

The Daily Tar Heel

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For This Issue

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• The Sponges At Swarthmore

HALF THE juniors and seniors at Swarthmore college are Honor students. The program they follow is different from that offered at the University of North Carolina.

(1) At the beginning of his junior year the Swarthmore Honor student selects two (or three) closely related subject-fields he would like to explore in his last two years.

(2) During his junior and senior years he is freed from all academic conventionalities to master independently the fields he outlines.

(3) He may make voluntary use of any lectures, laboratories, or classes the college offers, but he is required to attend or "take" none.

(4) He is not responsible for course-credits or course examinations and receives no grades.

(5) Once a week he meets a seminar in each of the two subjects he is studying, for discussion and guidance. Individual advisers are also provided each Honors student.

(6) In his senior year the student's measure of success in mastering his field is tested by a comprehensive examination. This general examination is drawn up and administered by educators brought in from other colleges for the purposes.

II

The chief advantages of the Swarthmore program are: (1) It provides opportunity for the exceptional student to advance at his own rate unimpeded by the herd methods of modern classrooms designed for the average, and gives incentive for the student to use his capacities to the fullest; (2) It makes the student entirely responsible for his own education and aims at the development of habits of independence, initiative, self-reliance, and the techniques that make for growth—rather than the passive reception of facts dished out by lecturing professors; (3) The emphasis is not on the "passing" of more or less unrelated courses but upon integrated mastery of a field; (4) The student receives individual guidance from an adviser who can stimulate the development of his whole personality; (5) The comprehensive examination tends to bring student and professor to cooperate for an ordeal which both are interested in seeing met successfully.

In other words, the Swarthmore program encourages students to be something more than a uniform row of passive sponges soaking up whatever the prof takes a whim to pour on them.



WORDS AND ACTION

Up, during the week, went wages for workmen employed in more than 30 big industrial plants. Even the pariah Duponts gave their employees a raise.

Bitter, bitter as gall to labor unions are these wage boosts. They come at a time when all the amalgamated, consolidated, and united unions are trying to base their organization on the precept that the employer is a selfish and avaricious scoundrel, bent on filling his own pockets at the expense of the downtrodden masses.

Wage increases provide something definite, something more than words, to disprove the battle-cries of the strike-mongers.

Of course the employers know the effect of their wage-increases. They know that labor trouble may be averted by timely action.

And their strategy has devastating power.

Our Educational Process



Extraneous and Pungent Comments are:

1. Implication of the absorbent quality of the sponge is for most students, we believe, grossly presumptuous.
2. Profs are not necessarily as well rounded as the above hog-head.
3. Some profs are so dry, their giving off the indicated moisture is conjectural.
4. In the final analysis, the prof is iron-bound and the student shot full of holes.

Aydelotte Hits Academic System Swarthmore College Encourages Independence and Initiative; No Classes, Exam Routine or Grades For Honor Students

By DR. FRANK AYDELLOTTE
(President Swarthmore College)

Our conventional academic system is planned for the average student . . . Our special efforts have been expended more frequently upon those who were below the average than upon those who were above . . . We have failed to develop adequate methods for selecting the best from the average and for giving to those best a discipline worthy of their abilities . . .

The instruction of the average American student has been standardized beyond the point where uniformity has value . . . The system assumes that all college students are exactly alike, that all subjects are equal in educational value, that all instruction in institutions of a certain grade is approximately equal in effectiveness, and that when you have accumulated a certain quantity of credit, you are entitled to a bachelor's degree . . .

For Routine

Our ordinary academic system is planned to meet the needs of that hypothetical individual—the average student . . . Its purpose is to make sure that he does a certain amount of carefully specified routine work . . .

I do not mean to say that the system is a bad one for the average man for whom it is planned . . . but it is unjust to the best and most ambitious . . . The academic system as ordinarily administered is, for these better and more ambitious students, a kind of lock step: it holds them back, wastes their time, and blunts their interest by submitting them to exercises which they do not need. It causes, furthermore, the atrophy of the qualities of independence and initiative in those individuals who possess them by furnishing too little opportunity for their exercise . . .

How Plan Works

The system of honors courses at Swarthmore college was inaugurated . . . as an attempt to avoid this regimentation which

BREAKS WITH TRADITION

Swarthmore college (Swarthmore, Pa.), under the presidency of Dr. Frank Aydelotte, has blazed the way in this country towards individualizing the college program and organizing curriculum so as to make the student entirely responsible for his own education.

