month and year)
	62 - 64	Number of CEU's recorded
	65 - 66	Type of instruction
	67 - 78	Blank or for institutional use
	79 - 80	Card number

Card Number 2:

Columns	1 - 2	County
	3 - 6	School or District
	7 - 30	Street address of student
	31 - 41	Social security number
	42 - 53	Course number
	54 - 78	Blank
	79 - 80	Card number

Card Number 3:

Columns	1 - 2	County

Columns	3 - 6	School or District
	7 - 30	City, state and zip code number
	31 - 41	Social security number
	42 - 53	Course number
	54 - 78	Blank
	79 - 80	Card number

Course descriptions and the course format would be controlled by the program through the course number and would be printed on the transcript. The certifying statement and signature needed on the transcript would likewise be programmed.

Program Classification

It is recommended that the following classification system be utilized. Each program would be categorized by a three digit numbering system utilizing the following classification system.

(1) For individual understanding of society's problems . . .

1.01 Health and safety

1.02 Human relations and communications

1.03 Education

1.04 Government

1.05 Business

1.06 Law and law enforcement

1.07 Community development

1.08 Aging

1.09 Social change

1.10 Environment

1.11 Agriculture and food production

(2) For personal interest and growth . . .

2.01 Leisure time activities

2.02 Cultural enrichment

2.03 Expanding knowledge about the world and its people

2.04 Civic and economic understanding

(3) For occupational improvement in . . .

3.01 The professions

3.02 Business and industry

3.03 Government

3.04 Education

3.05 Law and law enforcement

3.06 Clerical

3.07 Trades and technologies

3.08 Agriculture and food production

3.09 Social services

(4) For development of basic intellectual skills . . .

4.01 Reading

4.02 Writing

4.03 Languages

4.04 Mathematics

4.05 Critical and creative thinking

4.06 Listening

(5) For understanding of personal life problems and demands . . .

5.01 Finance

5.02 Foods and nutrition

5.03 Family living

5.04 Child development

5.05 Health and safety

5.06 Personal assessment

5.07 Consumer understanding

Further course identification can be made by following the classification numbers with as many as eight additional digits according to the preferences of the sponsoring institution.

Course Format

It is recommended that educational institutions record the type of instruction by the below categories. The course format would be shown on the transcript as a part of the description of the course.

(1) Class A group formally organized for face-to-face instruction, which meets regularly but which has intervening time periods between meetings and which usually extends over an entire session or intersession.

(2) Conference A general type of meeting usually of one or more days duration, attended by a fairly large number of people. A conference will have a central theme but is often loosely structured to cover a wide range of topics. The emphasis is on prepared presentations by authoritative speakers, although division into small group sessions for discussion purposes is often a related activity.

(3) Institute Generally similar to a conference, but more tightly structured to provide a more systematic development of its theme, with the emphas more on providing instruction in principles and techniques than on general information. Participants are usually individuals who already have some competence in their field of interest. Institute programs may have a certain continuity, meeting on a yearly basis for example.

(4) Short Course A sequential offering, as a rule under a single instructo meeting on a regular basis for a stipulated number of class sessions over a short period of time (e.g., one to three weeks, etc.). Quizzes and examinations

may be given depending upon the determination of requirements. It may also be more informal and more flexible in its approach in order to meet the needs of students.

(5) Workshop Usually meets for a continuous period of time over a period of one or more days. The distinguishing feature of the workshop is that it combines instruction with laboratory or experimental activity for the participants. The emphasis is more likely to be on skill training than on general principles.

(6) Seminar A small grouping of people with the primary emphasis on discussion under a leader or resource person or persons. In continuing higher education a seminar is more likely to be a one-time offering, although it may continue for several days.

(7) Special Training Program A skill program which offers a combination of instruction and practice. The approach is usually on a more individualized basis than a workshop.

(8) Correspondence Course and/or Independent Study

(9) Lecture Series

(10) Closed Circuit TV Instruction

(11) Broadcast Circuit TV Instruction

(12) Closed Circuit Audio-Instruction

(13) Broadcast Radio Instruction

(14) Other

STUDENT EVALUATION

In the recording of CEU's, the program director for each learning experience will be responsible for certifying that the program was satisfactorily completed by each participant.

RETROACTIVITY

The CEU will not be awarded for non-credit educational activities conducted prior to the adoption of the unit by the institution.

LIMITATIONS

The following examples suggest the types of programs not normally awarded CEU's:

(1) Programs carrying academic credit either secondary or collegiate.

(2) Programs leading to high school equivalency certificates or diplomas.

(3) Programs not sponsored by an educational institution described herein.

(4) Programs only casually related to any specific upgrading purpose or goal.

(5) Programs which are normally considered routine job training.

THE GRANTING OF CREDIT FOR LIFE EXPERIENCE: SOME INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Robert J. Barak, Director Research and Information
State Board of Regents of Iowa

One of the most frequently expressed needs of educators considering the merits of the granting of credit for life experience is the need for practical information on the procedures used to evaluate experience. Such questions as: "How do you evaluate a person's experience?" "What experiences are creditable?" "What is the role of faculty in granting credit for life experience?" are frequent.

In an attempt to answer some of these questions, methods and procedures were requested from institutions listed by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities as "granting credit for life experience." The responses from this inquiry were reviewed and examples of the various institutional methods and procedures were selected for inclusion here.

The methods utilized in the granting of credit for experience range from what may now be "traditional" methods which primarily utilize selected standardized examinations such as the College Level Examination Program tests (CLEP) to the more "non-traditional" type methods which grant credit for learning competencies by methods other than validation by exam. The Commission on Non-traditional Study found that almost two-thirds of the 1200 institutions furnishing data for their study claimed that they presently award credit on the basis of CLEP and about the same number reported that they award advanced placement credit. (College Entrance Examination Board.)

Sangamon State University makes extensive use of the CLEP exams. At SSU credit is provided through the use of CLEP exams to give qualified applicants advanced placement directly into the junior year of an undergraduate program into the beginning of a master's degree program. Five parts of the CLEP exam are

utilized (i.e., English composition, social sciences, and humanities, mathematics and natural sciences). No scores or cut-off points are set for the CLEP. However, graduate applicants are expected to test approximately at the 75th percentile or above on all five tests, and undergraduate applicants are expected to score approximately the 50th percentile or above on all five tests.

The University of Iowa is one of a number of institutions around the country which have adopted the CEU, a new method of recording adult education experiences. This new system uses Continuing Education Units (CEU) to provide participants in workshops, short courses, conferences, institutes and other non-credit educational programs with cumulative records of their experience. As yet, there is no relationship between CEU and Credit. While some founders of the CEU claim it was not intended to be related to credit, others seem to be considering formulas to equate the two.

