

Teacher Education Goal Of Program

Continuing education for vocational industrial teachers in Texas secondary schools is the primary objective of the Teacher Education Division of A&M's Engineering Extension Service.

The program offered by the education division seeks to refine and extend the abilities of vocational industrial teachers who teach students destined to become producers in the labor force.

The increase in ability, according to Gene Fisher, acting head of the division, is needed because of the increasing demand by the public and industry for more relevant education, especially vocational education.

The Engineering Extension Service, in cooperation with the Industrial Education Department of A&M and the Texas Education Agency, has proved to be

very instrumental in assisting vocational industrial teachers in achieving the refinements necessary for implementing effective programs of vocational industrial education.

The summer school program offered by the division is coordinated by Bob Wagner. The teaching staff consists of six regular A&M staff members and four-teen guest instructors. The guest instructors teach in vocational industrial programs throughout the state and are invited to participate in the summer program because of their excellent performance in the field of vocational

industrial education. Students enrolled in the summer program, according to Fisher, are presently teaching or will be teaching in secondary or post-secondary level positions. A survey of the teachers in the program was taken recently and the results showed that 77 per cent are male, 67 per cent are native Texans and 90 per cent are married.

The survey also showed that while 73 per cent of the teachers completed high school through traditional means, the remainder obtained equivalency certificates by successfully completing G.E.D. test series. Several of the participants were also found to have completed work on advanced degrees.

The number of males who responded to the survey have accumulated 3,008 years of trade experience and the females have accumulated 784 years. Of those who responded in the survey, 54 per cent served in the military service and in many cases this is directly related to their teaching specialization.

Average size of the schools the participants represent is about 1,600 students, according to the survey.

Auto Insurance Reductions Ordered

AUSTIN—The State Insurance Board, as predicted, last week said it will order auto insurance reductions averaging 4.3 per cent for private cars and totalling at least \$25 million.

Even further savings may be allowed under new competitive rating effective September 1, which allows companies to deviate above and below standard rates set by the Board.

However, insurance industry spokesmen warned, other new laws going into effect may drive rates up substantially next year.

Rates cited by the Board do not include, for example, effect of new optional additional coverage for medical expenses and wage losses (up to \$2500 for driver and passenger). Actually, the coverage is added automatically unless the car owner rejects it in writing.

Industry officials estimated the \$2500 additional "personal injury protection" will cost from \$8 to \$23 a year, which would exceed the cost of savings on other coverage in the same territories.

Changes in the "guest statute" —which will allow passengers other than members of the driver's family to sue in event of accidental injury—will add at least another five per cent to premiums, according to a top industry source.

The new comparative negligence statute will increase property damage liability costs at least 10 per cent, estimates the Texas Automobile Insurance Office, which represents companies writing 98 per cent of Texas auto coverage.

The guest statute and compar-

ative negligence law changes will not be reflected in premiums ordered into effect August 27, since there is no experience to base calculations on.

Rates vary substantially among 40 rating territories. An average statewide cut of 11.2 per cent was ordered last year.

Highway Safety Center Projects Awarded Funds

The Highway Safety Research Center, a division of A&M's Texas Transportation Institute, has been awarded funding for two similar safety research projects.

The projects, headed by principal investigator Eugene Buth, deal with testing vehicle-impact characteristics of a light pole

and an emergency telephone station.

The light pole project, funded with \$4,000 from Kaiser Aluminum, consists of impacting a vehicle with a newly-developed structure featuring a new style breakaway base.

A prototype pole has been successfully tested by TTI, and the results, according to Buth, measured up to the company's expectations. He said the next test would be on a production model to verify the first test's results.

The telephone station test involves the Motorola Motoreall highway emergency telephone system. The structures will be placed along interstate highways at regular intervals to aid motorists in emergencies or distress.

The tests at A&M will involve full-scale impact tests to determine momentum and deceleration changes a vehicle would experience when striking one of the telephone mounting poles.

Computer simulation tests also will be run, and the results between the two will be compared. If a common point can be established, the remainder of the tests will be run in computer simulation, avoiding destructive tests on the structure and TTI automobiles.

Since the telephone support poles will be installed on federal highways, the government has set guidelines for crash characteristics of the poles. The Motorola system will be tested to see if it fits the guidelines, Buth said.

Funds Received For Atomic Equipment

Funds for undergraduate instructional equipment have been acquired by A&M's Geology Department from the National Science Foundation.

The NSF matching grant was made through its Undergraduate Instructional Scientific Equipment Program.

Total value of the grant is \$16,800, according to Dr. Robert B. Scott, associate professor of geology.

He said the money will buy an atomic absorption spectrophotometer and related equipment. It will be used in the laboratory course Geology 451, introduction to geochemistry.

In addition, a PH meter will be purchased to enable students to measure ion activity in natural solutions.

"We are excited about this equipment," Scott said. "It is easy to run and gives excellent data. This will upgrade our geochemistry course to the professional level."

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