This article was submitted to the DAILY TAR HEEL by President Aydelotte to explain the philosophy underlying Swarthmore's break away from the traditional lock-step academic system.

This is the third of a series of articles by nationally known educators explaining systems of education at other institutions designed to individualize the college academic program.

Italics again are ours.

is the most serious defect of the conventional curriculum. It applies as yet only to the Junior and Senior years . . .

Strictly speaking, the sole duty of the Honors student is in two years to master the field which has been outlined. He is not expected to take courses; he may make whatever use he chooses of the different classes and lectures in the college, but this is entirely voluntary. Attendance is not taken; he gets no credit for being regular and no punishment for neglecting them altogether. The only exercises for which he is rigidly held are two seminars per week in the two subjects which he will normally be studying at the same time . . .

Some Guidance

In addition to the seminar, members of our Faculty find that some individual guidance and advice is necessary. This is arranged . . .

No examinations or tests are required of an Honors student until the end of his Senior year.

No records are kept concerning him in the Registrar's office other than a mere note of the fields in which he is working . . .

Senior Comprehensive

The degree of his success, however, is determined by the final examinations at the end of his course (senior year) . . . The examinations are given by external examiners, professors from other universities who have come to Swarthmore for that purpose . . .

. . . The result (of this system of external examiners) . . . is to make the relation between the professor and the student totally different from the conventional one. They become collaborators in meeting an ordeal in which they are equally inter-
(Continued on last page)

Frosh Object To Compulsory Chapel

★ NOT PREPARED

To the Editor,
The DAILY TAR HEEL:

Freshmen are human beings too, but the people who are responsible for freshman chapel evidently do not think so. If those programs are to serve their purpose, they must hold the attention of these freshmen, and they are not doing that now. The poor fellows are treated to a succession of second rate musicians who are culled from all parts of the campus, and speakers who either have not prepared much, or stumble over the unintelligible bits of trite slush that they do bring to the platform. There have been some good speakers, it is true, but the main object of those in charge seems to be to use up one half hour.

This assembly could be a vital force in welding the freshman class into an integrated whole, and could perform a real service to the University, but it cannot do that until the quality of the programs is raised to the place where they vitally interest the freshman audience. Chapel should not be looked upon as

Hit Of The Week

Ruth Crowell

In the modern world WAR, of course, is no threat at all—so the University last week decided to let Armistice Day slip by unnoticed without sponsoring its annual peace services. When on the night before Armistice Ruth Worth Crowell



(writer, aviatrix, Alpha Kappa Gamma) heard of the omission, she organized a special program of her own for freshman assembly—and as presider over the exercises drew almost as much applause from the first-year men as Hogie Vick gets with his four cheerleaders.



Ernest Strickland, resident of Mangum dormitory, is a very quiet fellow. He is so quiet, in fact, that his roommate, Newton Lee, has assumed the aspect of silence. Last week, a certain boy came to visit Ernest. When he entered the room, Ernest said, "Take a seat."

The visitor did so, and an hour passed without another word being spoken. Finally, the visitor arose and looking out of the window said, "It looks like rain."

In about thirty minutes, Newton walked over to the window and said, "Not tonight." When these words were spoken Ernest started for the door. The visitor asked him where he was going and he replied, "I'm going for a walk; I can't bear to hear you argue."

The Reverend Donald Stewart finished his radio speech in Durham the other morning and left the studio. As he walked out the door a reporter grabbed him and asked for a copy of his speech. It was another case of a radio personality being beseeched for his autograph.

Jim Daniels says he was surprised to find a letter addressed to Sarah Dalton in his box at 219 Everett last week.

something to cut if you can get away with it.

W. K.

★ FRESHMAN FALLACY

To the Editor,
The DAILY TAR HEEL:

In an ambitious attempt to demonstrate the fallacy of compulsory chapel for freshmen, the candid camera has caught scenes, actually taken during the assembly, showing the class sleeping, studying, reading, drawing and doing everything but listen to the program, given supposedly for the edification of freshmen in general.

Observation, from any standpoint, should clearly indicate the uselessness of a compulsory chapel period five days a week. To make such a series of programs interesting at every assembly is a well nigh impossible job.

In my opinion, such as it is, a decided improvement could be effected through the reduction of the present periods to one a week. Such a movement should revive the dying interest in the programs and prevent depression from over-production.

K. M.