The use of locally constructed exams, as opposed to standardized national exams, is practiced at East Texas State University and Moorhead State College to grant credit for experience. According to the Commission on Non-traditional Study about half of the institutions identified grant credit by utilizing examinations of this type and other locally adopted criteria. At East Texas State students can receive college credit for work experience, in-service training, military courses, technical education, CLEP, Advance Placement Test and departmentally constructed tests of competency.

Moorhead State uses a somewhat different approach which requires the student to document their own claims to competency by preparing statements of competency under the guidance of an advisor. The student then gathers relevant documentation or draws up suggested methods of evaluation which the student would be willing to participate in. The student is then referred to an appropriat faculty person who agrees with the student on a means of proceeding and actually carries out the evaluation procedure.

At Sterling College in Kansas opportunities are provided for older student to "quiz-out" of those out-of-classroom experiences that are required in its competency-based curriculum. Students wishing to receive life experience credits this way first confer with an appropriate evaluation team and then assemble evidence to validate their experiences. The student then decides how and when the credits are to be validated before the evaluation team. The School of New Resources of the College of New Rochelle (N.Y.) uses a similar committee of six persons to judge each student's request for credit for experience. The committee of six persons, some members of the School, will judge the portfolio prepared by the student and determine the number of credits to be awarded. The portfolios prepared by the students describe elements of the student's experience plus a reflective analysis of what has been learned from each experience.

Thomas A. Edison College (N.J.) has devised a method of evaluating college-level knowledge and/or skills which have been acquired through experience, on-the-job training, independent study or course work which has been completed at an unaccredited institution. The Thomas A. Edison method is known as "Individual Assessment" which may be used to satisfy certain degree requirements. This assessment method also includes those areas which cannot be adequately assessed by existing proficiency examinations. Like Sterling College and the School of New Resources mentioned earlier, the method developed by Thomas A. Edison College includes documentation by the student in the particular area in which credit is being requested. Rather than utilizing a committee or a team, however, Thomas A. Edison students use a single examiner for each "significant body of knowledge" and pay fees proportionately.

The various institutional procedures mentioned above are described more fully in the section which follows. References are also provided for those interested in additional information.

INSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES

East Texas State University

In 1972, East Texas State University initiated procedures for granting credit for life experience. During the brief period since then, 112 applicants have been approved for credit. At East Texas State, the maximum credit allowable is thirty semester hours. Additionally, credit is not awarded or posted to the student's permanent record until the student completes thirty semester hours in residence. The East Texas State University program also enables students to receive college credit for work experience, in-service training, military courses, technical education and credit by examination. In some instances credit may be obtained in more than one of these areas.

Occupational Competency. A student may receive college credit for as many as ten (10) courses for competencies acquired through work experiences related to his educational objectives. In order to apply for credit for occupational competency, the student must submit his application to the Admissions Office, complete with his work history and names and addresses of at least three references qualified to verify his competencies. When the notarized replies from the student's references are received, he is assigned to an Occupational Competency Coordinator in the college from which he is seeking credit. The coordinator will then confer with the student and forward recommendations for credit to the Committee on Credit for Occupational Competency for final action. The student will be notified by the Admissions Office of the Committee's decision. All credit awarded for occupational competency is held in abeyance and posted to the student's record only after he has completed ten (10) courses in residence with at least a "C" average.

In-Service Training. A student desiring to receive credit for educational experiences gained through in-service training, institutes, etc. of governmental

agencies and private business may have his experiences evaluated if the experience included at least eighteen (18) hours of lecture-discussion type experience or fifty-four (54) hours of contact in laboratory type instruction. The student must have a letter of verification from the person who was in charge sent to the Admissions Office with the following information provided:

(1) Full and correct title of educational experience

(2) Course objective

(3) Course content

(4) Total number of laboratory contact hours

(5) Total number of lecture-discussion hours

(6) Qualifications of instructors

The credit will be evaluated by the Admissions Office. Credit earned through this method will be granted after the student completes ten (10) courses in residence with a "C" average.

Military Service Credit. Credit may be issued for military technical courses which are listed for credit in A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., latest edition, and recommendation of the Commission on Accreditation of Service Experiences. Credit will be granted by the Admissions Office according to the recommendations in the Guide and CASE. Courses taken through the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI), regardless of mode of study, may transfer at face value. A percentile of 20 or above is required.

Technical Education. Credit may be obtained through regionally accredited technical educational programs. (This includes credit for work completed in a teaching hospital which is accredited through the appropriate national agency of the field in which credit is sought.) All courses in an accredited Associate of Applied Science degree program will be accepted in transfer. Other technical-vocational

courses will be accepted when recommended by the department head at ETSU responsible for the subject matter area and the Associate Director for Admissions

Credit by Examination: Credit for individual study or formal and informal educational experience not covered by occupational competencies may be earned through Advanced Placement Test, the College Level Examination Programs, and departmental tests of competency in specific courses. Testing is administered through the Office of Testing, Orientation and School Relations. For additional information concerning various tests, please contact the Director of Testing, Orientation and School Relations, East Texas State University, Commerce, Texas 75428.

Persons achieving credit by one or more of the above methods should work closely with his academic advisor within his major department to plan the completion of his degree program. Applicability to a degree program of credit earned through non-traditional manner will vary according to the major chosen.

Moorhead State College

Moorhead State College does not give credit for experience itself nor does it grant credit for college-level competencies that have been developed through experience.

At Moorhead State the procedure is to have the adults who wish to establish their claims to competence prepare statements of competence which they intend to document. This preparation is carried out under the guidance of an advisor. Various faculty members on campus have provided sample statements of competence to use as illustrations. A given student then gathers relevent documentation or draws up a suggested method of evaluation which he/she would be willing to participate in. He/she is then referred to an appropriate faculty person who agrees with the student on a means of proceeding and actually carries out the evaluation procedure. Credits can then be posted by the registrar

either by specific course number and title or by use of an appropriate departmental prefix and a descriptive title. The following departments have already made such assessments: Accounting, business, chemistry, computer science, criminal justice studies, English, foreign languages, geography, history, industrial education, Latin American studies, mass communications, minority group studies, political science, social services, sociology, and speech. It is expected that other departments will become involved as soon as they have students seeking credits through assessment. Their program only began in September.

It is important to note that they are only able to award credit through assessment of experience in those areas where they have faculty qualified to do the evaluating, or where standardized, fairly well-accepted means exist externally for doing the evaluation. For example, Moorhead awards credit on the basis of subject examination of CLEP; they permit the awarding of credit to graduates of accredited diploma schools of nursing; and they allow clock hours from completed programs at Minnesota ATVI's to be translated into college credits up to a limit of 72 quarter credits. They do not attempt to assess competence in areas where they have no qualified faculty.

