

# A Graduate Program for Leaders

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Many of us will admit there is a need for a rethinking of college programs for the preparation of instructional leaders. This brief account of the graduate program at the University of Connecticut, where Vernon Anderson is associate professor of education, indicates the direction in which one faculty group thought and the program that is unfolding as a result of their thinking.

SCHOOL PEOPLE who wish to prepare for leadership positions in the area of supervision and curriculum development should rightfully expect colleges of education to offer graduate work for this purpose. Every year a number of teachers and principals are placed in supervisory positions. The principalship is becoming recognized as a key supervisory job. Fortunately, too, the pendulum is swinging away from identifying the superintendent of schools as an interpreter of school laws, a public relations man, and an expert on school finance—with qualifications for educational leadership left to chance.

The graduate program of the University of Connecticut offers a doctor's degree in the area of supervision and curriculum. These features of the program are emphasized:

- Planned cooperatively by the staff of the School of Education
- Goals set up in the form of competencies that leaders in supervision and curriculum should have
- Experiences that a student will have planned in terms of the competencies, including course work as only one of several types of recommended experiences
- Stress placed on leadership experiences in conferences, workshops, and field studies and social group experiences with adults in the community such as

labor groups, social service groups, community civic clubs.

## Leadership Demands These

Those who work in capacities of leadership in the instructional program, whether they are supervisors, administrators, directors, or special instructional coordinators, need certain skills, understandings, and attitudes to help teachers become more creative individually and as a group.

The specific objectives for the program include such descriptions of the effective leader as these:

- He is able to work effectively with people
- He is able to lead a group in a continuous, systematic study of a problem
- He understands the meaning of the democratic way of life and its application to the school situation
- He is familiar with sources, types, and uses of instructional materials
- He understands the process of social changes
- He makes others feel that their contributions are of value
- He is primarily interested in developing children rather than in developing subject matter.

The complete list of behavior goals indicates the type of person that this doctoral program should strive to develop.

## The Areas of Emphasis

Twelve clear-cut areas in which leaders in supervision and curriculum are expected to have or achieve competency serve as criteria for planning a program for students:

1. The child and adolescent: the process, guidance, and evaluation of growth and development
2. The nature of the learning process and its application to the school situation
3. The formation of basic values and the making of choices based on values
4. Social trends and issues
5. The relationships of school and community in a democracy
6. Group processes and human relations
7. Principles, techniques, and trends in curriculum development
8. Principles, techniques, and trends in supervision
9. Methods of planning and organizing instruction
10. Sources, types, and uses of instructional materials
11. Research techniques and skills
12. Communication of information.

## In and Out of Class Experiences

In building the doctoral program in supervision and curriculum, types of experiences students will have were considered more important than a list of courses to be taken. In fact, a list of fifteen experiences is the "required" part of the plan of study. It is obvious that a course may or may not furnish the type of experiences needed by instructional leaders. The title and subject content of the course certainly do not guarantee them. In other words, this list of ways in which the desired competencies may be achieved furnishes a guide to instructors as well as for non-class activities:

1. Obtaining experience in schools

2. Teaching college classes under supervision
3. Participating in and giving leadership to conferences
4. Conducting and reporting on research
5. Writing for professional journals
6. Giving talks to professional and lay groups
7. Studying a community
8. Surveying a school
9. Doing demonstration teaching
10. Observing good teaching
11. Obtaining special, supervised field experience
12. Making systematic studies of children
13. Participating in seminars with other doctoral candidates
14. Participating in courses in which the above competencies are definite goals
15. Doing independent reading, study, and investigation.

The six courses common to all doctoral candidates in this area include one in each of the three fields: curriculum, supervision, and principles and policies of leadership; plus a workshop, a practicum or field study, and a seminar—three courses which are believed to furnish excellent vehicles for the various types of experiences indicated. Other courses are selected, according to individual needs and interests, from education, psychology, social sciences, and other departments.

## Leadership at Work

In the program for the education of supervisors, curriculum directors, and other instructional leaders, first-hand experience in leading groups, participating in community study, and studying children are important phases. The candidate may be one who is working full time in school and has an opportunity to gain these experiences, or may ar-

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says in some way affects the child; I see that the teacher has within her grasp the opportunity to contribute markedly toward helping the child develop a concept of himself as an important and needed person.

"With my growing awareness of the way the teacher can help meet (or can unknowingly block) the emotional needs of children, there has come an increased appreciation of teaching. For me, personally, there has come a feeling of satisfaction that I have found the right profession; my life is again taking on meaning and purpose."

That's what we have to help more young people attain, Mary. We not only need to recruit into the teacher training institutions a large number of capable young men and women, but we have to explore the kinds of learning experiences that will give them insights into the feelings of children and into the satisfactions that can come with teaching. For those who haven't had satisfying experiences in their own educational backgrounds (too often in sub-

ject matter rather than child-centered programs), we have to provide opportunity for these teachers-to-be to see why those experiences were not satisfying—and, further, we have to help them work through to feelings of inner-satisfaction so that they won't constantly revert to the kind of teacher-pupil relationships they knew as children. In order to increase their own awareness of children's reactions and the meanings behind them, we need to capitalize on the feelings they have bottled up within themselves. What a challenge to increase students' "inner-standing" of children!

Dorothy

P. S. I still like the use of the term *inner-standing*—defined in my last letter somewhat as follows: being able to put yourself so completely into another person's frame of reference that you temporarily lose your own perspective and feel the reactions of the other person to the world as he sees it.

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range for them through the Curriculum Center at the University. He has a good opportunity to serve as a leader or chairman in conferences and workshops sponsored by the University or the New England Regional ASCD. He may also learn more about the group process by serving as an observer in a discussion group in these conferences. He may participate in school surveys and study communities first hand, contacting community organizations and spending time working with them. He may obtain experience in talking to community groups and writing for professional journals. He makes independent studies, gathering and interpreting

data, and defends a point of view before groups of graduate students and faculty.

These are but a few of the activities of the candidate in a newly organized program of doctoral study. They are intended to supplement the courses, the dissertation, and the examinations. Some of them are included within courses that are taught in such a manner that the student may participate in cooperative planning and evaluation. The doctoral program at the University of Connecticut is a flexible one that is planned by a committee of advisers, as members of the Graduate School, and the candidate—to meet *his* needs.

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