Sterling College

Colleges have for many years been permitting students to "quiz-out" of certain courses in the curriculum either simply to satisfy requirements or to receive college credits and thus accelerate their programs. Outside agencies are making these tests available (such as the CLEP program and the College Board Advanced Placement series), and many colleges have their own testing services. Sterling College participates in similar programs, and it is possible for students to test out of a variety of courses in the curriculum.

Sterling's new competency curriculum has made possible a similar "testing out" potential in an entirely different kind of experience. In order to explain

this process it is necessary first to explain several aspects of the new curriculum. First is the emphasis upon "competency." Graduation requirements are set down in terms of nine areas in which students are expected to demonstrate competency, and numerous ways have been identified by which students can "demonstrate" these competencies. One way - a more or less traditional way - is by taking and passing certain courses at a level regarded as "competent" by the instructor.

In most of the areas, however, students are encouraged to demonstrate competency also by participating in various out-of-class experiences, such as the kinds of experiences traditionally referred to as "extra curricular." Possibilities for receiving credit for off-campus and summer activities also exist. To get these credits students work through evaluation teams in each of the competency areas to identify suitable experiences, plan projects and set up the procedures for evaluation and eventual accreditation.

For older students entering the college program after significant post-secondary experiences, the college is proposing to permit the accreditation of a limited number of life experiences for college credit. In other words, the student can "quiz-out" of those out-of-class experiences that are required in the curriculum. Several important things need to be kept in mind in this regard.

(1) The college will accredit only the kinds of experiences that are related to the competency areas in the curriculum and meet the educational objectives of the competencies.

(2) The number of such credits that can be accredited is limited by the requirements of the curriculum.

(3) Students will be expected to pay for the credits obtained in this way - or, if desired, to fit the credits into a normal course load during succeeding semesters so that no extra charges need to be assessed. (The charge for credits

not handled as part of a normal course load is presently $15 per credit hour.) This charge covers the costs of administering, evaluating and accrediting these experiences and represents ¼ the normal charge for a regular credit hour.

(4) Students must be able to furnish some kind of validation of these experiences and, if possible, some evaluation from persons in a position to comment about what the student has done.

Although this possibility for testing out of life experiences is intended primarily for older students, it will obviously be of great benefit to transfer students as a way of meeting some of the out-of-class experiences required in the Sterling College curriculum. In addition, freshmen students right out of high school who have had unusual experiences or have special talents in the competency areas may apply for possible validation of life experience credits.

Following is a description of the process through which students wishing to receive "life experience" credits should go:

(1) Get an appointment with the Dean or the Registrar for a preliminary discussion about your "life experiences" to find out tentatively what possible credits you might validate.

(2) You may be asked to confer with an appropriate evaluation team chairman or representative to discuss the possibilities further.

(3) You will then begin to assemble the kinds of evidence you are requested to submit to validate your experience.

(4) You decide how and when you want your credits validated.

(5) You appear before the appropriate evaluation team or some other person who may be designated, present the evidence for your life experience and get the experience(s) evaluated for competency credit(s).

University of Iowa

A new method for providing standardized records of the experiences of Iowans

in continuing education programs was recently announced by the University of Iowa's Division of Extension and University Services.

Representing a first for Iowa, the new system uses Continuing Education Units (CEU's) to provide participants in workshops, short-courses, conferences, institutes and other non-credit educational programs with personal, cumulative records of their experiences.

The CEU plan for Iowa has been approved by the State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education, representing the state's Area Schools (community colleges), the Iowa Association of Private Colleges and Universities, and the Regents Universities. It will go into operation July 1, 1974.

Under the new system the U of I Extension Division will evaluate all continuing education programs to be offered at the University to determine if, and how many, CEU's should be awarded to participants.

One CEU will be awarded for ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education program which meets standards set by the State Coordinating Committee for Continuing Education.

CEU's will be granted to participants in a new program of non-credit courses for adults which will be launched later this month by the U of I's Center for Conferences and Institutes (CCI). Each of the seven evening classes in the first series of courses will provide ten contact hours of instruction, making participants eligible for one CEU per course taken.

The initial U of I program will include non-credit courses in Iowa history, care of heart patients, food budgeting, Hi-Fi music, the energy crisis, preschool child care and indoor gardening.

People working in such fields as medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing and engineering are required to continually update their knowledge by attending various educational programs. Each of these professions has its own scoring

methods for recording these activities. CEU's offer a standardized system for compiling such records.

The CEU system has been developed in response to the trememdous growth that is taking place in continuing education. Among the key trends that are stimulating this mounting demand for non-credit education programs are the knowledge explosion, increased leisure time, earlier retirement and professional recertification programs.

According to university administrators, education no longer can be viewed as a process that ends when people reach their early twenties. Today education is a lifelong experience and the CEU provides a uniform system for the accumulation, updating and transfer of an individual's record of participation in these continuing education activities.

In addition to encouraging lifelong learning as a way of personal enrichment, the CEU system is designed to stimulate an individual's professional development. For example, updated records of a person's continuing education experiences would be available to employers on the student's request. The University of Iowa has also made extensive use of the CLEP exams which is explained elsewhere in the conference proceedings.

Sangamon State University

Sangamon State University recognizes that persons can receive an education outside the formal university environment. They use the College Level Examination Program to evaluate life experience so that qualified applicants may be admitted directly to the junior year of an undergraduate program or to the beginning of a master's degree program. In addition to the College Level Examination Program, individual papers are submitted by the applicant explaining work, community leadership and other learning experiences. There are five parts to the exam: English composition, mathematics, natural

sciences, social sciences, and humanities. No minimum scores or cut-off points are set for the CLEP. However, graduate applicants are expected to test approximately at the 75th percentile or above on all five tests, and undergraduate applicants are expected to score at approximately the 50th percentile or above on all five tests.

During the past year, Sangamon State University has admitted 114 undergraduates at the junior level and 24 students at the graduate level. Their total enrollment over this period has averaged 2,800 students.

The College of New Rochelle

Discription of the New Resources Program

Origins. The New Resources model is a degree program directed to an adult population which had been bypassed or never had the opportunity to begin or complete higher education. Older students often feel insecure about the prospect of returning to school. New Resources overcomes this state of affairs by stripping education of its procedural shortcomings. Its admission policy stresses exit rather than entrance requirements. Its curriculum is based on the assumption that adults have learned a great deal through their experiences on the job, at home and in the community. Thus the program awards academic credit for educationally valid life experience. It encourages independent study options by which students can maintain connection between their education and experiences. The program depends in a large part on student-based curriculum development thus recognizing their maturity as well as their needs and interests. In these various ways, a student can complete one hundred and twenty credits and secure a Bachelor of Arts degree. Depending on the amount of life experience credit awarded, the process can be completed in three to four years of full time study (i.e., twelve credits per term) without removing the student from his or her job and family responsibilities.

This concept was first formulated and advanced at the College of New Rochelle by Thomas Taaffe, former Chairman of the College's Department of Philosophy and currently Director of the District Council #37 campus. The model was refined and implemented at the College with the assistance of Joseph McDermott, former education officer for the Peace Corps and the National Urban Coalition and presently Dean of the School of New Resources.

The New Resources Program was formally approved by the College of New Rochelle is April, 1972. Two campuses of the program were in full operation by

September, 1972. At the College of New Rochelle itself, the program began with 201 students of which three-fourths were full-time students. A deliberate effort was made to recruit students of varying income, racial, sectarian and professional groups. Within one full year, this campus reached its self-imposed ceiling of four hundred students.

With the opening of the New Rochelle campus, a second campus was opened simultaneously in New York City in conjunction with District Council #37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Union, AFL-CIO. D.C. #37 consists of sixty-one local unions, representing over one hundred thousand members and growing at the rate of twelve thousand members per year. Five divisions comprise the Union: Blue Collar, Clerical, Professional, Schools and Hospitals. This campus makes the College of New Rochelle the first full-accredited degree program to exist on union premises. Although the program began modestly with 130 students, it has grown within one year to 300 students. The response on the part of the union members was such that there now exists a waiting list of over 500 persons. Like the New Rochelle campus, the D.C. #37 campus will have a ceiling of 400 students once sufficient space becomes available.

A third campus of the New Resources program was opened in October, 1973, in Co-op City, Bronx, New York. This location is three miles from the College of New Rochelle. Co-op City is an apartment complex of approximately 54,000 residents, owned and operated by the River Bay Corporation. Co-op City represents a major creative experiment in the effort to re-establish in New York City the concept of the neighborhood community as an urban alternative to suburban living. The program began with 50 students and is expected to number 200 students by the fall of 1974. While the majority of students will be residents of Co-op City, the campus will be open to residents of the surrounding

Communities of the Bronx and Queens.

New Resources' Philosophy

The New Resources model is based on several assumptions about the education of adults. First, it presupposes that the educational structures appropriate to the preparation of younger adults for participation in the life of the community are not suited to those persons who have for some time been engaged in that process. Thus academic institutions must adapt their resources to the strengths andneeds of the adult learner. If this is taken seriously, it becomes apparent that the academic institutions do not have the full range of resources required to perform this task. Institutions of higher education must come to perceive themselves, not merely as extending into the community, but as an extension of it. Put otherwise, a college must define its educational resources in terms of the specific possibilities of the communities which surround it. In particular, this implies that an institution which seeks to educate adults should not define its educational resources in terms of traditional academic departments and disciplines. Moreover, it implies no permanent faculty and thus, no rank and tenure. Faculty are recruited for the specific purpose of a singular seminar once that need is articulated.

Within this general framework, each campus of the School of New Resources can be thought of as an extension of a specific community. Each instance of the New Resources program demonstrates the ability of academic institutions to serve under a variety of local circumstances. The New Rochelle campus represents the college as a learning center for economically and racially diverse surrounding communities; it is a place for communion for persons often isolated from each other. The District Council #37 campus provides an educational center for union members to deal with their particular needs and problems within the liberal arts tradition. Finally, the Co-op City campus serves a

relatively homogeneous and autonomous community which itself is an in-urban experiment. As such it can provide a forum to explore some of the many questions which have arisen out of the attempt of its residents to grapple with the issues of human survival, growth, and transformation within the life style of the city. Indeed the partnerships that now exist between the College of New Rochelle and D.C. #37 and Co-op City provide a model for other small, liberal arts colleges to develop non-traditional relationships with external institutions.

Second, the Bachelor of Arts degree is chosen as the appropriate certificate for the New Resources program. It is the most obvious symbol of commitment for an academic instituion to the education of adults within its own tradition. Of equal importance is the fact that the B.A. degree implies an unpatronizing approach towards the adult learner. In contrast, the B.G.S., B.L.S. and other special degrees offered in many adult education programs are tantamount to second class status.

Third, the liberal arts framework is chosen because it represents an approach to the understanding and solution of human problems which utilizes the diversity of our cultural and community resources. By emphasizing the development of historical perspective and the understanding of behavior, the liberal arts approach promotes expanding and humanizing perceptions which develop the student's ability to participate within his or her total environment. This is particularly important for adults since many have been, for various reasons, denied that conscious understanding of themselves and their institutions.

Finally, the New Resources model is committed to the idea of a participatory democracy, first, by making itself accessible to all members of its community who seek its use. On a second level, the New Resources approach

maximizes the opportunity for its students to pursue whatever course of studies satisfies their needs by not requiring any specific courses. The program depends on students exercising their right to develop their own curriculum.

The philosophy of New Resources is realized in a consistent set of academic components and procedures described below.

The Academic Program

The College of New Rochelle is accredited by the New York State Board of Regents and by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. A B.A. degree is granted upon the completion of 120 credits. The School of New Resources represents a new path to that degree.

New Resources operates on an academic schedule consisting of three 15-week terms per year. Students carry from 3 to 15 credits per term; students can take 18 credits with permission. Each registered student is matriculated.

Admissions criteria consists of a written application, evidence of a high school education or its equivalent and a personal interview.

The academic components of the New Resources program are as follows:

(1) Life Experience Credits. Once admitted, students may earn a maximum of 30 credits for life experience in one of two ways. Through the auspices of the Educational Testing Service, a student may submit the scores of CLEP examinations for up to 15 credits. A second avenue open to all students is the preparation and submission of a life-experience portfolio to an evaluation committee for up to 30 credits. The portfolio may be in part a resume because certain skills and positions are themselves creditable. The students may also earn credits by indicating a correspondence between college courses and the learning achieved through experience. Beyond these, the student is

encouraged to record their experiential learning in whatever ways resumes cannot, and in ways not matched by the structures of traditional college courses. Because persons often undervalue their own experiences, this latter invitation induces them to explore the meaning and educational significance of their own past. However, credits are not awarded simply because an experience was had or because a situation was lived through. They are awarded in proportion to the student's ability to analyze and reflect upon that experience. Such reflection must demonstrate that the student has learned something about himself and his world. Each student is assigned a mentor to assist him/her in this task. The portfolio is meant to be a semi-public document and an additional learning resource for the college. (A student may elect to keep the portfolio confidential.) The library of Life Experience Portfolios has already become an asset in program development.

Because of a desire to create a learning environment which avoids the loneliness and isolation of the external degree approach, New Resources includes among its Core Seminars the Life Experience Workshop. This is a deliberate effort to permit the learning through experience to fund the learning process. Unlike the portfolio process itself, the workshop is a joint attempt to share and evaluate personal experiences. There are two workshops open to all students: one has as its framework, the community; the other has as its framework, the person.

(2) Core Seminars. These are the points of departure of the New Resources curriculum. They are 'core' in the sense that they are an introduction to the liberal arts and a basis for curriculum development. Each seminar is interdisciplinary in nature, a forum for the common exploration of areas and concern. Among core seminars are "The Human Body," "The American Experience," and "Women in Contemporary Society."

These seminars are "siminal" in the sense that they become grounds not only for dialogue, but also the seed-bed from which new courses emerge. The curriculum at New Resources is neither a prescribed course of study, nor an aggregate of carefully designed "subjects." It is a living process wherein students develop interests, recognize needs, and then guide these into new areas of inquiry. For example, the "Human Body" seminar evolved into a seminar in Interpersonal Communications on one occasion, a seminar on Genetics on another, and a seminar in Comparative Theories of Medern Psychology on yet another. These middle-range seminars can lead to more specialized ones. For instance, the Comparative Theories course developed into a course on the work of B.F. Skinner.

Like most seminars offered, core seminars carry 6 credits. They meet once a week for three hours. Students are required to complete approximately eight to ten hours of assigned reading per session. In addition, each student is expected to formally teach his peers in an area in which he has become relatively expert as well as to submit a research paper. A seminar consists of approximately 15 persons.

(3) Courses. In addition to Core Seminars, students may select from a large number of new courses offered each term. Students may also elect to take courses offered in the Arts and Science division of the College of New Rochelle as well as weekend seminars offered by the New Resources program for the community. Since the program takes as most important the needs of its students, it encourages them to take courses at other institutions. Such credits are transferable toward the degree provided that the institution is accredited and a grade of C or better was earned.

New Resources students need not have a major. Concentrated study is not a function of departmental options but primarily of a student's sense of his

own learning needs. Programs of concentration do not exist as requirements, but are developed out of a dialogue between the needs the students express and the college of community resources available.

(4) Independent Study. Information has been defined as a difference that makes a difference. The same may be said of learning and it is the inspiration for the independent study option. We are interested in knowledge that generates a human difference. We count an independent study project acceptable when significant information has been processed and when the student is able to document a significant educational change either in himself, his peer-group or the learning community as a result of the study.

A student may elect to do an independent study for three or six credits in any liberal arts area. Projects which involve the actual work situations of students are encouraged. When a student is interested in probing specific areas or developing a specific skill, arrangements are made for an interview with the Director of Independent Studies. He offers guidance in the formulation of the project and selects appropriate mentors for the study. Beyond this, the Director aims, whenever possible, at providing an opportunity for the student to bring the results of the study to other students. Thus, unlike the external degree approach, independent study takes place in a social context.

Students may take up to thirty credits in independent study. In accord with the grading system of the New Resources program, the student doing an independent study has the option of working on a Pass/No credit or A, B, C, D/No credit basis.

Program Procedures.

It is essential that all procedural aspects of an adult education program reflect a recognition of the maturity of its students. Three procedural dimensions of the New Resources program bear mentioning in this regard.

(1) Curriculum Development. The New Resources program considers student participation to be essential to curriculum development. To encourage it, a student meeting is held at the mid-point of each semester for the purpose of determining student needs and interests. Following this meeting, students can suggest specific courses for the coming term. If fifteen students show interest in a course suggestion, they meet with staff to determine the feasibility of such a course and the selection of a faculty person. If a student proposes a course, but fails to generate sufficient interest on the part of others, the student is counseled to pursue this interest through independent study or a course elsewhere. A second curriculum meeting deals with the actual setting up of the courses for the approaching term. The meeting closes with the list of seminars. Thus expressed-student needs shape the curriculum, and the curriculum shapes the faculty.

This process is itself an integral component of the curriculum at New Resources. That is, the joint student-staff effort to develop a set of course offerings in an educational experience. The whole process of curriculum development aims at making the student conscious of his or her education. This is essential to the education of adults.

(2) Student-Faculty Relationship. It is New Resources' conviction that adult education should be characterized by self-initiative and peer-group inter-teaching in the presence of an expert teacher. Thus faculty act mainly as mentors and critics to the learning enterprise and as such they are an important resource. A seminar of fifteen persons generates intense interaction. Participants are critiqued by their peers and by the faculty mentor. In this way, the students can gain benefit from the experience and technical knowledge of the faculty persons without developing an undesirable student-teacher dependency. Since faculty are hired for the purposes of a

specific seminar only, a cult of teacher-personality is avoided. Moreover there is a little danger that curriculum will reflect the prejudices and methodological limitations of a small group of academics, however eminent they may be. The policy of rotating has made it possible to recruit a first-rate faculty.

(3) Counseling. Counseling services reflect the New Resources' philosophy by drawing upon and maximizing the resources of the student rather than reinforcing their perception of themselves as dependent upon institutions to define and respond to their needs. Although each counseling network is tailored to the different groups of students on the three campuses, there is an underlying conviction concerning the power of adult learners to do for themselves many of the things that they have come to expect institutions to do for them. In the initial program interview, it is made clear to the prospective student that the program will provide whatever is needed by way of information about graduate school, job requirements, program procedures, etc. It will also provide a structure of group counseling for individuals with common needs. However, it will not provide an elaborate one-to-one counseling program which has a strong component of traditional "guidance." While students initially express some anxiety about this arrangement, they have come to understand and value the reasons for this approach. For what this approach demands is a recognition of the adults' maturity and a realization of their own potential.

Individual consultation on academic matters is limited to assessment of transcripts from previously attended institutions, communication of information on requirements for teacher certification, etc. The preferred forum for counseling involves student meetings around areas of interest, for example, social services, art, psychology, and education. We believe that this

counseling process is as important as the information provided. Many students have extensive experience as para-professional or volunteers in careers which they and other students wish to pursue. Thus peer-counseling is the norm and individual meetings are the exception.

The New Resources program is not a terminal degree program and there is considerable interest in graduate school. Graduate school advisement places a large responsibility upon the student to investigate programs, research admissions criteria, etc. Once students become conscious of their needs, they must undertake the task of developing curriculum. Beyond this, the academic counselor establishes contact with the graduate school in question for the purpose of explaining the New Resources program.

While the New Resources program does not understand its role to involve job placement, its student may seek the advice of New Careers, Inc. Its staff has considerable expertise in the area of human services. Through an arrangement with Social Policy magazine, New Careers is available at no cost.

(4) Financial Aid Policy. Because of the democratic nature of the New Resources program, it is crucial that it be made available to as wide a cross section of the community as possible. In order to apply for financial aid, a student is required to complete a student financial statement provided by the College Scholarship Service and a college application for aid. The college attempts to meet whatever financial needs these forms indicate. This is done from a variety of sources: New York State Scholar Incentive Awards, National Director Student Loans, Guaranteed State Loan Programs, Educational Opportunity Grants, Basic Opportunity Grants, etc. Since non-institutional aid is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, the college has committed itself to providing a significant amount of institutional aid. In the first year, the New Rochelle campus awarded over $200,000 in such aid, this represents approximately 35%

of income returned to the students in the form of financial aid.

It should be noted that many institutional and non-institutional aid programs discriminate against adults, especially low income adults. Many colleges reserve their own aid to matriculated 18-21 year old undergraduates. Low income students experience great difficulty in securing bank laans. Even some government-sponsored programs are discriminatory. For example, the Federal Basic Opportunity Grant Program which began this year is restricted to students who have never been to college or taken college type courses. Thus, students fresh from high school are eligible. But, this works against adults who may have taken some college work long ago, and who are, for all practical purposes, new students. Likewise, the N.Y.S. Regents College Scholarship is not available to adults since they did not take the examination back in high school and cannot do so now.

New Resources Program - Life Experience Credits

Here are answers to questions you may wish to ask about Life Experience credits:

What do we mean by life experience?

Experience can be an effective teacher. What an adult learns through experience is important. What is learned through reflection on that experience is more important. Therefore, this portfolio should reflect your experience, giving a sense of what you have learned and skills you have acquired from this experience. Both are worthy of academic recognition. The most suitable form of recognition in the academic context is academic credit.

This is, in simplest form, the philosophy that has let numerous colleges and universities - Queens College and Brooklyn College and the City University Fordham University, for example, to award life experience credits to qualifying adults. The College of New Rochelle has extended the privilege of awarding these credits to New Resources students.

How many life experience credits can I receive?

The greatest number of life experience credits a student can receive is 30. No student may receive more than that; we doubt that many students will receive as many as 30. On the other hand, all students undoubtedly will receive some.

Who will judge my request for life experience credits?

A committee of six persons, some of them members of the New Resources Program, will judge each student's portfolio and determine the number of credits to be awarded. If a student's experience is highly specialized, they may call on a faculty member or someone with credentials in the appropriate field of specialization, for aid in determining the number of credits to be awarded.

Can life experience credits be transferred to another college?

No. They are applicable only toward a College of New Rochelle degree.

What do I present in order to receive life experience credits?

Each student is asked to submit a portfolio describing elements in his experience, plus a reflective analysis of what he has learned from that experience. This should be essentially why he believes he is worthy of credit.

What should the life experience portfolio be like?

The student should use the format that most clearly communicates the nature of his/her own unique experience, and show it to best advantage. The format is not confined to the written word. Different formats from the written word may be employed. For example, audio-visual material, representative work material, i.e., painting, sculpture, ceremics, welding, etc.

What are the deadline dates for submitting a portfolio for evaluation?

The following are the deadline dates for the next year:

March 15, 1974
June 15, 1974

What else should be included in the portfolio?

(1) A one page autobiography. This life history should be in chronological order. It should include education, job history, personal and community activities.

(2) A one page outline of all areas in which the student believes life experience credits are deserved. Each area should be titled and described in a few lines.

(3) A full description of each of the areas outlined in step two. There is no prescribed length for these descriptions. The important thing is that they communicate fully and effectively, what you have experienced, and also embody your reflective analysis of each life experience.

(4) Appropriate validation of each area of experience for which academic credit is requested. This might take the form of letters from third parties, samples of work, etc.

How should the portfolio be "packaged?"

The portfolio must be typewritten. The autobiography and the one page outline of experiences should be singled spaced. The full description of each area of life experience and the reflective analysis should be double spaced. The portfolio should be securely bound in a thesis cover.

Will my portfolio be returned to me?

No. Since the portfolio will remain part of the permanent records of the College of New Rochelle, New Resources Program, the student should be sure to retain a copy. Samples or work which cannot be duplicated will, however, be returned to the student. A portfolio will not be entered in the New Resources Program Portfolio Library without the written consent of the student.

Procedures for Presentation

(1) After signing up for life experience credits, each student is assigned

a mentor to assist and supervise in the preparation of the portfolio.

(2) The student is responsible for arranging to meet his mentor at least once, and not more than three times.

(a) Initial interview: Student presents the one page autobiography and the one page outline of all areas in which he is applying for life experience credits. c/f questions sheet on life experience credits.

(b) Second interview: Ongoing review of descriptive content of life experience areas and reflective analysis. c/f question sheet.

(c) Final interview: Final review of completed portfolio before submission to evaluation committee.

(3) Once a portfolio has been submitted to the Evaluation Committee, it cannot be recalled or amended. Students with special forms of presentation e.g., art work, drama, etc. must be prepared to be accommodating to the evaluation committee, regarding date, time, etc. of presentation on the deadline date or within the week following it. This is contingent on numbers, the logistics of getting the committee together, etc.

Procedure for applying

(1) Mentors will be assigned upon request with priority given to those students closest to graduation.

(2) Students are strongly urged to try to complete the portfolio process in no longer than one academic year dating from the time of the initial interview.

(3) Sign ups should be made with Sister Elinor Shea.

Thomas A. Edison College

Thomas A. Edison College recognizes the fact that many people possess college-level knowledge and/or skills which they have acquired through experience, on-the-job training, independent study, or course work completed at unaccredited institutions of learning. The College has devised a method of evaluating such knowledge and skills known as Individual Assessment, the results of which may be used by students to satisfy certain degree requirements. A person may request Individual Assessment when a particular area of knowledge cannot be adequately assessed by existing proficiency examinations.

Individual Assessment has as its central concern the recognition of college-level knowledge, however acquired. The staff of the College will be available to provide assistance to the candidate in preparing the formal application for consideration by qualified evaluators.

Credits earned through Individual Assessment may be used to meet the requirements of the College's Associate in Arts degree and the general education (liberal arts) requirements of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree. These credits may also be transferred to other colleges. As in all cases of transfer credit, policies are determined by the receiving institution.

Procedural Steps

The following is a list of procedures to be followed by Edison College students who think that Individual Assessment may be a means of evaluating their college-level knowledge or skills.

1. Before actually applying for Individual Assessment through the College, the candidate must be enrolled in one of the College's degree programs. An individual enrolls by submitting a completed enrollment form and the $25.00 enrollment fee.

However, a student may receive informal advice from a member of the College staff before enrolling to determine whether Individual Assessment would be a useful and appropriate means of receiving evaluation for knowledge which the student possesses. The candidate should submit the completed Individual Assessment Questionnaire either upon enrollment or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. An enrolled student who decides to seek Individual Assessment evaluation must submit an application form with an initial $25.00 Individual Assessment Application fee to the office of the Registrar.

3. With the assistance of an Edison College advisor, the student then prepares a survey of the areas of knowledge to be assessed and organizes the documentation, if any, that supports the application. The primary purpose of the survey and documentation is to focus attention on the college-level knowledge or skill claimed by the student. Any information which will be helpful in identifying and evaluating this knowledge should be included. Each survey will be unique; therefore, the material presented would include a clear and detailed statement of the college-level knowledge claimed. It may also include, where applicable, such documentation as the following: a listing of formal or informal educational activities, work experience, with a description of duties which have been instrumental in the acquisition of the knowledge claimed, and the evaluation of supervisors when appropriate; and a portfolio of works such as reports, published books or articles, speeches, works of art.

4. Once the candidate has prepared the survey of a field of knowledge, it will first be reviewed by the Edison College staff. It will then be referred to an examiner who is a member of a collegiate faculty from the appropriate field of study to determine the method of evaluation.
5. After reviewing the materials, the examiner will submit a plan for assessment to Edison College. This plan will include the subject matter to be covered in the assessment, the method of evaluation, and an estimated range of the number of credits for the work to be assessed.
6. When the student has reviewed and agreed to the examiner's plan for assessment, an additional fee of $75.00 must be submitted before the evaluation takes place. Mutually convenient meetings between the candidate and the examiner will be arranged. If the evaluation involves more than one significant body of knowledge and thus more than one examiner, it will be necessary to charge a fee of $75.00 for each additional area examined.
7. When the Individual Assessment has been completed, the examiner will submit the results of the evaluation for review to the Vice President for Academic Affairs of Edison College.
8. The student will be informed of the result by the College. Any appeal for a review of the evaluation should be directed to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

THOMAS A. EDISON COLLEGE

Individual Assessment Questionnaire

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ Business Phone: _____

_____

Social Security #: _____

Are you enrolled in Edison College? Yes _____ No _____

1. What are your long range educational goals? What are your current plans to achieve them? How does Individual Assessment figure in these plans?

2. Briefly describe the area(s) of knowledge and/or skill that you believe need evaluation on an individual basis. Remember that if a College-approved subject examination is available, you should use that for evaluation. Describe in terms of academic subjects where possible. A complete list of available CLEP examinations is enclosed.

3. What method or combination of methods do you think would best be used to evaluate your knowledge?

THOMAS A. EDISON COLLEGE

Individual Assessment Application

This application is to be accompanied by a $25.00 application fee. An additional fee of $75.00 will be charged for Individual Assessment in each field of knowledge and/or skill to be evaluated.

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ Business Phone: _____

_____

Social Security #: _____

1. What college-level field(s) and/or skill(s) do you wish to have assessed by Edison College? Name the field(s) and where possible list equivalent college courses.

2. How did you acquire this knowledge or skill (for example: self-study, on-the-job training, non-accredited courses, etc.)?

3. What method(s) of examination do you think would be most appropriate? (Written, Oral, Portfolio, Performance, etc.)

4. List materials (such as books, articles, works of art, reports, etc.) which you might submit to an examiner as part of your survey. Do not send these materials to Edison College at this time.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

DIRECTIONS TO THE EXAMINER:

Edison College is asking you to serve as an examiner in its Individual Assessment program because of your experience in evaluating student achievement in your field of specialization. A statement of the policy and procedures governing this individualized evaluation process is attached for your guidance.

Although Edison College accepts evidence of academic achievement attained under a variety of traditional and nontraditional learning conditions, the individualized evaluation of college-level learning acquired in nontraditional ways is a unique and vital aspect of the College's approach to helping the student earn a college degree. However, because it is unique the Individual Assessment approach can pose certain evaluation problems for the examiner.

Two of the more troublesome problems are likely to be the following:

1. The fact that knowledge acquired nontraditionally does not always yield to ready classification under a typical college discipline and/or course title.
2. The danger of setting up unproductive, time-wasting assessment in instances where students claim the achievement of college-level knowledge and/or skill which proves to be below college-level when evaluated.

To avoid these pitfalls, the College is dividing the examiner's role in the Individual Assessment process into two phases as outlined below.

Phase One: Preliminary Assessment

Before undertaking a formal evaluation of the candidate's work, you are being asked to:

a. Make a preliminary examination of materials presented by the candidate to determine whether the student shows evidence of achieving at college-level in the field(s) being considered.

b. Identify your proposed method(s) of evaluating the knowledge and/or skill in question.

c. Indicate an approximate range of credits to be awarded to the work after evaluation.

When signed by you, the "Individual Assessment Agreement" informs the College that you believe the student is performing at college-level. An estimate of zero credits or a negative statement across the face of the agreement for a particular field will inform the College to go no further with the agreement in the specific field. In the event you believe you are not able to evaluate part or all of the candidate's work, please indicate this on the form.

Note that you are requested to classify the knowledge or skill being assessed either by subject discipline or equivalent course title. Please keep in mind that you are assessing college-level knowledge in areas that may relate broadly to bodies of knowledge within your discipline but may not fall specifically under the course(s) you teach. Parenthetically, note also that the College is not soliciting recommendations outside your subject field.

If you recommend the completion of assessment, you are asked to attach a list of suggested study materials such as guides, outlines, readings, and reference sources.

When signed by the candidate, this agreement should serve to prevent misunderstandings among the examiner, the College, and the candidate.

Phase Two: The Final Assessment

After determining your method(s) of evaluation, you will undoubtedly find it necessary to meet one or more times with the candidate and are

requested to do so. This individual meeting could be an important step in the assessment process both from the viewpoint of the candidate and the examiner. The individual attention received in the interview will often be very helpful to the candidate whereas the examiner will need the interview to develop a fair assessment.

After completing your evaluation of the candidate's knowledge or skill, you are expected to complete the attached "Final Report and Credit Recommendation". Obviously, the content of the preliminary and final forms will overlap somewhat. However, the second one should provide a more refined, in-depth assessment which more specifically pinpoints the content classification, describes in more detail the mode of evaluation, and designates exactly the number of credits to be awarded.

In conclusion, a reiteration of the Edison College approach to Individual Assessment is worth stating. As you know, there is considerable disagreement in the literature concerning whether credit should be allotted for life experience per se or be allotted only for college-level knowledge and/or skill acquired through such experience. We at Edison College adhere to the latter position. Posing it negatively, we do not believe one can assume competence in academic areas simply because of one's exposure to life experience.

If you have any questions concerning the above, please do not hesitate to contact the College Registrar for clarification.

THOMAS A. EDISON COLLEGE

Individual Assessment Agreement Form

CANDIDATES NAME: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY #: _____

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT AGREEMENT

I have reviewed the materials presented by the candidate and agree to act as a consultant to Thomas A. Edison College of New Jersey in the Individual Assessment of _____.

I agree to assess the candidate in the subject area(s) that are identified below. (List specific courses where possible; otherwise, describe by academic disciplines). Although the specific number of semester credits to be awarded cannot be determined until I have examined the candidate, I am providing an estimate of the range of credits to be awarded for each subject area. Zero credits will be interpreted to mean that assessment is not recommended in the particular subject area.

DISCIPLINE OR SUBJECT AREA	METHOD OF EVALUATION	ESTIMATED CREDITS Minimum	Maximum

Examiner's Signature _____

Date _____

I have seen this plan and understand the field(s) to be covered, the methods to be employed, and the range of credits projected for Individual Assessment. I agree to this plan.

Candidate's Signature _____

Date _____

EPILOGUE

CREDIT FOR COMPETENCE: BEYOND THE PROCRUSTEAN PITFALL

Dr. Linda Hood Talbott
Regional Program Coordinator
American Association for Higher Education
University of Missouri-Kansas City

The Procrustean Pitfall to which Richard Ferguson refers in his paper on "Competency Evaluation and Testing" is a fitting analogy when defining a significant characteristic of many traditional educational programs and standardized modes of evaluation. The reader may recall that Procrustes, a malevolent figure from Greek mythology, forced his victims to exactly fit his bed. True, the suffering of his victims was minimal if they fit the frame. But if they were too tall, he chopped off their legs to the required length. If they were too short, he stretched their limbs to fit his rack.

As Ferguson notes, "just as the suffering of Procrustes' victims was limited if they fit his bed, little damage is done to the individual being evaluated when the test is a fairly good fit for the competency or competencies being assessed. The danger lies in the insistence on using tests which are only minimally related to the competencies being evaluated thus forcing the test to serve an inappropriate role."

The analogy also fits when looking at the traditional educational college program which insists upon fitting the student to the specifications and convenience of the institution. In contrast, the Commission on Non-Traditional Study of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education defined non-traditional study as essentially "an attitude which puts the student first and the institution second, concentrates more on the former's need than the latter's convenience, encourages diversity of individual opportunity, and de-emphasizes

time and space or even course requirements in favor of competence and, where applicable, performance."

Each of the foregoing papers in this collection presented at an American Association for Higher Education regional conference on "Learning in an Open Society: Credit for Experience," held at Drake University in May 1974, thoughtfully explored various issues surrounding the assessment and awarding of credit for experiential learning. Several of the papers provide illuminating institutional examples of the attitude which puts the student first and the institution second.

There is Dr. Douglas Moore's warm personal account of his father, a self-directed learner who designed, built and repaired complex electronic equipment for radio, television and radar without ever attending a college or technical school. The personal annecdote illustrates Moore's central thesis that "learning does not take place only in a formal educational setting, nor is there any guarantee whatsoever that the experience of something will result in learning."

Moore went on to describe how Minnesota Metropolitan State College (an institution he helped to start) is completely competency-based in its evaluation of studenta. Minnesota Metropolitan State College defines a competency as "the ability to exhibit the level of performance that is requisite to the succesaful attainment of a particular goal." The institution was designed and developed for the chief purpose of integrating classroom and field experience to facilitate learning.

Dr. Peter Meyer in his paper on "Crediting Prior Learning" expanded upon this concept of the integration of classroom and field experience by noting that what has recently been discovered as "experiential" education is as old as the medieval guilds and has been a part of most professional education.

"Educators for the professions," said Meyer, "take for granted that the ultimate learning is a synthesis of theory and practice."

For Meyer, what is most crucial is the educator's transition from the construction of educational experiences for and with students for the future to accrediting competencies from the students' experiential learning of the past. He suggested four levels of credit for competency:

"1) Credit for competency achieved through experience.

2) Credit for knowledge gained from the competencies achieved through the experience.

3) Credit for the analysis of the knowledge gained from the competencies achieved through experience.

4) Credit for the analysis and synthesis of discrete bodies of knowledge gained from the same or different experiences."

A very helpful overview of some state college and university experiences in competency-based curricula and in the awarding of academic credit for prior learning experience was provided by Robert Barak in this collection of conference papers. He noted that the methods and procedures utilized in the granting of credit for experience range from "what may now be 'traditional' methods which primarily utilize selected standardized examinations such as the College Level Entrance Examination Program (CLEP) tests to the more 'non-traditional' type methods which grant credit for learning competencies by methods other than validation by exam."

The experience with CLEP credit at the University of Iowa was documented in Douglas R. Whitney's paper on a four-year study at that institution. Whitney suggested that there are three purposes of credit by examination through CLEP:

"1) To convert life experiences into college credit.

2) To exempt students from introductory coursework where they can demonstrate competence.

3) To shorten the time required to complete a degree."

Whitney noted that the University of Iowa experience predictably revealed higher graduation rates for students with CLEP credit, "since the most able students are the ones who earn CLEP credit."

Barak also described more non-traditional institutional use of locally-constructed examinations as well as documented statements of competence which are evaluated before granting the student academic credit. Such programs as those at East Texas State University, Moorhead State College, Sterling College, the College of New Rochelle, and the University of Iowa may differ along the spectrum of various modes used to assess credit for experiential learning, but they all have a common thrust of seeking to award credit for demonstrated competence.

As American post-secondary education moves toward the twenty-first century, institutional experiments in competency-based education will be carefully watched. Projects such as the Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning (CAEL) with its Assembly of participating institutions should significantly assist in developing a taxonomy of alternate assessment techniques for granting credit for experiential learning.

It is certainly true that competency-based assessment and evaluation generates many difficult problems. Not the least of these problems is coming to grips with such critical questions as the following:

1) What types of experiential learning justify college-level credit?

2) To what extent must learning be specified in behavioral outcomes?

3) What constitutes evidence of learning?

4) Does the credentialing of experiential learning change the meaning of the baccalaureate degree?

5) How can the assessment of experiential learning be consistent and equitable without standardization?

6) How is the qualitative value of experiential learning to be assessed and to be recorded?

These are critical questions, but they are not new ones. Central to all the papers presented in this collection is the recognition that the awarding of academic credit for experience, if it is to have any validity, must be competency-based, and that what is at issue is the evaluation and accreditation of learning (skills, knowledge, competencies), not life experience per se.

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